



CHARLOTTE™

2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



Hidden Valley

Hosted by City of Charlotte Neighborhood & Business Services at UNC Charlotte Center City

Hidden Valley 2015 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday July 18, 2015, the community members from Hidden Valley participated in a board retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at UNC Charlotte Center City. The following board members participated in the retreat:

- Sherilla Horton
- Tom Wilson
- Zeke Burns
- JoAnn Norris
- Jamie Adams
- Gwendolyn Harris



The City of Charlotte values citizen leadership and its ability to make an impact in the communities, in which we all live, work, play and shop. With this in mind, the board retreat process was initiated to help neighborhood based organizations develop strategic plans to improve quality of life in their communities.

Purpose

The purpose of the board retreat was to

- Generate meaningful conversations around improving quality of life in our community
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)
- Develop a vision and strategic priorities for our community

By participating in the retreat, our board earned a \$1,500 Neighborhood Matching Grant credit to help execute one of the projects we identified.

Process

Our board retreat was conducted by trained facilitators tasked to keep our conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to help capture the best of the past, the best of the present, and how we can add to our strengths to build a better future. The focus was:

- Developing a vision to guide our decision making and activities
- Developing strategic priorities that aligned with our vision
- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Introductions
- Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?: Arrow Activity
- Where We Want to Be: Vision Statement Exercise
- Seeing the Forest through the Trees: Developing Strategic Priorities
- Working Lunch – The Year Ahead
- Idea Development – Time for participants for develop an action plan for goal achievement.

Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?

We began our day with paired interviews, using the “Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?” activity. The activity was intended to help us reflect on:

- What we value
- What are the best things about our community and the people who live here
- What are our past successes
- Where are the potentials and possibilities

After interviewing our partners we shared our discussion with the group, finding commonalities in our conversations.

Where We Were: Reflecting on our past, what were some of the best/worst moments?	Where We Are: Why would or wouldn't a person/business want to move into our community?	Where We Want to Be: If you could make 3 wishes to make our community flourish, what would they be?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prestigious • Professionals • Close group of neighbors • Neighborhood Association 1970-80 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parades/festivals ○ National Night Out ○ Christmas Tree program • Population changed: aged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Homeowners Association • Great location (I-85 close to uptown, Blue Line) • Diamond in the rough • Stigma/poor reputation (gangs etc.) • Education • Services needed for elderly • Early child care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Quality childcare • Workforce development • Continual care model • Food/grocery store access

Our Vision

Our vision is the unifying statement for our community that will guide our decision making and reminds us of what we are trying to reach. It is based on our shared values and preferences for our community's future. It combines the best of what was, what is, and what could be.

OUR VISION:

Hidden Valley is a beautiful, historic and innovative community that is committed to the quality of life of our residents!

Strategic Priorities

After committing to a shared vision, the board began to brainstorm on strategic priorities. This is where we began to define what is most important to us in order to achieve our vision. Strategic priorities are initiatives that will help us move closer to our vision of our community. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.

We started out thinking big and then narrowed down our focus using the Affinity Mapping Process, detailed below:

- Grab some sticky notes from the table. Keeping the vision statement in mind, write down as many of the following as you can think of, one per sticky note:
 - Current action items getting you closer to our vision.
 - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.
- Place the sticky notes on the wall.
- Organize the ideas by natural categories, once everyone agrees on the groups, give each one a name.

This activity led us to the following categories and action items being identified as important within our community:

Marketing and branding

- Establish a logo/vision statement
- Design t-shirts, bumper stickers and marketing materials to get the word out

Collaboration & Organization

- Work together to achieve the vision
- Reestablish Homeowners Association
- Strategic partnerships CMS, CHA, City, banks, County and Parks and Recreation
- Create a joint group 'Hidden Valley Collaborative'
- Neighborhood suggestion box
- Know your specific contribution to the community
- Conduct a survey identifying the needs in the community



Values

- Conflict resolution
- Strong work ethic
- Communication
- Team

Neighborhood activities and engagement

- Develop a signature event with all groups
- Community clean up or ‘Pride day’
- Bring residents together community fair/fun day
- Engage the youth

