

# Greater Memphis Neighborhoods Plan

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## Overview

Greater Memphis Neighborhoods (GMN): *A comprehensive, strategic approach to creating “greater” Memphis neighborhoods that engage citizens-at-large, neighborhood residents, the business community, government, schools, foundations, nonprofits and faith-based organizations in neighborhood revitalization. This strategic approach will focus on concentrating human capital, economic and community development resources, and efforts to targeted neighborhoods for maximum effect.*

### **GMN: History**

The Greater Memphis Partnership – consisting of the Community Foundation of Greater Memphis, The Assisi Foundation, CD Council and local community development leaders, National Bank of America Foundation and the City of Memphis Division of Housing and Community Development – took a leadership position to establish positive change in the lives of Memphians by creating a comprehensive public/private community plan that supports neighborhood development, coined a “Blueprint for Revitalization” for Memphis. Consultants, EDAW, were hired by the Greater Memphis Partnership to assist in drafting this plan. The comprehensive community, redevelopment plan for the Greater Memphis area is meant to accomplish several objectives, namely to:

- Devise strategies to most effectively revitalize targeted neighborhoods
- Define overall community investment priorities
- Establish roles and responsibilities of existing – and possibly new – organizations to help implement community development plans
- Identify greater external partnership opportunities for these organizations, particularly to be able to tap into more substantial and less restricted financial resources
- Suggest ways to build capacity and retain knowledge within neighborhood organizations to be able to continually develop and implement innovative solutions

Over the course of 10 months (from April 2008 to January 2009), EDAW worked with those on the frontline in Memphis community redevelopment – to form the revitalization plan and generate recommendations for a strategic blueprint for revitalizing neighborhoods citywide. EDAW created 12 individual reports (i.e. deliverables) written during the course of the project to form the complete volume of the revitalization plan, detailing background information and needs assessments, results from visioning exercises and implementation strategies. This report summarizes these findings.

# Implementation Strategies

## 1. Introduction

The complete volume of the Greater Memphis “Blueprint for Revitalization” provides background information, data, assessment of needs, results from visioning exercises, and a series of goals and objectives. To insure that this body of work does not gather dust on a shelf, a clear implementation plan and work program is provided to guide decision-making in the short- and medium-term. This report (Deliverable III-3) summarizes the priority actions and initiatives which are recommended to help to begin to transform the community development industry in Memphis.

The implementation plan, comprised of this report and a full Work Program and Implementation Schedule was developed to clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of existing and planned public, private, and intermediary organizations in Greater Memphis. The Work Program and Implementation Schedule presents a total of fifty-one (51) recommended projects / tasks, along with the responsible entities, estimated costs, and a proposed timeline for delivery.

The Work Program also relates each of the 51 action items back to the Strategic Goals developed in Phase II of this project to ensure the aims for revitalization, as developed with the Steering Committee, are being met. These five overall themes from vision and goals are:

- Building Better Relationships;
- Improving Economic and Residential Vitality;
- Improving Quality of Life;
- Developing Neighborhood Plans; and
- Improving Capacity of the CDC Industry.

The Work Program provides a step-by-step roadmap of 51 interrelated action items. While each item is important, priorities will have to be agreed upon, as in any public planning process. This document provides recommendations for the starting point for implementation. It is critical that momentum be generated and early successes won. In other words, ANY of these recommended action items would serve as a strong first step. The focus should be on working toward incremental success and establishing the urgency to get some tasks accomplished right away. The Greater Memphis Partnership, with these recommendations in hand, provides the best opportunity and venue to spearhead the development and revitalization of Memphis’ neighborhoods.

## 2. Implementation Strategies

While justification for each of the 51 action items is strong, there are selected tasks that rise to the level of highest priority. It is recommended, therefore, that the Greater Memphis Partnership initially focus on the “Top 5” priority tasks listed below. Based on input from the stakeholders, guidance from the Steering Committee, and results of the assessment of needs, the following action items should take priority:

1. Establish a New Organizational Structure
2. Identify Priority Target Neighborhoods
3. Develop Neighborhood Plans
4. Identify New Funding Sources and Strategies

## 5. Expand Community Development Beyond Housing

Each of these action items are summarized below.

### *2.1. Establish a New Organizational Structure*

Much of the discussion regarding implementation is focused upon the interrelationships between the myriad organizations now working as the community development industry in Memphis. Throughout this strategic planning process, a constant theme is the need to address the structure of this industry and how a new organizational model would bring fresh energy to the revitalization of neighborhoods in the community. Because of the unique nature of this priority, a separate section below is devoted to a description of the proposed organizational structure.

### *2.2. Identify Priority Target Neighborhoods*

The assessment tool developed for this strategic plan - the Strategic Framework for Prioritizing Investments – enables the user to score and evaluate the positive aspects of each target area as opportunities as well as recognize areas in need of improvement. The goal is to focus investment on a limited number of priority revitalization areas. As much as every Community Development Corporation (CDC) and every neighborhood would like to be the focus of investment, the reality is that the funding resources are far too limited to be spread among so many neighborhoods. By targeting resources, the ability to maximize investment and achieve real improvement is increased.

The strategic framework should be completed as a method of identifying the priority areas. It is recommended that up to three (3) areas should be targeted for the first two (2) years. At the end of that period, new priority areas can qualify for targeted efforts. This will create a rolling calendar so that each new priority area becomes the focus of an intensive effort, one at a time.

### **2.3. Develop Neighborhood Plans**

Each neighborhood must identify challenges and pinpoint opportunity areas to understand how investment can be best put to use in their areas. Neighborhood revitalization plans should be drafted for each priority area, to be determined in part through the Strategic Framework assessment, based on input from all stakeholders in the community. These revitalization plans should address land use, economic development, safety, housing, urban design, human capital, recreation, community pride, culture, and incorporate a marketing strategy. They should be structured to include a vision, a series of goals and strategies, and should recommend a series of measurable action items.

These neighborhood revitalization plans usually have a 5-10 year planning horizon. The CDCs could take the lead on the formulation and implementation of the neighborhood plans. A well developed, community supported revitalization plan establishes the unique priorities and needs for each neighborhood and serves as justification and support for funding requests from many sources. Once neighborhood plans have been completed, they should be adopted as part of the City of Memphis' Comprehensive Plan to further insure their implementation.

### **2.4. Identify New Funding Sources and Strategies**

The pursuit of new and expanded funding sources and strategies is included in the Summary Report on Programs, Technical Assistance, and Other Resources for Implementation. While the types of funding goals proposed toward the beginning of this project in early 2008 dealt with increasing consistency and reliability of funding in neighborhoods; greater flexibility in

the use of funds; and longer term and multi-year loan commitments to allow CDCs to address their diverse needs and programs, the economic reality in 2009 has shifted this emphasis. Due to the deep economic recession, the entire funding industry has reverted into a survival mode mentality.

The report describes opportunities to take advantage of traditional funding sources such as banks and foundations and to explore other funding bodies; however, the degree to which these opportunities can be capitalized on are dependent on how these funders respond to the economic recession. Still, some organizations and/or funding strategies worth further investigation include the following:

- Tennessee Department of Economic & Community Development
- Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA)
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- Operating Support Collaborative (OSCs)
- Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs)
- Living Cities (or the National Community Development Initiative)
- Tax credits and block grants, such as New Markets Tax Credits, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Renewal Communities Program, and the Neighborhood Stabilization Program
- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Specific recommendations for priority action include:

- Seek sources of funding both inside and outside of the Memphis community
- Reconfigure the funding cycle to move away from year-to-year investments and toward a three-year funding commitment for priority neighborhoods; and
- Seek other nontraditional funding sources related to such topics as transportation and open space and recreation, and innovative public-private partnerships. The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) has been made available to cities such as Memphis, and a series of programs have been identified under the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, known as the Federal Stimulus Program.

