Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment

Graham Institute Integrated Assessment Report Series Volume III Report 1
About The Reports
The Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment (IA) is the result of a partnership between the University of Michigan (U-M) Graham Sustainability Institute and Focus: HOPE. The IA was developed to support Focus: HOPE’s comprehensive place-based effort known as the HOPE Village Initiative. The Initiative’s goal: by 2031, 100% of residents living in a 100 block area surrounding the Focus: HOPE campus will be educationally well-prepared and economically self-sufficient, and living in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

The IA recognizes that the success of the HOPE Village Initiative is tied to sustainability factors including the physical environment, economic development, community health, and education. Through collaboration with U-M researchers, residents, and Focus: HOPE staff, the IA developed data, tools, and concepts to advance the HOPE Village Initiative. This document is one of six final project reports completed for IA.

This work was made possible with support from the Graham Sustainability Institute, Focus: HOPE, and neighborhood residents.

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• Applied Research and Service by Urban Planning Students in the HOPE Village Initiative Area
• Building a Healthy Community in Detroit: Tracking the Impact of the HOPE Village Initiative Area
• Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space
• Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
• Play & Grounds
• The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park
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**Team**

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Peter McGrath
Introduction

“A tradition of providing summer service to the Focus: HOPE community development department for over a decade.”

Graduate students from the University of Michigan (UM) Urban and Regional Planning Program have maintained a tradition of providing summer service to the Focus: HOPE community development department for over a decade. Funding through the Graham Institute presented an opportunity to continue and expand student service and learning experiences by concentrating on planning-related projects in the HOPE Village Initiative neighborhood during 2012-2013. This project was not designed as a traditional academic research effort, though considerable field research and informal best practices surveying were employed.

Building on the work of previous students and Focus: HOPE staff, the initial project scope looked to address three broad issues/topics:

1. Community asset mapping
2. Linwood Avenue commercial corridor
3. Industrial corridor along Fenkell and Linwood

Projects selected aimed to help increase employment and services, along with improving health and safety conditions associated with vacant buildings and land. We developed these initial topics in collaboration with Focus: HOPE staff, but as often happens in community planning, priorities expand and shift in response to current neighborhood and organizational conditions.

From May through August of 2012, students Stephen
Luongo and Peter McGrath worked onsite at the Focus: HOPE offices with community development staffers Megan Wilbur and Stephanie Johnson-Cobb under the direction of Debbie Fisher. Both students met bi-weekly with Eric Dueweke as UM project lead. Luongo wrapped up some details during September-October 2012, and assisted in the transition to student Eric Huntley in early 2013. Huntley’s service, again based mainly at the Focus: HOPE office, continued through mid-August. Outputs generated by the three students are described below and have been provided directly to Focus: HOPE and made available to the teams involved in the Sustainability and HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment.
Findings

“Good community planning often requires adjustments to meet changing situations.”

Community Asset Map

Our first project for students Luongo and McGrath in 2012 was researching and designing the long-awaited HOPE Village community asset map and brochure, entitled “Community Connections.” This project required collaborating with residents and Focus: HOPE staff outside the department. Students researched the over 140 businesses and organizations listed in the document directory, took appropriate photos and created the map. One important leave-behind product of the brochure process is a spreadsheet of all organizations listed in the directory, so that the database can be easily maintained and updated by staff.

Linwood Avenue

A major focus for planning students’ HVI effort was the Linwood Avenue commercial corridor. A revitalized HOPE Village area could feature Linwood as its “Main Street.” One early step toward achieving this vision was Luongo and McGrath’s work, led by Megan Wilbur of FH, to further organize and get feedback from the Linwood Business Owners Association (LBOA). Extensive field research by the two students enabled them to produce a database of every parcel along Linwood showing land use, zoning and building condition. These data were then mapped using GIS (Geographic Information System) software.

