



NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD RETREAT



August 20, 2022

Southwest Area Neighborhood Coalition

Hosted by City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services

Southwest Area Neighborhood Coalition

2022 Board Retreat

Background

On Saturday, August 20, 2022, members of the **Southwest Area Neighborhood Coalition** participated in the Neighborhood Board Retreat hosted by the City of Charlotte at Central Piedmont Community College. The following board members and/or community members participated in the retreat:

- Al Peace
- Betty Peace
- Marcellous 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 the quality of life in the neighborhood
- Outline a direction for the future of the neighborhood that represents the needs and desires of current and future residents
- Set clear goals and priorities for the upcoming year(s)

By participating in the retreat, the board earned up to \$1,500 toward volunteer hours required for the Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) to help execute one of the projects listed below.

To receive this credit, neighborhood organizations will submit a copy of the Developing Your Ideas worksheet with their NMG request. This credit will expire following the March 1, 2024, NMG application deadline.

Process

The board retreat was conducted by trained facilitators tasked to keep conversations on-task, productive, and focused on achievable objectives. The process was designed to build on the organization's current strengths, identify opportunities, and create a short-term vision for the neighborhood. The focus was:

- Analyzing neighborhood trends and conditions
- Developing strategic priorities
- Developing project ideas

The agenda for the day was as follows:

- Welcome & Overview
- Introductions
- Group Agreements
- SOAR Model (includes QoL review)
- Conducting a SOAR Analysis
- Lunch/Networking
- SMART Goals
- Developing Your Ideas
- Participant Survey
- Wrap-up/Next Steps

SOAR Analysis

The primary retreat activity was a group discussion using the SOAR analysis framework. The activity was intended to help participants reflect on:

- Their values
- The best things about the community and the people who live there
- Past successes
- Potentials and possibilities

Our discussion helped us to find commonalities in our conversations.

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diversity• Convenient location to shopping and drug stores• Housing stock• Family oriented• Affordable housing• Transit infrastructure• Highway access• Medical facilities moving in (CW Williams)• Farmers markets close	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facility space (vacant schools, stores, office building) 335 Archdale Drive• Better stores• More business investments/relationships• Parks & Recreation facilities improvements (new facilities)• Need more affordable housing

After identifying the organization's strengths and opportunities, participants began to brainstorm aspirations for their neighborhood. These aspirations will serve as short-term goals for the organization. This is where participants began to define priorities for their neighborhood.

Participants generated a list of aspirations and then narrowed that list down to three priorities. The idea is to focus on a few things and do them very well as opposed to many things and missing the mark.

Aspirations	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe, desirable community • Beautification (be the best-looking community) • A well socially connected community • Well educated residents on local ordinances • State of the art recreational facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming entrance and exits to the neighborhoods • Residents are communicating with each other often • Improved landscaping to businesses, homes, and neighborhood signage • Less crime and more families

Results

Three aspirations were agreed upon by the group. These aspirations will serve as the organization's strategic priorities for the next twelve months. Participants then identified a desired result for each priority that they felt would be most impactful.

Aspiration 1: Welcoming entrance and exit to neighborhood

Desired Result: Clean corridor/ attractive neighborhood signage

Aspiration 2: Less crime and more families

Desired Result: Less drug activity (specific drug houses), less loitering, less traffic violations at major intersections, more homeownership

Aspiration 3: Residents are communicating with each other often

Desired Result: Better communication across language barriers

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

2022 Neighborhood Board Retreat Summary

Southwest Area Neighborhood Coalition

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

1

Welcoming entrance and exit to neighborhood

2

Reduce crime

3

Improve communication across language barriers

IN THE NEXT 12 MONTHS, WE WILL WORK ON THESE ACTIVITIES GUIDED BY OUR ASPIRATIONS:

Organize a quarterly cleanup of the neighborhoods, corridor, and businesses

Identify crime reduction partners, programs or strategies by December 2022

Work with Nations Ford Elementary to distribute translated flyers/materials promoting meetings and events



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
<i>Beautification-</i> Organize a quarterly cleanup of the neighborhoods, corridor, and businesses Lead(s): SWAN neighborhood leaders	Keep Charlotte Beautiful
<i>Neighborhood Improvements-</i> Identify crime reduction partners, programs or strategies by December 2022 Lead(s): SWAN neighborhood leaders	Need a Speaker
<i>Partnerships/Communication-</i> Work with Nations Ford Elementary to distribute translated flyers/materials promoting meetings and events Lead(s): SWAN neighborhood leaders	

Your community is located within Charlotte's **Southwest** Service Area. Your staff contact for following up and community assistance is:

Chad Martin, Service area Community Engagement Liaison	Millicent Powell, Service Area Community Engagement Manager
chad.martin@charlottenc.gov (704-432-1579)	millicent.powell@charlottenc.gov (704-432-6814)

DEVELOPING YOUR IDEAS

Priority: Organize a quarterly cleanup of the neighborhoods, corridor, and businesses

1. What is the purpose of this project? To beautify neighborhood
2. Are there similar projects within the community that could provide synergy, partnership potential or lessons learned? Yes, as a coalition, info can be taken from SWAN to neighborhoods
3. What would be a successful outcome of completing this project? How will we measure success? Having clean-ups; beautification better looking corridor on an ongoing basis; new neighborhood signs
4. What are the benefits to the community? The community will benefit from the following <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clean corridor
5. What are your strategies, first steps and what resources do we need to make it happen? (in-kind donations, grants, partnering organizations, volunteers, technical expertise) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate to rep neighborhoods• Get buy-in from neighborhoods• Talk to signage company on sign options/costs• Selection implementation/find funding
Point Person/Action Team: Mrs. Keogh/SWAN Board
Timeframe or Proposed schedule: 4 to 6 months for neighborhood approval