## **2.5. Expand Community Development Beyond Housing**

A key recommendation in the action plan is to strengthen housing rehabilitation efforts and programs. The presence of occupied, well-maintained homes represents the largest single measure of the vitality of a neighborhood. However, through the visioning process, it became clear that strategies for neighborhood revitalization in addition to housing programs should be elevated in priority. Examples include revitalization of commercial corridors, a renewed focus on human capital, and an emphasis on quality of life measures. Therefore, it is recommended that the following action items receive priority as a compliment to the established housing programs:

- Focus on economic development and jobs;
- Encourage community spirit and neighborhood pride, and work to improve pride in the city as a whole;

- Develop and implement a City-wide neighborhood green space and beautification plan;
- Coordinate with Operation Safe Communities;
- Create quality of life indicators and have neighborhood organizations begin tracking progress / coordinating results;
- Complete and implement commercial corridor revitalization action plans; and
- Strategically locate “one stop shops” in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

### **3. Notes on Capacity Building**

While not specifically included in the list of the “Top 5” priority action items, an overarching theme that has importance to the future of neighborhood revitalization efforts in the Memphis community is the need to improve the capacity of Community Development Corporations (CDCs) to deliver their valuable services. Several specific tasks have been recommended, including:

- Establish a community development academy;
- Apply the Capacity Assessment Tool, as developed by separate consultants, to evaluate CDC capacity and effectiveness annually;
- Increase capacity and organizational effectiveness by hosting an easily accessible online resource including a central clearinghouse for neighborhood data; and
- Help CDCs get up to speed with national best practices by helping them attend conferences and meetings.

Most national intermediaries provide technical assistance, training programs, and advocacy services as part of their offering, both to members and non-members. State, regional, and local networks also exist which offer training and knowledge-sharing.

### **4. Organizational Structure**

Much of the discussion regarding implementation is focused upon the interrelationships between the myriad organizations now working as the community development industry in Memphis. Throughout this strategic planning process, a constant theme is the need to address the structure of this industry and how a new organizational model would bring fresh energy to the revitalization of neighborhoods in the community. Based on the case studies from other communities, the recommended steps to begin the restructuring of the community development structure in Memphis are:

- Divide into geographically “equal” neighborhoods;
- Designate a lead agency for each neighborhood;
- Retain the Greater Memphis Partnership;
- Encourage the City of Memphis to create a cabinet level position for neighborhood revitalization; and
- Form a local community development intermediary.

Consideration of the organizational structure takes into account which agencies and groups have responsibility for action. Within the community, there are many groups working for the improvement of the neighborhoods, including the City of Memphis, the Greater Memphis Partnership, as many as 40 CDCs, foundations, financial institutions, Shelby County, the State of Tennessee, and others. At times, there is close cooperation between these groups. At other times, however, it appears that efforts are not as well coordinated. The recommended structure will

enable greater cooperation, clearly establish a lead agency in each target area, and provide appropriate checks and balances.

#### **4.1. Divide into Geographically “Equal” Neighborhoods**

One of the issues identified through the strategic planning process was the disparity in the geographic size of neighborhoods served by CDCs. There are examples of CDCs serving very tiny areas being considered for funding and resources on par with CDCs that serve far-reaching communities. With the goal of identifying priority areas by neighborhood rather than by organization, for planning purposes Memphis should be divided into no less than fifteen (15) and no more than twenty (20) neighborhoods, each roughly geographically equal in area. When delineating these areas, care should be taken to preserve the traditional neighborhood boundaries where possible. In some cases, it may be necessary to group two neighborhoods into one target area to achieve this objective.

#### **4.2. Designate a Lead Agency for Each Neighborhood**

Following closely on the issue directly above, there should be a lead agency designated for each of the neighborhoods. This is in response to the overlap in service areas by the existing CDC structure. In an area currently served by more than one CDC, a singular CDC would be the lead agency. This results in a structure whereby the City of Memphis, funders, and other organizations have between 15 and 20 CDCs to work with, rather than the nearly 40 that exist today.

#### **4.3. Retain the Greater Memphis Partnership Steering Committee**

Based on the relationships established through this strategic planning process, it is recommended that the Greater Memphis Partnership become a permanent coordinating organization. The member agencies represented on the Steering Committee have exhibited a great deal of coordination, cooperation, and common sense of purpose. As a permanent, standing organization the Greater Memphis Partnership is able to serve several roles:

- Provide a venue for strategic neighborhood planning
- Act as a point of contact, clearinghouse, and resource for neighborhood advocates
- Serve as a watchdog over neighborhood revitalization programs including the new intermediary
- Provide political awareness, advocacy, and education
- Develop stronger partnerships with key local contacts, such as the City of Memphis, other CDCs, neighborhood associations, colleges and universities, funders, and faith-based organizations
- Meet regularly to work towards successfully delivering the Work Program and Implementation Schedule of this “Blueprint for Revitalization.”

#### **4.4. Encourage the City of Memphis to create a cabinet level position for neighborhood revitalization**

The City of Memphis should create and staff a cabinet level position for neighborhood revitalization. This neighborhood ombudsman/advocate working at the City of Memphis on behalf of the neighborhoods serves as a single point of contact for CDCs and neighborhood residents with concerns and complaints. The cabinet level of this position is important to insure a voice at the highest levels of local government while also insuring direct accountability to neighborhood groups. Through this position, trends in neighborhood concerns will be monitored as well as

coordination among departments to work on implementation strategies for neighborhood revitalization plans.

#### **4.5. Form a local community development intermediary**

With the expressed goal of increased coordination between community development organizations on funding, policy advocacy, and technical assistance, it is recommended that a new local intermediary be formed. While there is some debate whether this intermediary should be local or national, Memphis should implement a local intermediary based on the best elements of the national models namely; local control with national support, very strong oversight with a strong board, tight fiscal controls, and a strategic plan for the sustainable operation of the intermediary covering short-, medium- and long-range.

The specific objectives for the new local community development intermediary include:

- Establish a clear mission statement and a qualified board for the community development intermediary
- Explore and document the need for a Housing Trust Fund, work with the business and non-profit community to find partners and market the need for establishing a Housing Trust Fund to a regional audience
- Coordinate funding to increase its continuity by dedicating a steady stream of funds to target revitalization areas for multi-year periods in order to allow continuous plan implementation
- Secure loan guarantees/safety net established by the banks in cooperation with the foundations to help make securing funding for community development projects and operations easier
- Ensure the work of the Community Development Council is continued with the intermediary in place, either by shifting or sharing with responsibilities with the CD Council or through establishing a formal partnership with the CD Council
- Keep the Memphis CDC industry connected to best practices and innovations being undertaken in other areas.

In summary, the following primary elements helped lead to successful community development in the cities examined. These lessons could be applied to the way the City of Memphis approaches community development in the future:

- *City leadership dedicated to community development* – such as in Newark and Cleveland
- *Strong partnership with CDCs* – such as in Cleveland
- *Strong partnership with community residents* – such as Sarasota’s NPO & NAS; neighborhood planning in Louisville and Savannah; distinct liaison activities in Savannah through special department; and Dayton’s Priority Boards
- *Targeting resources / efforts* – such as in Richmond’s Neighborhoods in Bloom program, and in Savannah
- *Defining community development as more than housing* – such as with commercial corridor revitalization in Cleveland
- *Focusing on neighborhood strengths* – such as by embracing the Asset Based Community Development philosophy like Sarasota – rather than continuing to always highlight the deficiencies.

The Work Program provides a step-by-step roadmap of 51 interrelated action items. While each and every item is important, it is clear that priorities will have to be agreed upon. This document provides a recommendation for a starting point for implementation. Regardless of how the starting point is determined, it is critical that momentum be generated and early successes won. In other words, ANY of these recommended action items could serve as a strong first step. The Greater Memphis Partnership, with these recommendations in hand, provides the best opportunity and venue to spearhead the development and revitalization of Memphis' neighborhoods.

## Strategic Vision

A vision for Memphis neighborhoods was developed based on insights from interviews and visioning sessions with stakeholders, Steering Committee meetings, past studies about community development in the city, and an understanding of existing neighborhood conditions based on recent work compiled by the University of Memphis. The vision is to plan for and deliver "Greater Memphis Neighborhoods," making the entire city (a large geographic expanse comprised of a vast collection of neighborhoods) a "greater" place – better to live, work, play, and raise families in, based on grassroots involvement on the community level. It is proposed that CDCs and other community development groups can help realize this vision through acting on a series of goals, grouped by the following five themes which reinforce the overall image of "greater":

- Building Better Relationships
- Improving Economic and Residential Vitality
- Improving Quality of Life
- Developing Neighborhood Plans
- Improving Capacity of the CDC Industry

In brief, the five overall themes represent the following:

- *Building Better Relationships* – Strengthening relationships between community development organizations and between CDCs and their partners, including local governments, foundations, banks, faith-based organizations, and universities, to help bring more resources to Memphis neighborhoods
- *Improving Economic and Residential Vitality* – Further developing and revitalizing commercial and housing components of neighborhoods to grow economic opportunity and a stable property market through investing in physical capital (infrastructure) and human capital (the workforce)
- *Improving Quality of Life* – Making neighborhoods safer, greener, healthier, more attractive, and easier to get to and around
- *Developing Neighborhood Plans* – Ensuring that each Memphis neighborhood develops an action plan for revitalization so resources which might be garnered are spent wisely and make positive, sustained impacts

- *Improving Capacity of CDCs* – Equipping CDCs with the skills to tackle the complex issues involved in community development

To help deliver the strategic vision, a series of action-oriented goals was developed.