Figure 1  Community Asset Map
Student research also provided the basis for "Linwood: Main Street, Gateway, Catalyst" an extensive 38-page report and master plan detailing current conditions along the avenue, as well as a corridor improvement plan with short-, medium- and long-term recommendations for Focus: HOPE and other stakeholders. Strategies range from branding and property maintenance to streetscape improvements and infill development. The Linwood report contains professional-grade designs and graphics that encourage adoption of its concepts. A powerpoint presentation was created to show report highlights. Design work benefited from collaboration with a volunteer architect recruited from a suburban church partner, as well as coordination with the UM Play + Grounds team.
**Industrial Corridor/Greenway**

Similar to Linwood, we completed field and internet research for every land parcel along Fenkell between the Lodge Freeway and Linwood. Properties along the south side of the street are industrial and adjoin the recently abandoned railroad line. Focus: HOPE and others are exploring the potential for converting the rail line into the Inner Circle Greenway. McGrath and Luongo interviewed greenway experts in Pittsburgh, Milwaukee and Chicago to learn best practices in greenway development. They also met with representatives of the (Detroit) Greenways Coalition and Conner Creek Greenway. Their research culminated in a four-page greenway briefing memo to Focus: HOPE staff.

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**Robeson School Site**

Good community planning often requires adjustments to meet changing situations. In May, 2011 the Paul Robeson Academy, one of the anchors of the HOPE Village neighborhood, experienced a major fire. By early 2012—after the scoping of the Graham projects was complete—Detroit Public Schools made the decision to tear down the fire-damaged historic school structure and offer the property for sale. The two UM urban planning students were tasked with analyzing potential new uses for the property, including an urban recreation center and park with an urban agriculture focus. A four-page illustrated report by Luongo and McGrath titled “More Than a Park” described the possibilities. The two-man team also researched the re-use of similar parcels and presented the results of that research to Focus: HOPE.

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*Figure 5 Robeson School Site*

*Figure 6 Robeson Site Idea*


**Façade Improvement**

Focus: HOPE staffer Megan Wilbur asked McGrath and Luongo to assist with implementation of a federally-funded façade improvement program for businesses along Linwood and Davison avenues. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program administered through the City of Detroit allows business owners working with select nonprofit partners to receive matching funds for approved exterior improvements. Our tenacious tandem contacted business owners, and worked with installation contractors and reviewing paperwork. Luongo also designed a concept awning for a local restaurant. The CDBG work leveraged over $100,000 of new investment in the HOPE Village target area.

**GIS and Grant Writing Support**

One big advantage of having talented UM students onsite each day is the opportunity for staff to “draft” them for assistance with tasks utilizing specific skill sets. As in the Robeson and façade improvement examples, Luongo and McGrath supported FH staff in several smaller ways. Luongo researched and reported on the capabilities of a new open-source GIS software system called QuantumGIS which could prove less complex and certainly less costly than the commonly accepted ArcGIS software. He and McGrath also provided graphic and writing back-up for grant applications being prepared by Focus: HOPE.

**Streetscapes**

The arrival of grad student Eric Huntley in February 2013 coincided with another new opportunity for planning assistance to Focus: HOPE. An opportunity arose to consider streetscape improvements as part of the scheduled repaving of various streets within the HOPE Village boundaries. Huntley was able to use his urban design skills to expand on the Linwood work that Luongo had started in 2012, while also coordinating with design efforts by the Play + Grounds team led by Arquero and Maigret.

![Linwood Streetscape Proposal](image)

**Glazer Property Survey**

The Glazer Elementary School located on 14th Street is a major asset within the HOPE Village. Determined advocacy by neighborhood residents and Focus: HOPE staff prevented the school from closing in 2011, leading to an increased emphasis on stabilizing the surrounding blocks. Many of the homes surrounding the school are vacant and abandoned; some are fire damaged. Finding the owners of those properties and addressing these blighting influences is an important part of this stabilization effort. Huntley researched ownership of those parcels and provided information about their tax status.

