



CHARLOTTE™

2015 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



Prosperity Village

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

Prosperity Village

2015 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday July 18, 2015, the board members of the Prosperity Village 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:

- Deirdre Grubs
- Sarah Zdeb
- Shika Raynor
- Wil Russell
- Jennifer Dargel
- Theresa Rosa



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"> • Long commute • Resistance to change from community • Neighborhood meeting at BBQ place: put Prosperity Village on the map – sparked need for collaboration • Negative perception of multi-family (signage used), NIMBY perception • Lowes Food left and triggered negative impact on surrounding businesses • Myths to be debunked • Poor communication; internal and external • Lacked identity • Prosperity Church was the only road • Opening of I-485 • I-485 as a barrier – 20 year wait • Fragmented neighborhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connected: regional airport, businesses • Proximity to Concord Mills and Northlake Mall: good and bad • Availability of land with I-485 connection (accessibility) • Ability to be a small business niche • Desire for quality businesses • Proximity to University Research Park • Availability of electric charging station • Low crime rate • Proximity to UNCC and employers • Short drive time to airport • Perception versus reality of the neighborhood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age in place • More restaurants • Reduction in car culture: more walking and biking • Buffered bike lanes on major biking routes • Wider sidewalks • Pocket parks, outside! • 5K at I-485 interchange • Weekly food truck event • Standing community events like ‘Walk the Loop’ • Outdoor entertainment facilities • Meeting place • Branding and identity of neighborhood • Strong sense of place: enhanced quality of life • More engagement with UNCC • Organized area board with strong communication

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:

Prosperity Village connects generations of people with neighborhoods, businesses, and recreation centered around Charlotte's most distinct and vibrant village.

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:

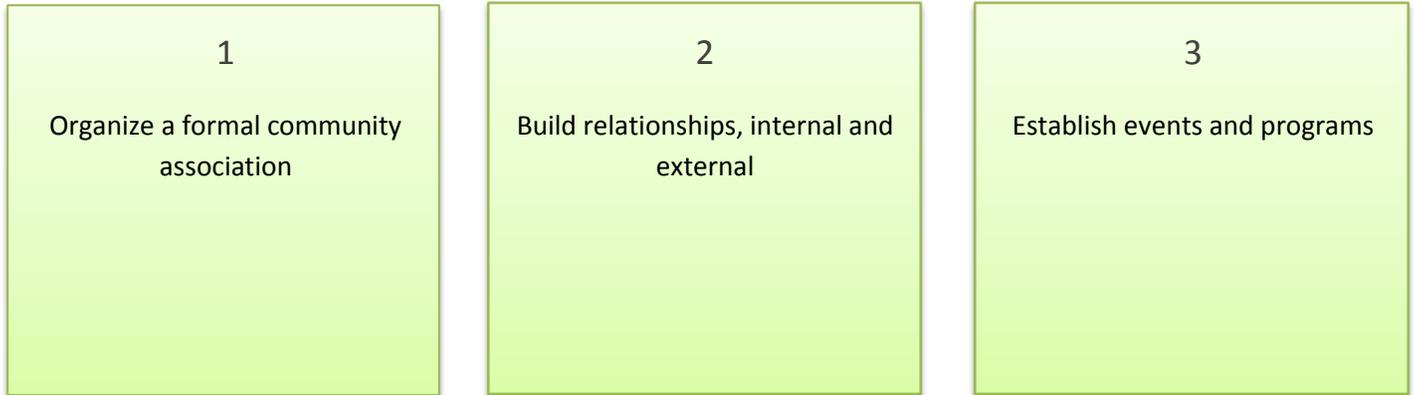
- Grab some sticky notes from the table. Keeping the vision statement in mind, write down as many of the following as you can think of, one per sticky note:
 - Current action items getting you closer to our vision.
 - Possible priorities/actions items to get us closer to our vision.
- Place the sticky 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:

Formalize Community Organization	Building Relationships: internal and external	Events and Programs	Built Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish area association ○ Define membership ○ Finalize board positions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Decide/vote ○ Establish by-laws ○ Website for association ○ File papers for 501c3 ○ Community branding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Logo creation ○ Communication: website, email, printed pieces (at grocery stores) ○ Neighborhood grants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain money ○ Define boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with developers on newly purchased properties ○ Better communications with developers, planners and City Council ○ Working with UNCC to develop the community ○ Small business incubator ○ Contacting existing school PTA's <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fundraising ○ Neighborhood outreach ○ Communicate the existence of association to larger community; membership drive ○ Identify representatives from neighborhoods within radius ○ Connecting to other HOA's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Grand opening" community event ○ Develop weekly/monthly walking groups, greenway rides ○ Plan first community event ○ Food truck event ○ B-cycle program ○ Off ramp beautification event ○ Adopt a City Street program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Expanding greenways ○ Parks: benches, pond/creeks ○ Village/Community town center creation ○ Improve dining ○ Branding the village ○ Expression wall ○ Area plan approval ○ CNIP development ○ Library partnership ○ Bike Shops, Run for Your Life

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

Prosperity Village

OUR VISION:

Prosperity Village connects generations of people with neighborhoods, businesses, and recreation centered around Charlotte's most distinct and vibrant village.

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

1

Organize a formal community association

2

Build relationships, internal and external

3

Establish events and Programs

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

Establish board members and set by-laws by the end of 2015

Establish a community outreach committee to build relationships, both internal and external, following 501c3 approval.

Host an event to kick off the community association (Grand opening for the Village, celebrate website, area plan) by end of 2016.

Project	Getting Started	Resources
Project #1: Establish board members and set by laws by the end of 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize a meeting to bring out neighbors to participate in the association 	<p style="text-align: center;">Need A Speaker http://charmec.org/speakersbureau/Pages/default.aspx</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Charlotte School of Law http://www.charlottelaw.org/</p>
Project #2: Establish a community outreach committee to build relationships, both internal and external, following 501c3 approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop/send out a survey for neighbors to identify resources and current active relationships in the community 	<p style="text-align: center;">Online survey tool: www.surveymonkey.com Sample neighborhood survey: http://www.santacruzneighbors.com/files/form_sampleneighborhoodsurvey.pdf</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee Development 	<p style="text-align: center;">How to organize a committee: http://www.mycommittee.com/BestPractice/Committees/Startingacommittee/tabid/244/Default.aspx</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Charlotte School of Law http://www.charlottelaw.org/</p>
Project #3: Host an event to kick off the community association (Grand opening for the Village, celebrate website, area plan) by end of 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage neighbors in community participation 	<p style="text-align: center;">Neighborhood Event Planning Toolkit http://www.sdsynod.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Block-Party-Kit.pdf</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Neighborhood Matching Grants Contact Atalie Zimmerman for more information: azimmerman@charlottenc.gov 704-336-4594</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