Descriptions about what the goals entail and how they may be accomplished are found below.

However, implementation strategies (to be drafted in the next phase of work for this project) will give further detail on organizational roles and responsibilities, possible funding sources, and timeframes.

## **5-Year Goals**

### *Theme: Building Better Relationships*

As stated above, the intention of the “Building Better Relationships” theme is strengthening relationships between community development organizations and their partners, including local government, foundations, banks, faith-based organizations, and universities, to help bring more resources to Memphis neighborhoods. It is envisioned the following goals will help accomplish this aim; they are explained in further detail below:

*Goal 1:* Further formalize the Greater Memphis Partnership

*Goal 2:* Establish a Community Development intermediary

*Goal 3:* Create and implement a plan to increase the funding available for community development

*Goal 4:* Hire a neighborhood ombudsman / advocate at City of Memphis

*Goal 5:* Reorganize and restructure elements of the CDC industry in Memphis

*Goal 6:* Develop more formal relationships with key local partners

### **Goal 1: Further formalize the Greater Memphis Partnership**

#### Purpose:

- Carry on working together as an oversight committee or steering group to oversee the implementation of the Greater Memphis Neighborhood goals

#### Objectives:

- Establish who will continue on as part of the Greater Memphis Partnership, and determine any other stakeholders who should be invited
- Develop stronger partnerships with key local contacts, such as the City, other CDCs, neighborhood associations, colleges and universities, funders, and faith-based organizations
- Meet regularly to work towards delivering the Work Program and Implementation Schedule

### **Goal 2: Establish a Community Development intermediary**

#### Purpose:

- Coordinate between community development organizations on funding, policy advocacy, and technical assistance
- Serve as a single point of contact on policy and coordination issues for entities such as the City, the County, and the State
- Possibility of intermediary being national or local

#### Objectives:

- Establish a clear mission statement and a qualified board for the Community Development intermediary
- Coordinate funding to increase its continuity by dedicating a steady stream of funds to target revitalization areas for multi-year periods in order to allow continuous plan implementation; put policies in place detailing qualifications required for tapping into these ongoing funding streams and how long they should continue, ensuring that the Community Development intermediary makes decisions on resource allocation based upon objective and open criteria
- Secure loan guarantees/safety net established by the banks in cooperation with the foundations to help make securing funding for Community Development projects and operations easier
- Ensure the work of the Community Development Council is continued with the intermediary in place, either by shifting or sharing with responsibilities with the CD Council or through establishing a formal partnership with the CD Council
- Keep the Memphis CDC market connected to best practices and innovations being undertaken in other areas

**Goal 3: Create and implement a plan to increase the funding available for community development**

Purpose:

- Develop a strategy to identify additional sources of funding to help carry out community development projects and CDC operating costs

Objectives:

- Work to identify additional funding opportunities from private and public sectors, including federal and local sources
- Explore a Housing Trust Fund by conducting research, documenting the need for a Housing Trust Fund, and looking at national models in order to make the case; work with the business and non-profit community to find partners and market the need for establishing a Housing Trust Fund to a regional audience
- Look for funding sources both within and outside of Memphis

**Goal 4: Hire a neighborhood ombudsman / advocate at City of Memphis**

Purpose:

- Serve as a single point of contact for CDCs and neighborhood residents with concerns and complaints

Objectives:

- Create a cabinet-level position with direct accountability to neighborhood groups
- Direct citizens to the appropriate resources or department
- Track trends in neighborhood concerns
- Hold coordination meetings among departments to work on implementation strategies for neighborhood revitalization plans

**Goal 5: Reorganize and restructure elements of the Community Development industry, including the CDCs, in Memphis**

Purpose:

- Restructure and consolidate Community Development industry to maximize return on investment

Objectives:

- Develop a Strategic Plan for the CD Council
- Rationalize the number of CDCs operating in Memphis and refocus areas in which they work. Utilize the Capacity Assessment Tool to aid in this analysis
- Identify a person within the City charged with the development and implementation of Neighborhood Plans
- Identify roles within City government which can be strengthened to benefit community development, particularly within OPD (possibly regarding neighborhood plan-making or quality of life issues) and the Neighborhood Relations department
- Get State and County governments more involved in community development
- Align CDC plans with State, County, and City plans; likewise, update the Citywide Strategic Plan (2002) to reflect the vision and goals of Greater Memphis Neighborhoods
- Strengthen relationships between CDCs
- Once established, define how the national or local intermediary will coordinate and share responsibilities with key players such as the CD Council and the City

**Goal 6: Develop more formal relationships with key local partners**

Purpose:

- Capitalize on local resources through developing a partnership approach to community development

Objectives:

- Coordinate with neighborhood schools more closely, integrating the needs of parents, teachers, and students into neighborhood activities, perhaps through new advocate at the City. Additionally, coordinate education and childhood development programs with appropriate agencies
- Coordinate with the School Board more closely
- Explore partnership opportunities with local colleges and universities, such as LeMoyne-Owen College. Maximize the resource available through strong leadership and research capacity at the University of Memphis' City and Regional Planning Department in particular
- Explore further opportunities to partner with faith-based organizations, particularly to assist in service delivery

**Theme: Improving Economic and Residential Vitality**

The intention of the "Improving Economic and Residential Vitality" theme is further developing/revitalizing commercial and housing components of neighborhoods to grow economic opportunity and a stable property market through investing in physical capital (infrastructure) and human capital (the workforce). It is envisioned the following goals will help accomplish this aim; they are explained in further detail below:

*Goal 1:* Complete and implement commercial corridor revitalization action plans

*Goal 2:* Develop a partnership with Memphis Fast Forward

*Goal 3:* Develop a better process for dealing with properties facing liens or foreclosures

*Goal 4:* Strengthen housing rehabilitation efforts and programs

*Goal 5:* Help tackle poverty by tying into existing networks / programs which can provide advice, support, and resources

*Goal 6:* Strategically locate “one stop shops” in disadvantaged neighborhoods

### **Goal 1: Complete and implement commercial corridor revitalization action plans**

#### Purpose:

- Revitalize a commercial corridor to provide economic development / stimulus to one or more priority area(s)

#### Objectives:

- Complete commercial corridor inventories / studies to assess existing conditions and opportunities in targeted neighborhood areas; draft action plans based on findings
- Ensure the participation of local residents, businesses, the City of Memphis, economic development, and transportation agencies in developing the action plan
- Ensure the plans are implemented, possibly through creating or expanding appropriate City programs; by creating a non-profit dedicated to promoting and attracting development to neighborhoods; by investigating how Main Street programs can be of help; and with the help of Merchants’ Associations
- Possibly include a revolving loan fund for small business start-ups in the corridor plan
- Support small businesses and entrepreneurship; promote minority-owned business enterprises

### **Goal 2: Develop a partnership with Memphis Fast Forward**

#### Purpose:

- Partner with an established organization which can help deliver certain community development related goals

#### Objectives:

- Identify areas of cross-over between Greater Memphis Neighborhood strategic goals and MFF goals, and work to partner on accomplishing goals as appropriate

### **Goal 3: Develop a better process for dealing with vacant properties and those facing liens or foreclosure**

#### Purpose:

- Make vacant properties and/or those with delinquent owners easier to develop into affordable housing by CDCs
- Work with appropriate agencies to strengthen the process to help “good neighbor” owner-occupiers stay in their homes when faced with liens or foreclosures

#### Objectives:

- Transfer absentee landlord properties to the Memphis Land Bank, then direct them to local CDCs to make construction of affordable housing easier
- Work with lenders, tax assessor, local government attorneys, CDCs, and title insurance companies to develop a legally effective and expeditious legal process for dealing with properties facing tax liens and tax foreclosures