Both the property survey and streetscape work were highlighted in graphics created by Huntley for our poster included in the Graham Institute poster display. Huntley also staffed the display area at Parkman Library along with the Focus: HOPE community celebration on July 27.
Davison Traffic Studies

A significant portion of our student’s summer 2013 activity was centered on the need for pedestrian accessibility and safety along busy Davison Avenue. Working with Focus: HOPE volunteer and retired traffic engineer, Dick Beaubien, Huntley researched best practices in pedestrian safety and helped draft detailed memos for the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). He also researched traffic crash data and road safety audits and created multiple maps detailing HVI street conditions. Sources used included publications from the Institute of Traffic Engineers, especially those involving “context sensitive solutions.”

Huntley also organized and staffed a community focus group to solicit ideas from residents and businesses on how to make crossing Davison safer. Another safety effort that benefited from Huntley’s work involved a letter writing advocacy campaign for improved street lighting led by Focus: HOPE. Letters drafted by Huntley were timed to influence the early days of the new Detroit Lighting Authority.
Recommendations

“This project’s applied research and service was designed to be used by Focus: HOPE staff on an ongoing, ‘real-time’ basis.”

This project’s applied research and service was designed to be used by Focus: HOPE staff on an ongoing, “real-time” basis. Each of the projects described above generated a timely report, memo and/or activity that put student research into practice. Research products are stored on the Focus: HOPE server and currently in the Dropbox for the overall Graham project set.

Highlights of the recommendations produced by urban planning student researchers include the following ideas, most of which have already been conveyed to Focus: HOPE staff. Indeed, staff are likely already working on most of these ideas at some level.

Community Asset Map

- Solicit staff and residents’ feedback on usefulness of and needed corrections to the 2012 map.
- Update quarterly, or as needed, the database generated by the UM urban planners.
- Plan now for a revised edition in 2015.

Linwood Avenue

- Concentrate efforts and resources on Linwood as a gateway and catalyst
- Continue support for, and dialogue with, the Linwood Business Owners Association.
• Begin by implementing a streetscape maintenance program.
• Work with LBOA to pursue a branding strategy.
• Pursue traffic calming measures with City of Detroit Department of Public Works.
• Focus on intersection of Oakman/Linwood as a redevelopment hub. First step: removal of parking lot at SE corner.
• Use master plan report by UM planning students as a guide for future activity.

Greenway

• Continue cooperation with Michigan Trails and Greenway Alliance, Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan and other greenway supporters.
• Recognize that development of the Inner Circle Greenway will be a long-term venture.

Robeson Site

• Incorporate generous green space[s] in any new use.
• Consider short-term or “interim” program utilizing a greening strategy.

Streetscapes

• Keep working with the City of Detroit to advocate for new amenities whenever major streets such as Linwood and Oakman are repaved.
• Adapt and make use of designs created by UM urban planning teams. (Also see Play + Grounds.)
• Advocate for inclusion of streetscape improvement guidelines within Detroit Future City implementation documents.

Property Survey

• Prioritize action/new investment for properties near neighborhood anchors or in highly visible locations, e.g. near Glazer School, on commercial streets, corner lots.

Davison Avenue

• Pressure MDOT and City of Detroit traffic engineers for immediate measures to improve pedestrian safety on this dangerous road.
• Work with business owners and residents to mount a campaign for better lighting and pedestrian crossings.
• Consider focusing on the intersection of Linwood and Davison, which has seen many traffic accidents over recent years.

General Recommendations

• Create a marketing or promotional campaign to get the word about the HOPE Village Initiative out to a wider metro area audience.
• Negotiate with University of Michigan units to provide ongoing support for Hope Village Initiative program activities.
• Partner specifically with the Urban and Regional Planning and Undergraduate Research Opportunity programs to provide students for summer assistance to Focus: HOPE’s Community Development Department.

