



CHARLOTTESM

NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



February 24, 2018

Ravenwood Neighborhood Association

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services at
Goodwill Opportunity Campus

Ravenwood Neighborhood Association

2018 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, February 24, 2018, the board members of the Ravenwood Neighborhood Association participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat facilitated by the City of Charlotte, hosted at the Goodwill Opportunity Campus. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

Charlotte Gore
Debbie Dryden
Tim Diggs

Corey Dergazarian
Buz Dowd



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 match credit toward a Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects we identified. More information on the grant program can be found online at <http://charlottenc.gov/nmg>.

To receive this credit we'll submit our completed Vision to Action Idea Development Plan Workbook with our NMG request. This credit will expire following the June 1, 2019 NMG application deadline.

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?
<p>Best</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Children draw you together” • Hickory Grove 4th of July Parade • Good feeling of small community built around school • Sense of small-town identity • Winterfest • Methodist church and school pairing • Own post office <p>Worst</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shooting on Fairlawn Rd. (but it created a rallying point for those involved to clean up their act) • More rentals with absentee landlords 	<p>Positive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in owner-occupied homes • Disposable income (but nowhere to spend it save a few new options) • Increase in property values (but also an increase in property taxes) <p>Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging neighborhood (pro and a con) • Aging board • More disconnected (some former leaders “over it” vs. those who may just be too busy, living their own lives) • Lack of common community rallying point • Percentage of public housing and impact on greater community (schools, etc.) <p>Positive and Negative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighborhood park (positive if all folks use respectfully) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upscale business like what we used to have (like bakery, coffee shop) • Harris Teeter or Publix (higher tier grocery store) • Better schools (investment/defined focus from CMS) • Community input in infrastructure improvements (bond projects, street sign replacement) • Connectivity • Small town feel • Inclusivity-everyone has a role, access to information

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:

*Ravenwood—A Neighborhood of
Involvement, Diversity, and
Unity*

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:

- Community Focus/Projects
 - Flowers/plants at entrance signs (4 votes)
 - ONE goal per year to focus on as a community (2 votes)
 - The new park
 - Picnic tables in the park
 - Bird houses in the park
 - Notice board at the park
 - Community garden
 - Grants
 - More community involvement
 - Statue of man and dog for our neighborhood
- Community Participation
 - Halloween gathering/park party (2 votes, opted to move forward)
 - More group get togethers (block party-like events) (2 votes)
 - Kid meetups at the park (1 vote)
 - Website (in progress) (1 vote)
 - Kids' activities
 - School partnerships (volunteering)
 - Like to see more of the "young people" at meetings, planning meetings, etc.
 - Run/walk club
 - Dog walking or dog club
 - Dedicated Ravenwood groups (not with Grove Park)
 - Another potluck event like Winterfest
 - Coffee mornings meetup
 - Cleanup days (drains, etc.)
 - Painting fire hydrants
 - Tree banding committee
 - Holiday lights competition (more than just monthly garden)
 - Community helpers/volunteer team (checking in on elderly/helping with yardwork)
 - Block captains
 - Ravenwood Float/4th of July Parade
 - Grassroots involvement
 - Board members
 - More new people taking over for the warriors
- Infrastructure
 - Sidewalks (2 votes)
 - Street lights (1 vote)
 - Stoplight at Highland and Hickory
 - Bridges over creek
 - More trails
 - New street signs/ posts
 - Greenway?
 - Meeting place outside for our neighborhood

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. Within these three categories, there were three activities selected as most impactful toward achieving our strategic priorities.

The strategic priorities and activities are summarized on the following page.



2018 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Ravenwood Neighborhood Association

OUR VISION:

*Ravenwood—A Neighborhood of Involvement,
Diversity, and Unity*

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

1

Implement Community Project

2

Encourage Community
Participation

3

Advocate for Infrastructure
Improvements

IN 2018-2019, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITES GUIDED BY OUR PRIORITES:

Plant flowers and
plants at 3 entrance
signs before the 2018
Garden Club Tour

Hold Fall Fest in new
Delta Creek Park in
October 2018 and
explore interest in
future festivals

Gauge community interest
in infrastructure
improvements by National
Night Out 2018.

Please list any parking lot items or additional activities beyond the initial 3 here.

- School Partnerships
 - Explore ideas on how to partner with local schools [here](#).
- Street sign replacement program
- Street light improvements
- Zoning issues



Resources to Get Started- You’ve rolled up your sleeves and established your vision. We have compiled resources that may assist your organization in achieving your goals on our Neighborhood Training Programs and Resources [website](#). We have identified resource categories that may be applicable to your projects below; please do not hesitate to explore more categories as you undertake your work! Links and contact information are provided for information only and are subject to change.

Project	Potential Resource Categories of Interest
Plant flowers and plants at 3 entrance signs before the 2018 Garden Club Tour	Beautification
Hold Fall Fest in new Delta Creek Park in October 2018 and explore interest in future festivals	Beautification; Partnerships
Gauge community interest in infrastructure improvements by National Night Out 2018.	Communication; Welcoming & Engaging Neighbors

Your community is located within Charlotte’s Northeast Service Area. Your staff contacts for following up and community assistance are:

Charlenea Duncan, Northeast Community Engagement Liaison	John Short, Northeast Community Engagement Manager
csduncan@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-2173	jshort@charlottenc.gov or 704-336-3862