#### **Goal 4: Strengthen housing rehabilitation efforts and programs**

##### Purpose:

- Continue CDCs' good work rehabilitating housing but identify additional funding and expand programs

##### Objectives:

- Strengthen rehabilitation efforts for both single family and multi-family homes; seek additional funding possibly through TIF / TAD programs, community development bonds, and federal stimulus funds
- Expand financial assistance to homebuyers and identify or lobby for the creation for incentives to for-profit and non-profit developers
- Work to preserve affordability in Memphis neighborhoods
- Help keep aging populations in their homes through identifying new or expanded programs, such as providing tax abatement and home repair financial assistance

#### **Goal 5: Help tackle poverty by tying into existing networks / programs which can provide advice, support, and resources**

##### Purpose:

- Help relieve poverty through building capacity rather than supplying direct services

##### Objectives:

- Partner with experts already focused on poverty relief to help alleviate the problem
- Develop CDC capacity to work with poverty relief providers effectively

#### **Goal 6: Strategically locate "one stop shops" in disadvantaged neighborhoods**

##### Purpose:

- Provide convenient access to information and government and non-government support

##### Objectives:

- Ensure convenient access to services is established by potentially locating "one stop shops" in strategic parts of Memphis, such as one for the north, south, east, and west areas of the city

#### **Theme: Improving Quality of Life**

The intention of the "Improving Quality of Life" theme is making neighborhoods safer, greener, healthier, more attractive, and easier to get to and around. It is envisioned the following goals will help accomplish this aim; they are explained in further detail below:

*Goal 1:* Encourage community spirit and neighborhood pride, and work to improve pride in the city as a whole

*Goal 2:* Develop and implement a City-wide neighborhood green space and beautification plan

*Goal 3:* Strengthen the code enforcement strategy

*Goal 4:* Coordinate with Operation Safe Communities

*Goal 5:* Create quality of life indicators and have neighborhood organizations begin tracking progress / coordinating results

## **Goal 1: Encourage community spirit and neighborhood pride, and work to improve pride in the city as a whole**

### Purpose:

- Pride means finding value in a place and can instill a sense of ownership and commitment to an area; developing such pride would mean people care about and would work to enhance their neighborhood or city

### Objectives:

- Coordinate events such as festivals, possibly through introducing Main Street programs in target neighborhood areas. Explore developing initiatives in conjunction with the City, neighborhood associations, CDCs, and civic associations as well. An example is establishing a “best neighborhood cleanup” award
- Track and publicize positive data and trends to quell the negativity that persists about some neighborhoods and the City at large; develop a city-wide communications strategy to publicize results

## **Goal 2: Develop and implement a City-wide neighborhood green space and beautification plan**

### Purpose:

- Capitalize on vacant / under-developed land throughout the city to develop a network of green space, whether through the construction of parks, parkways / green medians, passive open space, or tree planting

### Objectives:

- Investigate the feasibility of acquiring and assembling vacant properties into green Space, park space and open space
- Establish a series of community parks
- Begin the process of planning for the connection of green space through pedestrian and bicycle paths
- Incorporate active-use green spaces such as community gardens
- Develop a maintenance plan as part of the green space and beautification plan

## **Goal 3: Strengthen the code enforcement strategy**

### Purpose:

- Implement a systematic code enforcement program which would be customized to curb blight where it is evident in its earlier stages

### Objectives:

- Citywide revamp of code enforcement and nuisance abatement. A study of best practices in code enforcement and nuisance abatement could be used to advocate for the strengthening of the code at the City
- Expand the Memphis City Beautiful Commission’s Citizens Seeking Improvement (CSI) program regarding housing code violations to all CDCs and neighborhood associations

## **Goal 4: Coordinate with Operation Safe Community**

### Purpose:

- Work towards the goal of ensuring that the Memphis community is one of the safest of its size in the country

Objectives:

- Strengthen the partnership with the Operation Safe Community consortium.
- Identify areas of cross-over between Greater Memphis Neighborhood strategic goals and Operation Safe Community Strategic goals and work towards coordination in implementation

**Goal 5: Create quality of life indicators and have neighborhood organizations begin tracking progress / coordinating results**

Purpose:

- Ensure quality of life in Memphis neighborhoods continues to improve; measure this through adopting a monitoring system

Objectives:

- Work with the Urban Institute's National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership to model best practices from other localities
- Include indicators to cover issues such as health, education, and economic opportunity
- Indicators should be managed by individual CDCs / neighborhood groups
- Neighborhoods should coordinate and share findings to ascertain a global picture of progress
- Update and report on the indicators annually

**Theme: Developing Neighborhood Plans**

The intention of the "Developing Neighborhood Plans" theme is ensuring that each Memphis neighborhood develops an action plan for revitalization so resources which might be garnered are spent wisely and make an impact. It is envisioned the following goals will help accomplish this aim; they are explained in further detail below:

*Goal 1:* Focus investment on a limited number of priority revitalization areas over the next five years

*Goal 2:* Develop a revitalization or short-term action plan for each neighborhood area, building upon existing plans where available

*Goal 3:* Develop a GIS intelligence system that identifies emerging problem areas and a fast action team to address these areas, i.e. "Neighborhood by Neighbor"

*Goal 4:* Adopt the Unified Development Code

*Goal 5:* Align neighborhood plans with other existing City, State, and Regional plans, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan

**Goal 1: Focus investment on a limited number of priority revitalization areas over the next five years**

Purpose:

- Stakeholders have commented that without focus of the limited funding available for community development, investment ends up being diluted across many neighborhoods and therefore the impact is diminished. Targeting investment several key neighborhoods can also catalyze development in adjacent areas

### Objectives:

- Evaluate target neighborhoods for investment, using the Strategic Framework as an analysis tool
- Focus on these revitalization areas for a five-year period. At the end of that period, a new priority area can qualify for targeted efforts. This will create a rolling calendar so that each new priority area becomes the focus of an intensive effort, one at a time
- Priority areas do not necessary have to be single neighborhoods, but they should be small enough that the effort can be managed by a single CDC and that visible improvements will be apparent after a significant initiative
- Provide action plan for all areas, even those not selected as priority areas

### **Goal 2: Develop revitalization or short-term action plan for each neighborhood area, building upon existing plans where available**

#### Purpose:

- Each neighborhood needs to identify challenges and pinpoint opportunity areas to understand how investment can be best put to use in their areas.

#### Objectives:

- Significant revitalization plans should be drafted for each priority area (with priority locations to be determined in part through the Strategic Framework assessment), based on input from all stakeholders in the community
- Revitalization plans should address land use, economic development, safety, housing, urban design, human capital, recreation, community pride, culture, and a marketing strategy. These plans should have a 5-10 year planning horizon. CDCs should lead on the plans' formulation and implementation
- Short-term action plans should be developed for those areas not classified as high priorities in certain cycles
- Formally adopt neighborhood plans as guidance for development.
- Draft a "Neighborhood Planning Handbook" to guide residents through the neighborhood planning process

### **Goal 3: Develop a GIS intelligence system that identifies emerging problem areas and a fast action team to address these areas, i.e. "Neighborhood by Neighbor"**

#### Purpose:

- Utilize the power of GIS technology to be able to easily spot negative (and positive) trends in communities. Build on Neighborhood by Neighbor work that is involving local people to collect and transmit the data which underlies the technology

#### Objectives:

- The GIS intelligence system should include such data as vacant properties, code violations, foreclosures, and crime patterns
- The fast action team should include code enforcement, planning, relevant CDCs, and potentially other partners to work on mortgage fraud and related issues

### **Goal 4: Adopt the Unified Development Code**

#### Purpose:

- A draft of the Unified Development Code was completed in 2008 but has not yet been adopted. Formally adopting the Code will help define development guidelines in the city

**Objectives:**

- Pass a City-wide infill residential development ordinance. An ordinance would help ensure that new housing development is compatible with existing residential fabric in scale and design. Address the development of multifamily apartments by making sure multifamily designs are compatible with Crime Prevention through Environmental Design standards
- Eliminate permissive zoning categories in Memphis neighborhoods. Advocate for neighborhood appropriate zoning districts in the rewrite of the new Unified Development Code
- Develop overlay zoning districts for appropriate areas