Figure 9 Logo Concepts for Linwood
Building a Healthy Community in Detroit: Tracking the Impact of the HOPE Village Initiative Area

Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment

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The purpose of this study was to establish a set of diverse baseline measures which could potentially be used to track the short and long-term impact of the HOPE Village Initiative (HVI) on the 100-block area surrounding the facilities of Focus: HOPE. We employed both quantitative and qualitative measures, drawn from the fields of urban and medical sociology, microeconomics and public health, to assess actual and potential impact of these projects on the everyday lives of individuals who either reside or spend significant time within the HVI area. Our methods were intended to elicit peoples’ perspectives on the neighborhood, as much as assessment of the actual state of the neighborhood. In sociology and geography, a distinction is often made between space and place: space represents the objective characteristics of an area, in terms of physical features, demographics, or other abstract criteria, while place refers to the associations, meanings, identities, and emotions that may be connected to that space. Perceptions of people in a community may drive their actions as well as their sentiments, and these actions, in turn, have consequences for the physical state of the neighborhood (see Figure 1). In other words, space and place are dynamically related. For example, if individuals read signs of physical decline in the environment around them as indications of a long-term trajectory, this may shape their decisions, and especially their investment of time and resources back into the community. We were therefore interested in both how people living
in the neighborhood saw the neighborhood, as well as what was actually happening at the level of economic and physical conditions.

Keeping in mind that the HVI is only in its beginning phases, our current findings reflect the status of the neighborhood as viewed by a variety of individuals in advance of the initiative’s impact. In addition, many factors cited by participants are not specific to the neighborhood but are experienced across Detroit: generational differences in terms of culture and values, lack of adequate job or shopping opportunities within the neighborhood, the presence of an active illicit drug market that also fuels violence and theft, and so on. We also need to be cautious in interpreting qualitative findings that may represent anomalous perspectives, or may simply reflect the setting of the interviews themselves. However, some clear overarching themes emerged which may merit closer attention and further investigation. In the sections that follow, we detail some of our specific findings, which will provide illustration for these more general points.

While the physical and social decline of the neighborhood was a central theme of our study, participants also consistently referred to physical and social factors that made the area appealing to them. For example, they often described their social connections and relationships within the community, many of which have been formed over decades, as a primary reason for residing or returning there. They likewise referred to recognized institutional assets, including Focus: HOPE, the Parkman Branch of the Detroit Public Library, and various churches within the neighborhood, as having a positive impact on life in the community overall. These tended to be seen as “safe havens” or buffers against the negative factors impacting the community, which kept the area from sliding further into decline. The dynamic tug-of-war between these sets of factors was evident in many of the narrative accounts of neighborhood life.
Introduction

“From our perspective, this implied a positive spillover effect, with specific geographically focused efforts yielding benefits for the population at large.”

In our past research we have largely focused on marginalized populations in the city of Detroit, including active heroin users, former street sex workers, ex-offenders and homeless or “street populations.” In all these previous studies, we have been drawn back to the importance of the local environment in shaping both exposure to risk and likelihood of achieving healthy outcomes and quality of life—what sociologists refer to as “life chances.” We were especially interested in the HOPE Village Initiative (HVI) because it proposed to expand the scope of Focus: HOPE’s efforts to include not only those who were enrolled in specific programs on the Focus: HOPE campus, but eventually all of those who reside within the HOPE Village area. From our perspective, this implied a positive spillover effect, with specific geographically focused efforts yielding benefits for the population at large—including those marginalized individuals who (by definition) are only loosely connected to formalized neighborhood improvement efforts. Our intention, therefore, was to recruit participants from across the target community without using predetermined characteristics (such as age, income, gender, or histories of criminal activity or substance use) as criteria for inclusion or exclusion. We cannot claim that the sample is representative, because the numbers are too small and the selection process was non-random.