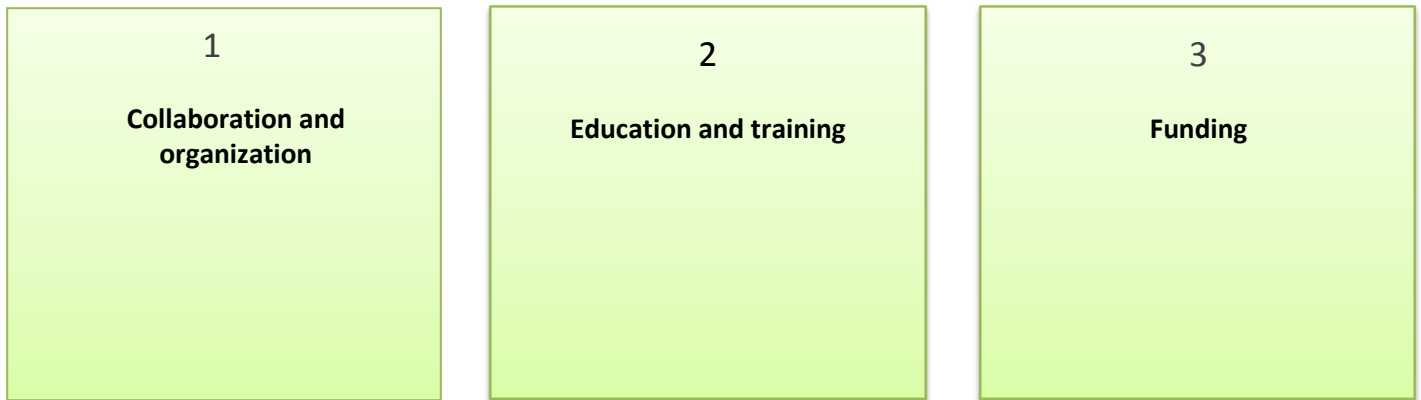
Funding

- Identify a steady source of funding

Education and Training

- Increase marketable skills of youth

Each participant was provided three (3) stickers to be used for voting. Stickers could be placed all on one or two items or shared amongst all of the ideas identified. The three categories receiving the most votes are the strategic priorities that are most important for us to begin working on to achieve our vision, these are:



[Action Items for 2015-2016](#) The three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities are activities in 2015-2016 are:



2015 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Hidden Valley

OUR VISION:

Hidden Valley is a beautiful, historic and innovative community that is committed to the quality of life of our residents!

TO HELP US REACH OUR VISION; WE WILL FOCUS ON THREE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

1

Collaboration and organization

2

Education & Training

3

Funding

IN 2015-2016, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITIES:

Joint group "Hidden Valley Collaborative" meeting frequently

Increase marketable skills of young people

Identify a steady source of funding

Resources to Get Started

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1 Collaboration and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Joint group “Hidden Valley Collaborative” meeting frequently 	<p style="text-align: center;">Mail Chimp: Free online newsletter creator: www.mailchimp.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Newsletter tips: http://archive.ci.falcon-heights.mn.us/nlhandbook/com_tips.html</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A guide to building effective neighborhood partnerships: http://www.neighborpower.org/papers/building-genuine-partnerships.pdf</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish frequent meetings 	<p style="text-align: center;">Increase neighborhood participation: http://atlantahoamanagement.wordpress.com/2011/09/27/how-to-increase-attendance-or-participation-in-homeowner-committees/</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Increase Neighborhood Volunteers http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Attracting_Volunteers</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Volunteer Appreciation Ideas http://blogs.volunteermatch.org/engagingvolunteers/2012/04/05/7-ways-to-appreciate-your-volunteers/</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a communication plan 	<p style="text-align: center;">Local Resources for Neighborhoods: http://digitalcharlotte.org/ Knight School of Communication at Queens University: http://www.queens.edu/Academics-and-Schools/Schools-and-Colleges/Knight-School-of-Communication/Spotlight-Stories/How-Do-Neighborhoods-Communicate.html</p>
Project # 2 Education and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase marketable skills of young people 	<p style="text-align: center;">Mayor's Mentoring Alliance for mentoring resources and training opportunities: http://charmeck.org/city/charlotte/mayor/MentoringAlliance/Pages/default.aspx</p>
Project #3 Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a steady source of funding 	<p style="text-align: center;">Neighborhood fundraiser ideas: http://www.useful-community-development.org/how-to-fundraise.html</p> <p style="text-align: center;">More fundraising ideas: http://www.ehow.com/way_5208916_fundraising-ideas-neighborhood-association.html</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Alternatives to HOA Assessments http://realtentimes.com/todaysheadlines1/item/21090-19991216_assessments</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Budget Preparation Tips http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/article/Association/Budget_Preparation_Tips</p>

Your community is located within Charlotte’s North East Service Area, your staff contacts for following up and community assistance are:

Charlenea Duncan, Community Engagement Specialist	John Short, Community Engagement Lead
cduncan@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-2173	jshort@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-3862