**Goal 5: Align neighborhood plans with other existing City, State, and Regional plans, such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan**

**Purpose:**

- Incorporate the goals established in the City, State, and Regional plans into neighborhood plans to ensure joined-up working and avoid duplication

**Objectives:**

- Conduct a policy review as part of each neighborhood plan

**Theme: Improving Capacity of the CDC Industry**

The intention of the “Improving Capacity of the CDC Industry” theme is equipping the CDC industry with the skills to tackle the complex issues involved in community development. It is envisioned the following goals will help accomplish this aim; they are explained in further detail below:

*Goal 1:* Establish a Community Development Academy

*Goal 2:* Evaluate CDC capacity and effectiveness annually

*Goal 3:* Establish a central clearinghouse for neighborhood data

*Goal 4:* Build an online and hard-copy toolkit to help CDCs manage their key challenges

*Goal 5:* Offer scholarships for CDC employees to attend national training conferences and seminars; additionally, invite experts to meet and present their work locally

*Goal 6:* Identify value of CDCs to their local neighborhoods

**Goal 1: Establish a Community Development Academy**

**Purpose:**

- Increase CDC and neighborhood organization capacity through providing formalized training initiatives and certification program to allow them to effectively carry out the goals set forth in this plan

**Objectives:**

- Develop an Academy to host training programs, conferences, and workshops regarding best practices, policy, and advocacy issues for CDCs as well as Neighborhood Associations
- Develop standards / curriculum for CDC certification

## **Goal 2: Evaluate CDC capacity and effectiveness annually**

### Purpose:

- Make CDCs accountable for their efforts and help identify where capacity-building needs to take place

### Objectives:

- Evaluate capacity through applying the new Capacity Assessment Tool
- Establish cut-off points which group CDCs according to their performance and capacity
- Consider withdrawing / reducing funding available through CDC intermediary for ineffective CDCs
- Technical assistance should be made available for building capacity where the need exists
- Explore new missions for those CDCs with capacity, including commercial revitalization, services, programs, etc.

## **Goal 3: Establish central clearinghouse for neighborhood data**

### Purpose:

- Much neighborhood data exists; however, it is not always clear where it is housed, how to access it, or what the parameters of its use are. A central clearinghouse would make it easy to tap into these resources

### Objectives:

- Basic neighborhood data, including GIS data, should be collected, analyzed, and provided to the CDCs by an appropriate centralized institution
- This institution should present findings and innovations in its data collection enterprise at least annually, e.g. at a CDC conference

## **Goal 4: Build an online and hard-copy toolkit to help CDCs manage their key challenges**

### Purpose:

- Increase capacity and organizational effectiveness by hosting an easily accessible online resource

### Objectives:

- Design the toolkit so that it can be used as a stand-alone educational piece and integrated into training activities
- Add pieces to the toolkit and/or update older pieces annually. Toolkit topics may include:
  - Planning – standard content and approaches to neighborhood revitalization plans
  - Housing Development – strategies for land acquisition, financing, and construction of infill housing
  - Housing Rehabilitation – funding sources and resources to assist with housing rehabilitation
  - Funding – available sources of funding for CDCs and strategies for obtaining funding
  - Training – local and national training opportunities, including websites, workshops, and conferences
  - Neighborhood Involvement – techniques for soliciting input from neighborhood residents on planning efforts

- Crime Prevention – an introduction to crime prevention strategies such as neighborhood watch and crime prevention through environmental design
- Workforce Development – local and state resources for workforce development, from earning a GED to getting technical training
- Neighborhood Commercial – strategies for attracting and retaining neighborhood commercial businesses and for establishing business associations capable of marketing and other promotional efforts
- Walkable Communities – an overview of the benefits and features of high quality of life walkable communities

**Goal 5: Offer scholarships for CDC employees to attend national training conferences and seminars; additionally, invite experts to meet and present their work locally**

Purpose:

- Help CDCs get up to speed with national best practices by helping them attend conferences and meetings, whether in Memphis or out of town, while allowing them to avoid the direct cost of training, which they otherwise might not be able to budget

Objectives:

- The scholarship should include all course fees, travel, and per diem costs
- Scholarships should be offered based upon qualifications and should be distributed widely among different staff
- The goal should be to offer 5-10 training scholarships annually

**Goal 6: Identify value of CDCs to their local neighborhoods**

Purpose:

- Quantify / qualify the value of CDCs to neighborhoods to strengthen their standing in the community and reinforce their importance to get greater buy-in from funders and neighborhood people

Objectives:

Value could be reinforced through publicizing progress of community development initiatives, such as through City publications and announcements or at an annual event, as CDCs become more active in neighborhood planning and implementation

## **Community Assessment Tool**

### **1. Introduction**

The Strategic Framework for Prioritizing Investments is designed to enable government agencies, funders, Community Development Corporations (CDCs), and other community organizations and stakeholders to evaluate and prioritize the appropriate levels of intervention required for Memphis neighborhoods. The Strategic Framework is a tool whereby interested parties can score target study areas against criteria to identify which study areas are most in need of investment and to help focus funding. A matrix format has been developed for the Strategic Framework to allow the user to simultaneously view the scoring of the individual criteria and target study areas while assessing the total scores on a comprehensive basis.

The matrix has been designed to present two sets of criteria - opportunities and needs – separately. This two-part format enables the user to score and evaluate the positive aspects of each target area in one grouping while likewise having the ability to score and evaluate those criteria that measure need for improvement in a separate grouping.

It is intended for the Strategic Framework to be completed at least annually as an exercise to understand change which is occurring across Memphis. Data from sources that are available on an annual basis are especially significant as this information can help influence the decision making, budgeting, and planning efforts each year. For the purpose of prioritizing investments, it is recommended that a full analysis of the Strategic Framework occur every three to five years. This time period will allow areas in greatest need of attention to receive continued funding to be able to launch, maintain, and/or complete initiatives. It also affords the longer view of the opportunities that have positive impacts on each target area.

## **2. How to Use the Strategic Framework**

The Strategic Framework matrix is designed to be easy to use – divided into two (2) distinct categories – opportunities and needs. The six (6) opportunities identify those positive criteria that measure the strengths upon which to build a revitalization program. On the other side of the matrix, the ten (10) needs include measures that represent neighborhood distress. This format enables the user to enter a unique score for each target study area and for each criterion.

### *2.1 Assessment Criteria*

The sixteen (16) Strategic Framework criteria are as follows (described in greater detail in Section 3):

#### Opportunities

1. Strategies for improvement in place
2. Strategic location
3. Community engagement and outreach
4. Available land / infrastructure
5. Historic levels of investment
6. Number of small business owners

#### Needs

7. Concentration of low-income rental housing
8. Number of absentee landlords
9. Homeownership rate vs. rental rate
10. Property values
11. Condition of housing stock
12. Vacant lots and properties
13. Economic conditions (income and labor force participation)
14. Commercial corridor conditions
15. Crime rate
16. School performance

#### Special Criteria

Additionally, two (2) special criteria are also included: 1) a measure of recent change to highlight the importance of addressing those areas that are rapidly improving or declining, and 2) the results of the CDC Capacity Assessment Tool to provide insight into CDCs' ability to implement programs for neighborhood revitalization.

The goal of the Strategic Framework is to provide an "at-a-glance" summary of the comparative neighborhood conditions within the 15 target areas. Building upon the findings from earlier deliverables, as well as readily available local sources, the Strategic Framework brings together the key criteria from:

- Needs Assessment Report
- Neighborhood Redevelopment Funding Report
- Visioning Exercise Results
- Existing Conditions and Neighborhood Snapshots (CBANA data)
- Neighborhood by Neighbor data (CBANA and City of Memphis HCD)
- Housing and Economic data sources (Memphis HCD)

Assembling a snapshot of the best available data, the Strategic Framework represents only a single tool to help guide neighborhood revitalization decision-makers. While the results of the Strategic Framework analysis provides an important and comprehensive view of the relative conditions throughout the target areas of Memphis, many other factors should also be considered to determine investment priorities. Some of these factors are the priorities of other funding programs, historic and cultural significance of each area, political considerations, and locally-determined criteria such as economic development, housing or infrastructure programs.

## *2.2 Scoring*

### Opportunities

Depending on how well or poorly the neighborhood rates for each opportunity criterion, it will be assigned a score, ranging 1 through 5, with "1" being generally poor and "5" being generally "good."