According to Fawcett et al., building healthy communities is a process that properly involves the
community as a whole. HVI embraces this holistic approach: “Much like the Harlem Children’s Zone in New York, the HOPE Village Initiative will bring together whatever resources are necessary to transform our community.” According to the HVI website:

The HOPE Village Initiative aims to develop a safe, strong and nurturing neighborhood where children and their families can develop to their full potential. To accomplish that goal, we will offer an interconnected web of opportunities and support, with education at its center. We expect to build a community where people want to live, work and raise a family – and where children have every opportunity to achieve their greatest potential.

The possibility of building more inclusive, resilient and sustainable communities is a major area of emphasis in both urban planning and public health, not to mention the fields of urban sociology and criminal justice, which have long been interested in the question of how communities develop, cohere and self-regulate.

To be healthy, communities must also be safe, and for this reason we were also very interested in local perceptions of risks related to crime and violence. As stated above, our objective in developing this exploratory study was to develop a baseline for a longer-term project that would monitor and describe change within this geographic area and gauge the relationship between HVI efforts and the identities and behaviors of area residents and stakeholders. Through ethnographic interviews, economic profiles, community-based focus groups, participatory photographic projects, and structured inventories of the built environment, our goal was to develop a multi-faceted portrait or snapshot of a community in transition, while also capturing some of the dynamic interaction between individual and environmental factors.

Our recruitment efforts were labor-intensive, involving a combination of targeted and snowball sampling. Over a period of more than a year, from the summer of 2012 through the fall of 2013, we engaged in planned walks throughout the HOPE Village area, meeting people on front porches, sidewalks and street corners and engaging them in conversations. We attended numerous community events and meetings, including but not limited to Focus: HOPE events and described the goals of the research. We recruited participants through specific sites or organizations, such as the Parkman Branch Library, the Village of Oakman Manor, Neighborhood Service Organization, the Oakman Boulevard Block Club Association, and also through more informal social places such as “the tree” on Linwood Avenue. When we had recruited participants from one social or geographic segment of the neighborhood, we moved to another. We were interested in attracting participants of different age groups, though we ended up with a sample that mostly consisted of working-age and older adults in their 40s and 50s. Only three interview participants were under 40 (all male) while another three were over 70. In total, there were 24 males and 17 females. We would have liked to recruit more young women, and residents of some areas, such as the blocks adjacent to Fenkell Avenue, and other groups, such as the Oakman Boulevard Community Association. Time and the size of the sample were limiting factors, and our methods likely skewed our selection towards individuals who were either retired or not formally employed.

Each of the methods that we employed, and an explanation of their intended purpose in the study, is described below:

- Economic questionnaires detailed individual income earned from legitimate and criminal sources, as well as income from earned and transferred or subsidized sources. Expenditures are also profiled to determine gross and relative changes.
- Ethnographic interviews captured individuals’
definitions of the neighborhood boundaries and their descriptions of its key characteristics, as well as their ideas concerning the nature and direction of changes taking place in the neighborhood. In addition, because we also gathered data concerning the daily routines, social networks, income generation and spending patterns, we can relate these more subjective impressions to individuals’ positions or niches within the neighborhood.

- The Irvine-Minnesota Inventory or IMI, carried out by undergraduate students under the supervision of Professor Paul Draus in the Fall of 2012, revealed patterns of housing quality and walkability that are also reflective of the variation in neighborhood.

- Focus groups and Photovoice projects, conducted with neighborhood elders and neighborhood youth, shone light on the subjective views of the neighborhood that are shaped by specific experiences within it.

Recruitment of participants and research efforts were staggered to reduce burden on the community while ensuring sustained involvement of the investigators (see Table 1, below). With the exception of the built environment inventory, the two lead researchers personally carried out all research activities. However, each stage was informed by interaction and dialogue with community residents. Some of our specific findings are shared in the sections below. While these findings represent a spectrum of perspectives on the HVI area, they must be viewed in the context of the methodologies employed. While they offer a glimpse into the daily lives and viewpoints of individuals living and working in the neighborhood, they are also very specifically rooted in terms of their individual experiences and social positions. They may be of value to the HVI as it moves forward and targets its efforts to specific sub-areas and sub-populations.