*Opportunities - Highest scoring areas have the greatest opportunity*

5 = Best opportunity

4 = Good opportunity

3 = Moderate opportunity

2 = Little opportunity

1 = Virtually no opportunity

### Needs

Depending on how well or poorly the neighborhood rates for each need criterion, it will be assigned a score, ranging 1 through 5, with "1" being generally good and "5" being generally "poor."

*Needs - Highest scoring areas are in need of greatest help*

5 = Poorest conditions / performance

- 4 = Poor conditions / performance
- 3 = Moderate conditions / performance
- 2 = Good conditions / performance
- 1 = Best conditions / performance

#### Special Criteria

The first special criterion, measuring recent change between the 1990 and 2000 Census, applies the 1 through 5 numerical scale as follows:

- 5 = High Negative Rate of Change
- 4 = Negative Rate of Change
- 3 = Moderate or Negligible Rate of Change
- 2 = Positive Rate of Change
- 1 = High Positive Rate of Change

The second special criterion, presenting the results of the CDC Capacity Assessment Tool, lists a rating based on the competency level:

- Forming
- Emerging
- Producing
- Mature

For each of the criteria contained in the Strategic Framework, this report provides a detailed description of the relevance of the criteria, identifies potential data sources, and provides a scoring key with an explanation of the scoring parameters.

For the purposes of this study, the neighborhood areas were scored using data generated from input and feedback from stakeholder interviews (May and June, 2008), Visioning sessions (June, 2008), findings from CBANA's Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis, and other readily available data sources.

#### *2.3 Optional Criteria Weighting*

The Strategic Framework provides the ability to assign weights to each criterion. At the discretion of the user, for example a community development funding agency, weights could be assigned based on the individual goals, strategies, and priorities of the particular organization. The weighting system was developed to adjust the scoring to emphasize that some factors take precedent over others. The table below recommends a series of weights for the Strategic Framework. Again, this system is flexible in that each user may select the appropriate weights based upon their strategic priorities.

Scores for each criterion, then, will be multiplied by the appropriate weighting factor to differentiate between those characteristics which are more and less important to consider in the analysis.

The weighted scores will be totaled for each area to reveal those neighborhoods which are most in need of assistance and which represent the best opportunities for investment to make an impact. It will be recommended that these neighborhoods be prioritized for investment.

#### *2.4 Notes on Methodology*

It is important to note that the results of the Strategic Framework are not intended to be used as the sole determination for establishing priorities for neighborhood investment decisions. While an important and comprehensive tool for organizing a wide range of data, there are numerous best practices, strategic plans, and other guidance that should also be considered as important components of any neighborhood planning exercise.

One of the flexible aspects of the Strategic Framework is that it could also be used on a smaller geographic scale to compare specific neighborhoods – even to the level of census blocks - within the larger target areas.

It is recommended that the Strategic Framework be incorporated into the decision-making process as soon as possible. Assembling the criteria measures in one easy-to-use table provides an organized, uniform format for a wide breadth of neighborhood conditions data.

Representatives from each target area will then be able to see how their area scores in relation to the other areas of the community. Action on completing the Strategic Framework will also enable the data collected in Year 1 to establish an early baseline by which future years may be measured.

### **3. Strategic Framework Assessment Criteria Explained**

These criteria were derived from conversations with stakeholders representing Community Development Corporations (CDCs), banks, foundations, local government agencies, the faith community, universities, and others as well as from information contained within CBANA's Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis, completed as part of this study. The criteria are meant to be indicators of a number of economic, demographic, housing, and quality of life patterns which individually provide insight into the well-being of an area, but when examined together, show the richness and complexity of some of the opportunities and challenges which impact the continued growth of Memphis neighborhoods. Assessing these neighborhoods enables us to spot trends and identify where interventions and additional resources are needed, as well as recognize local assets and the accomplishments of the community development industry, where good work has influenced positive change.

The Strategic Framework criteria (presented in totality on page 2) are described in greater detail below.

#### *3.1 Opportunities Assessment Criteria*

Descriptions are presented for the following opportunities assessment criteria:

1. Strategies for improvement in place
2. Strategic location
3. Community engagement and outreach
4. Available land / infrastructure
5. Historic levels of investment
6. Number of small business owners

## 1. Strategies for Improvement in Place

### Description

This criterion looks at the readiness of a community to initiate development projects: Has the neighborhood compiled a strategy to delineate where improvements need to be made, and have they drafted action plans to guide development? Knowing which neighborhoods are able to put investment to use in a meaningful way from the start will help ensure resources will be well spent.

On the other hand, gaining an understanding of those areas which are further behind in their planning processes can help channel assistance to organizations which might need additional capacity-building, training, and funding.

### Potential Data Source

This criterion is somewhat subjective and the data assigned in the sample Strategic Framework are based on the City of Memphis neighborhood target areas, review of existing plans and programs by neighborhood, and from stakeholder interviews.

### Score Explanation

5 = Very High Degree of Strategies in Place

4 = Good Degree of Strategies in Place

3 = Moderate Degree of Strategies in Place

2 = Low Degree of Strategies in Place

1 = Very Limited or No Strategies in Place

## 2. Strategic Location

### Description

Assessing strategic location provides context to compare which neighborhoods are at a particular advantage (or disadvantage) which might help (or hinder) their future development, by virtue of their location in the larger metropolitan area.

### Potential Data Source

Geographic Information System (GIS) maps were used to analyze strategic location. The items included in this mapping exercise are as follows:

- *Proximity to neighborhoods of rapid change, i.e. those on the upswing or decline.* This can signal either a warning that intervention may be needed to stave off a further downturn or highlight an opportunity to build on positive momentum generated in an adjacent area.
- *Proximity to major development projects in the pipeline,* which can also be built upon.
- *Location along key corridors,* which will make interventions visible to show work is being accomplished and serve as models for further change.
- Proximity to:
  - Existing transportation investments, such as transit, highways and pedestrian.
  - Employment centers, such as downtown, midtown, medical area, and airport.
  - Historic, cultural, and tourism facilities.
  - Colleges and universities.

### Score Explanation

- 5 = Outstanding Location, High Proximity, Revitalized
- 4 = Good Location, Area Experiencing Revitalization
- 3 = Average Location, Near Areas Experiencing Revitalization
- 2 = Poor Location, Average Proximity, Area Experiencing Some Revitalization
- 1 = Poor Location, Low Proximity, Not Experiencing Revitalization

### **3. Community Engagement and Outreach**

#### Description

The strength of neighborhood and social networks is directly related to quality of life and community amenities in Memphis and Shelby County. Measuring the number of opportunities for engagement and level of community involvement, therefore, provides an indication of the socio-economic health of an area. This criterion can be measured by looking at the number and strength of Community Development Corporations, Neighborhood Associations, and civic clubs, as well as popularity of neighborhood events, festivals, and recreation facilities.

#### Potential Data Source

This criterion is somewhat subjective and the data assigned in the sample Strategic Framework were gathered from rosters of CDC's and neighborhood organizations, event listings and from stakeholder interviews.

#### Score Explanation

- 5 = Very High Level of Engagement and Outreach
- 4 = Good Level of Engagement and Outreach
- 3 = Moderate Level of Engagement and Outreach
- 2 = Low Level of Engagement and Outreach
- 1 = Very Low or No Engagement and Outreach

### **4. Available Land / Infrastructure**

#### Description

Development projects of a sizeable scale can only be implemented if land is available to build on and the appropriate infrastructure (such as roads, sewer, water, and electricity) is in place to support growth. Having either greenfield or brownfield space can be seen as a major opportunity for constructing housing, commercial, or mixed-use developments, which, if done right, can often be catalysts for change in neighborhood areas. Within a built-out urban community, these larger, well-located tracts are usually not readily available.

#### Potential Data Source

Geographic Information System (GIS) maps were used to analyze larger vacant tracts throughout the study areas. Although the analysis examined any tract larger than 10 acres, the GIS maps present a range of categories by acreage (10-15, 15-30, 30-50, 50+ acres) in order to visualize potential large scale development or conservation sites. Efforts were made to remove land that was owned by the State of Tennessee, the City of Memphis, or Shelby County so as to avoid conflict with parkland or state forest. These maps are incorporated as attachments for reference.