Table 1 Sample Size And Recruitment Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sample Size (Projected)</th>
<th>Recruitment of Participants</th>
<th>November 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnographic Interviews</td>
<td>20, ongoing through study period</td>
<td>Through community partners, field outreach, and referral</td>
<td>23 completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Social networks/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily routines)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(22 valid)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Profiles</td>
<td>40, ongoing through study period</td>
<td>Through community partners, field outreach, and referral</td>
<td>41 completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>4-6 groups spread over three years, at 0, 6, 12 and 18 months</td>
<td>Through community partners, field outreach, and referral</td>
<td>2 completed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photovoice</td>
<td>2 projects</td>
<td>Through community partners, field outreach, and referral</td>
<td>1 completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spring/Summer 2013, 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Built Environment Inventory</td>
<td>Three waves:</td>
<td>Through community partners and UM students from Urban Sociology service learning course taught by Draus</td>
<td>1 completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2012, 2013, 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

“Economic profiles were gathered through a structured interview often conducted alongside the combined ethnographic/social networks/daily routines interview.”

Economic Profiles

Economic profiles were gathered through a structured interview often conducted alongside the combined ethnographic/social networks/daily routines interview. The profiles were obtained via survey, developed by PI Roddy, which may be administered within about twenty minutes. In total 41 economic interviews (24 males, 17 females) were completed. Demographic data, transportation details, home ownership and residential preference variables are included. Income and expenditure profiles are detailed. Table 2 contains the survey results.

The survey begins with basic demographic variables. The mean age of the respondents is 49 while the average household size is three adults and one child. The most often reported household size is two adults and zero children. This sample presents with 34% of households containing children (n=14 of 41). A 2008 Detroit Kids Data report (DKD) places reports on the relative number of households with children in the 48238 area code. The HOPE Village Initiative neighborhood overlaps with two zip codes: 48238 and 48203. Of the zip codes reported on within Detroit (21) the DKD reports the 48238 zip code as 11th and 48203 as 8th, with 41% and 39% of the reported units housing children under 18 respectively. Many of the HVI initiatives are targeted toward households with children.
Most of the participants who interviewed (68%) have graduated from high school or have a general equivalency development certificate. In fact, while 32% have not graduated from high school, another 32% have some college. The DKD report states that 70% of the population for the 48238 zipcode are high school graduates.5