#### Score Explanation

- 5 = 30 or more large tracts
- 4 = Between 20 and 29 large tracts
- 3 = Between 10 and 19 large tracts
- 2 = Between 1 and 9 large tracts
- 1 = No large tracts available

## **5. Historic Levels of Investment**

### Description

Funding patterns were examined through studying charitable institutions' 990 Forms and CAPER reports from the City to understand the levels of investment each neighborhood has attracted. This criterion also highlights those areas which have consistently been overlooked but may be in need of assistance. As part of the overall evaluation, this factor may influence recommendations for the distribution of funding in the future.

### Potential Data Source

Neighborhood Redevelopment Funding Report, data presented for the years 1998 through 2006.

### Score Explanation

- 5 = \$4,000,000 and above
- 4 = Between \$2,500,000 and \$3,999,999
- 3 = Between \$1,500,000 – \$2,499,999
- 2 = Between \$100,000 and \$1,499,999
- 1 = Below \$99,999

## **6. Number of Small Business Owners**

### Description

Memphis recorded a net loss of 1,362 businesses from 1998 to 2003, according to the CBANA report, although a modest increase of around 300 new businesses was expected between 2003 and 2006. More than likely, many of the small businesses in Memphis were a part of this trend. Because small business owners represent local ingenuity and drive, recycle the money they earn back into the neighborhoods, and provide job opportunities for neighborhood residents, they are a good marker of stability and a positive force in the community.

### Potential Data Source

Within the timeframe of this study, the specific data necessary to complete the measurement for this criterion was unable to be secured. The Minority Business Council was identified as a source as well as the Chamber of Commerce.

### Score Explanation

- 5 = High Number of Small Businesses
- 4 = Above Average Number of Small Businesses
- 3 = Average Number of Small Businesses
- 2 = Below Average Number of Small Businesses
- 1 = Very Few Small Businesses

### **3.2 Needs Assessment Criteria**

Descriptions are presented for the following needs assessment criteria:

7. Concentration of low-income rental housing
8. Number of absentee landlords
9. Homeownership rate vs. rental rate
10. Property values
11. Condition of housing stock
12. Vacant lots and properties
13. Economic conditions (income and labor force participation)
14. Commercial corridor conditions
15. Crime rate
16. School performance

#### **7. Concentration of Low-income Rental Housing**

##### Description

Pockets of low-income rental housing and Section 8 vouchers signal the need for increased site-based community services and for more decent rental housing options. These factors highlight the need to target resources while increasing services, neighborhood stability and reinvestment, and beginning to assist in the transition of the residents in these units to homeownership.

##### Potential Data Source

Two sources of data were used for this criterion. First, CBANA Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis was used as a source, extrapolated from zip codes. Second, Geographic Information System (GIS) maps were used to analyze the locations of non-owner occupied units by target neighborhood.

##### Score Explanation

- 5 = Very High Density of Section 8 Vouchers and/or More than 7,000 Rental Units
- 4 = High Density of Section 8 Vouchers and/or Between 4,000 and 6,999 Rental Units
- 3 = Moderate Density of Section 8 Vouchers and/or Between 2,500 and 3,999 Rental Units
- 2 = Low Density of Section 8 Vouchers and/or Between 1,000 and 2,499 Rental Units
- 1 = Very Low Density of Section 8 Vouchers and/or Less than 999 Rental Units

#### **8. Number of Absentee Landlords**

##### Description

Absentee landlords own and rent out property in an area, yet do not live in the local area. Because they do not have a personal stake in the neighborhood beyond collecting the rent, they do not recycle money earned into the area and frequently do little to help improve the community. In worst case scenarios, absentee landlords can actually contribute to a neighborhood's decline if they do not maintain their property. When problems arise, absentee landlords are often difficult to contact or are unresponsive and can therefore be looked upon as barriers to redevelopment. Assessing the number of absentee landlords in an area can therefore indicate potential areas of concern.

##### Potential Data Source

Within the timeframe of this study, the specific data necessary to complete the measurement for this criterion was unable to be secured. The Shelby County Assessor of Property is the primary data source with CBANA as another strong resource for this information.

#### Score Explanation

- 5 = 25% or more of Properties Owned by Absentee Landlords
- 4 = Between 15% and 25% of Properties Owned by Absentee Landlords
- 3 = Between 10% and 15% of Properties Owned by Absentee Landlords
- 2 = Between 5% and 10% of Properties Owned by Absentee Landlords
- 1 = Less than 5% of Properties Owned by Absentee Landlords

### **9. Homeownership Rate vs. Rental Rate**

#### Description

Evaluating this measure underscores the relative stability of an area, as homeowners tend to be less transient and willing to invest in their areas. Tracking homeownership versus rental rates will therefore help pinpoint those neighborhoods where residents may be financially stretched and therefore need additional assistance in the form of services or financial counseling. However, there needs to be consideration of the balance between the goals of increasing home ownership with the relationship to the sub-prime lending strategies of recent years. For Memphis on a citywide basis, of the occupied housing units in 2000, 56% were owner-occupied and 44% renter-occupied. This ratio was used as the approximate midpoint of the scoring for this criterion.

#### Potential Data Source

Census data from 2000 for housing tenure by zip code was used as the primary data source. CBANA Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis was also used as a reference, extrapolated from zip codes.

#### Score Explanation

- 5 = Below 40% owner-occupied
- 4 = Between 40% and 50% owner-occupied
- 3 = Between 50% and 60% owner-occupied
- 2 = Between 60% and 70% owner-occupied
- 1 = Above 70% owner-occupied

### **10. Property Values**

#### Description

Since 1995, property values have increased only about 25% in Memphis, according to the CBANA report, compared to more than 200% nationally. Additionally, sales prices dropped from 2007 to 2008 by 12%, exacerbated by the current mortgage crisis.

Looking at property values as part of the Strategic Framework analysis can provide insight into how neighborhoods are performing relative to each other as well as to the wider metro area and the country, as higher property values are an indicator of the wealth of an area.

#### Potential Data Source

CBANA Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis (Domain II Appendix, II.1, Housing Type, Tax Assessments & Average Sales Price by Zip Code) was used as the source of property value data, extrapolated from zip codes. The Memphis Area Association of Realtors would be a good source of updated sales data by Census Tract.

### Score Explanation

- 5 = Below \$44,999
- 4 = Between \$45,000 and \$64,999
- 3 = Between \$65,000 and \$84,999
- 2 = Between \$85,000 and \$149,999
- 1 = \$150,000 and above

## **11. Condition of Housing Stock**

### Description

The majority (84%) of housing in Memphis was constructed post-war (after 1950) and was not “built to last,” according to work done by CBANA. The remaining 16% of housing stock predates 1950 and varies in condition, depending to a large extent on the relative wealth of the neighborhoods in which it is found. The state of housing in an area can either lift community pride or diminish it, and neglect and blight can lead to increased crime or the perception thereof. Surveying the condition of housing stock, such as through the “Neighborhood by Neighbor” initiative, will show how areas of newer and older construction are faring and pinpoint neighborhoods in need of investment.

### Potential Data Source

CBANA Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis. Also, once completed, the “Neighborhood by Neighbor” survey will have recent, comprehensive data for this criterion.

### Score Explanation

- 5 = Very Poor Housing Conditions, Very High Number of Problem Properties
- 4 = Poor Housing Conditions, Moderate Number of Problem Properties
- 3 = Average Housing Conditions, Moderate Number of Problem Properties
- 2 = Fair Housing Conditions, Few Problem Properties
- 1 = Good Housing Conditions, Very Few Problem Properties

## **12. Vacant Lots and Properties**

### Description

Vacant properties and vacant lots are being tracked throughout Memphis through the “Neighborhood by Neighbor” program. It is important to recognize where these lots and properties exist as persistent vacancies have the effect of undermining wealth-building in areas. This can contribute to a transition from moderate income to high-poverty neighborhoods. Vacant lots and properties can also represent opportunities for the development of infill housing, green space, and other amenities, particularly if they are contiguous. These potential opportunities are captured to a degree through assessing the “available land and infrastructure” category in the opportunities section of the Strategic Framework, although this measurement tracks the availability of large parcels. Another category measuring the finer grain of vacant lots and properties could be added to the opportunities analysis if desired by individual users.