Table 2 Economic Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean (Mode)</th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>Mean (Mode)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>49 [54]</td>
<td>Public Transportation / Week</td>
<td>2.3 times [0 times]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Household</strong></td>
<td>3 Adults &amp; 1 Child [2 A, 0 C]</td>
<td>Distance Traveled to Work</td>
<td>2 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Distance Traveled to School</td>
<td>0 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>3 College</td>
<td>Distance Traveled to Shop</td>
<td>6 miles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10 Some College</td>
<td>Leave city / week</td>
<td>2 times [0 times]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15 DIP/GED</td>
<td>Why do you leave the city</td>
<td>14 Shop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 10TH Grade+</td>
<td>Why do you live here</td>
<td>22 History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td>34 African American</td>
<td>16 Housing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 White</td>
<td>Would you relocate</td>
<td>33 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Hispanic, NA, 0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employment (household adults, n = 103)</strong></td>
<td>23% F/T</td>
<td>Employment [13]</td>
<td>$1185 [$0]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7% P/T</td>
<td>Food Assistance (27)</td>
<td>$255 [$200]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wage (n=10)</strong></td>
<td>$13/Hour</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>When did you last work?</strong></td>
<td>7 Years Ago</td>
<td>Where</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What minimum wage would you accept?</strong></td>
<td>$7.45/Hour</td>
<td>Employment [13]</td>
<td>$1185 [$0]</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Food Assistance (27)</td>
<td>$255 [$200]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health Insurance</strong></td>
<td>63% Adults</td>
<td>Other (17)</td>
<td>$444 [$0]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>96% Children</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$1143 [$200]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rent or Own</strong></td>
<td>21 Rent Homes</td>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>$302 [$200]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8 Own Homes</td>
<td>Food [43]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12 Neither</td>
<td>Shelter [17]</td>
<td>$400 [$0]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreclosure</strong></td>
<td>11 Foreclosures</td>
<td>Other (34)</td>
<td>$341 [$0]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation</strong></td>
<td>17 Own Cars</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$1141 [$200]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The survey asked the participant the number of household residents and whether they were full time working adults, part time working adults, adult students, student children or working children. This question generated information on the working status of 103 adults in the neighborhood. Of those 103 adults, 23% are working full time (24) and 7% are working part time (7). In addition, the interviewed participants who are working full time (n =10 out of 41) report a mean wage of $13/hr. On average, the remaining 31 participants have been unemployed for 7 years and would accept a wage of $7.45 to begin working again. Although employment rates are low, lack of health insurance is relatively less prevalent. In this sample, children are insured at the rate of 96% and adults are insured at the rate of 63%.

Eight participants (20%) in our sample reported owning their homes and 21 (51%) identified as renters. In 2010, 51% of Detroit residents reported living in owner occupied housing. Participant households with children reported home ownership at a rate of 21%, while Detroit’s overall rate of owner occupancy in households with children is 45%. A full 29% of our participants reported neither renting nor owning their current shelter. Some of those that reported ‘neither own nor rent’ for this category were squatting in abandoned homes while others were staying with relatives, living in co-operatives, or performing care-giving duties in lieu of rent. If homeownership can be viewed as a proxy for vested interest in property caretaking and value, a full 80% of the participants surveyed fall outside of having this vested status. In addition, 11 participants (27%) have experienced the loss of a home through foreclosure.

Several variables regarding transportation and travel are reported. Over 41% of the participants reported owning their own transportation. Mean use of public transportation was 2.3 times per week with 7 participants reporting that they use public transportation 5 times per week or more and 18 participants reporting that they do not use public transportation at all. The mean number of times participants leave the city per week is 2; however, many (n=15) report never leaving the city during the week. The participants most often report leaving the city for the purposes of shopping and visiting relatives. The mean distance traveled for shopping is six miles.

Participants were also asked why they reside in the neighborhood, if they would like to relocate and, if so, where? Residents most often reported that they lived in the neighborhood for historical reasons, for example either the participant or their significant other were raised in the neighborhood. A number of respondents also reported that they lived in the neighborhood due to the affordability of housing. When asked if they would like to relocate, an overwhelming 80% responded yes. Many reported that they would like to leave the state and this desire was often associated with employment opportunities. Of those who wanted to stay in Michigan, nine wanted to continue to reside in the city. Although we did not record the information specifically, often safety was cited as the reason that other city neighborhoods were desirable (the University District was mentioned more than once).

The income profiles for the 41 participants are detailed in Figure 2. Means are reported for each category of income. Although unemployment data was requested, not a single participant reported income from unemployment. Participation rates are often helpful in interpreting income category data. Participation rates are as follows: Employment, 32%; Unemployment, 0%; Food Stamps, 66%; Pension/Social Security, 29%; Family and Friends, 32%; Other income, 41%.