### Potential Data Source

Geographic Information System (GIS) maps were used to analyze Shelby County Assessor of Property data the locations of vacant single-family homes and lots by target neighborhood. Once completed, the “Neighborhood by Neighbor” survey will have recent, comprehensive data for this criterion.

### Score Explanation

- 5 = 2,000 or more Vacant Lots and Properties (mostly not contiguous)
- 4 = Between 1,400 and 1,999 Vacant Lots and Properties (mostly not contiguous)
- 3 = Between 800 and 1,399 Vacant Lots and Properties (mostly not contiguous)
- 2 = Between 200 and 799 Vacant Lots and Properties (mostly not contiguous)
- 1 = Less than 200 Vacant Lots and Properties (mostly not contiguous)

## **13. Economic Conditions (Income and Labor Force Participation)**

### Description

Measuring economic conditions by examining income and labor force participation will give insight into the rate of poverty that challenges Memphis neighborhoods. From 2000 to 2006, the poverty rate in the city of Memphis has increased from 20.6% to 23.5% (or 157,662 people), according to the CBANA report. Linked to poverty are unemployment rates. In 2006, the unemployment rate for Memphis was 5.7%, higher than the national rate of 4.6% the same year.

The CBANA report found that “labor force participation in Memphis is lower than the national average and has trended downward in recent years” due to high rates of disability in the city and “discouraged workers” perhaps participating in the informal economy. Those who are able to work but are not counted in unemployment figures must be kept in mind when estimating education and workforce investment needs. Again according to CBANA, “the unemployment rate probably tells us less about neighborhood level economics than does the rate of on participation in the labor force.” This will therefore be an important characteristic to assess to identify those areas where interventions which help tackle poverty and develop the workforce are most needed.

### Potential Data Source

CBANA Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis

### Score Explanation

- 5 = Very High Percentage Not in Labor Force, Very High Poverty Rate
- 4 = High Percentage Not in Labor Force, High Poverty Rate
- 3 = Moderate Percentage Not in Labor Force, Moderate Poverty Rate
- 2 = Moderate Participation in Labor Force, Low Poverty Rate
- 1 = High Participation in Labor Force, Very Low Poverty Rate

## **14. Commercial Corridor Conditions**

### Description

“Both Memphis and Shelby County have experienced a net loss of establishments (businesses of all types) and jobs, with a slight comeback still more recently,” CBANA reports. Retail continues to shift eastward along the Winchester corridor, resulting in a “geographic re-centering of employment opportunities and the virtual abandonment of obsolete retail centers, including significant concentration of vacant strip centers and big box retail ‘ghost boxes’ in the Hickory Hill (Winchester) and Raleigh (Austin Peay) areas.” Additionally, CBANA notes that more traditional neighborhood retail is nearly obsolete and suffers from blight.

One important measure of the health of a community is to examine conditions along traditional commercial corridors in local neighborhoods. Vibrant neighborhoods enjoy an accompanying retail and service market. This assessment will not only identify failing areas in need of assistance

but also recognize those areas which are surviving and thriving, from which lessons can be learned.

#### Potential Data Source

The data for this criterion is aggregated from many sources and includes field observations as an important element. The specific elements include commercial occupancy/vacancy rates, condition of the commercial building stock, and the aesthetic conditions of the surrounding roads, parking lots and sidewalks. Also important is whether an area that was once abandoned has experienced revitalization, or is on the verge of revitalization.

#### Score Explanation

- 5 = Poor Condition, Very High Vacancy
- 4 = Poor Condition, Average Occupancy
- 3 = Poor Condition, Experiencing Revitalization
- 2 = Average Condition, Average Occupancy
- 1 = Good Condition, High Occupancy

### **15. Crime Rate**

#### Description

Crime is a significant issue in the city of Memphis. Reporting severe spikes from 2005 to 2006, CBANA data describes that although this has recently been curbed, crime rates have not yet been scaled back to their 2005 levels. Most every precinct throughout the city has reported hotspots of criminal activity. In recent years, these hotspots have correlated with high-density apartment complexes.

Highlighting areas which have higher crime rates could help identify where new initiatives need to be started, such as the federal “Weed and Seed” strategy identified in the CBANA report, where law enforcement (weeding) is linked with strategies to integrate local residents into productive labor force (seeding). The “Safeways” partnership developed between the Southeast Memphis CDC and the Memphis Police Department, which focuses on law enforcement and crime prevention in problem precincts, is a model which could be replicated.

Additionally, identifying these areas could be the first step to forming block clubs or Neighborhood Watch groups.

#### Potential Data Source

CBANA Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis was used to measure the number of arrests per census tract.

#### Score Explanation

- 5 = Highest Number of Arrests
- 4 = Significant Number of Arrests
- 3 = Moderate number of Arrests
- 2 = Low Number of Arrests
- 1 = Very Low Number of Arrests

### **16. School Performance**

#### Description

The quality of the educational program offered in an area is a basic element which contributes to neighborhood amenity value. The quality of early childhood programs to public schools is also

linked to economic opportunity and quality of life in neighborhoods. Highlighting poorly performing schools could present opportunities for CDCs to link with partner schools to strengthen social networks and place-based assets, for example by linking at-risk students with neighborhood-based mentors and finding corporate adopters for public schools. Developing these relationships could help community developers understand change in their neighborhoods as well, as schools track data such as mobility of students, which reflects the relative stability of an area.

#### Potential Data Source

Study areas were ranked based on the number of schools within a neighborhood that are on the targeted list for the No Child Left Behind program, provided by the Tennessee Board of Education.

#### Score Explanation

5 = 9 or more schools on target list  
4 = 6 to 8 schools on target list  
3 = 4 to 5 schools on target list  
2 = 2 to 3 schools on target list  
1 = 0 to 1 school on target list

### **3.3 Special Assessment Criteria**

Two (2) special criteria are included in the Strategic Framework: 1) a measure of recent change to highlight the importance of addressing those areas that are rapidly improving or declining, and, 2) the results of the CDC Capacity Assessment Tool to provide insight into CDCs' ability to implement programs for neighborhood revitalization.

## **17. Recent Rapid Change (since 1990)**

### Description

This criterion helps identify neighborhoods in transition, either progressively growing or declining, by examining *trends* in the criteria above. This criterion looks specifically at relevant information since 1990, rather than relying solely on the most recent year's data. With this benchmark, it will be possible to pinpoint areas in need of intervention to either reverse a downward turn or boost positive change. This is particularly important to capture those areas, which may not qualify for traditional community development funding as they do not, from the outset, appear to have the greatest needs as they may be lower scoring target areas.

### Potential Data Source

Two sections of CBANA's Housing and Neighborhoods Baseline Analysis were used to determine a score for this criterion. First, the study area's "Zone" as defined by CBANA was considered. This establishes some relationship between the 1990 and the 2000 Census. In future years, it may be desirable to assign scores based on neighborhoods' movement between Zone 1, Zone 2, Zone 3, and Zone 4 in CBANA categories. For a more specific data point, it is recommended to assign scores based on percentage change for ratio of median census tract income to median county income 1990-2000. In this case, a higher score indicates a more drastic rate of change toward the negative between 1990 and 2000.

### Score Explanation

5 = High Negative Rate of Change

- 4 = Negative Rate of Change
- 3 = Moderate or Negligible Rate of Change
- 2 = Positive Rate of Change
- 1 = High Positive Rate of Change

## **18. CDC Capacity Assessment**

### Description

The Community Development Council, working with an independent consultant, has developed the Capacity Assessment Tool to help evaluate the capacity of local CDCs. Organizations are rated as “forming,” “emerging,” “producing,” or “mature” based on their competency levels. Although assessment is currently voluntary, it is intended that all members of the Community Development Council will be eventually evaluated every two years.

For the purpose of the Strategic Framework, results from the assessment will help show if CDCs in certain neighborhoods are equipped to tackle the complex issues necessary to advance community development in their areas. The outcome of the assessment will therefore be an important consideration when making recommendations for areas where investment should be prioritized. However, because the tool also offers suggestions for improvements for those CDCs which are evaluated, the Strategic Framework analysis can additionally result in recommendations for investment to be channeled to capacity-building in certain areas.

### Potential Data Source

Capacity Assessment Tool

### Score Explanation

Numerical scoring is not used for this criterion. Rather, each organization shall be rated based on their competency levels as:

- Forming
- Emerging
- Producing
- Mature