Expenditure profiles for the 41 participants are detailed in Figure 3. The second largest category of expenditure is food, requiring 26% of mean monthly income. This is often reported as identical to the amount identified in income as bridge card revenue.
Several participants also acknowledged using the services of food banks and church/community dinners. Shelter was also a sizeable expense (15% of median income) although it would be labeled as ‘affordable,’ meaning housing costs less than 30% of income. A variety of expenditures are also detailed and transportation reveals itself as sizeable at 8%. Several participants mentioned utilities as burdensome and that the restrictions of the budget plan (essentially on time payments) made participation difficult. Other expenditures, which include a very broad range of expenses from hygiene products to past debts, consume approximately 1/3 of income.

The full time employment rate for our participants was 26%. The average time out of work reported was 7 years which may include respondents who are not seeking employment due to retirement, disability or other reasons. Participants were also asked what wage would be acceptable in order to return to employment. The average acceptable wage was $7.45. In addition, 66% percent of respondents reported participation the bridge card program. The participation rate for Detroit as a city is 41% for citizens within the state of Michigan but outside Detroit, the participation rate is 16.5%.

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Ethnographic Interviews

As noted above, ethnographic interviews were used to explore social contexts of daily life in the HVI area. Interviews were conducted with residents and others familiar with the HVI area, such as those who grew up in the area and those who visit daily [see Table 3]. With very few exceptions, each group and individual had good things to say about the community, especially relating to the quality of long-term relationships and the positive impact of key anchor institutions such as Focus: HOPE and the Parkman Branch of the Detroit Library. On the other hand, there were persistent themes of danger, disorder and decline evident throughout the interviews. In line with our study objectives, we were particularly interested with individuals’ descriptions of the physical environment and its relationship to social relationships and behaviors. Although there were persistent common themes, there were also many variations in the observations that individuals shared. Ethnographic methods are especially suited to teasing out such nuances, while also relating them to broader themes.
Our ethnographic approach requires us to try to understand the meaning that each participant wishes to convey: the state of the neighborhood (and daily life within it) as they see it. The sections below present a broad scan of responses from across the range of interviews. These are categorized into thematic areas that reflect the structure of the qualitative interviews and the questions asked, most of which were open-ended (see Appendix). Some of the responses are edited slightly to conserve space—for example, the Interviewer’s frequent “Mmm-hmm” and “Yeah” responses, which were included in the full transcript, have been largely removed. However, we have tried to preserve the flow and context of the conversation to better represent the ideas being conveyed. (Note: Where the characteristics of the respondents are not described in the text descriptions below, they can be gathered from Table 3). We have intentionally included multiple examples of key themes in order to provide a better sense of the rich detail of the participants’ responses. Finally, it should be noted that Focus: HOPE and the HVI were not the focus of our interviews. Only at the end of the interview did we ask a specific question about the impact of Focus: HOPE in the neighborhood.

Table 3 Ethnographic Sample

*Currently resides outside HOPE Village boundaries, but visits or spends time there regularly and has a long-term association with the area (due to family, employment, etc).
**This participant was recruited at a Focus: HOPE event but we found out that he resided outside the HVI area, did not spend much time within it, and had only been out of prison for 10 days. We therefore decided to exclude his data from the analysis.

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THEME 1: STATE OF NEIGHBORHOOD

Question: How do you describe the community to someone who is not from here?

The quote below, from an African-American woman in her 50s, is fairly representative of participants’ overall ambivalent views of the neighborhood:

Interview 1012

Okay, well, it used to be better than it is—well not—like I say, when I was growing up, but now it’s kind of wow, you know, people are sellin’ drugs and shootin’ and fightin’, you know, and, and gettin’ drunk all the time, but they don’t, you know, they’re peaceful. They don’t bother anybody. They just go their way and, you know, it’s just—it should be better than what it is. You know, people need to just either find them a job or do something constructive with their self. It’s like a little, a lot of young boys, you know (emphasis added).

This passage includes several of the themes that we will discuss below: first, the sense of historical decline (verging on nostalgic); secondly, the issue of behavioral norms; third, the sense of a problematic generational divide. Finally, the emphasis is added on the phrases “they’re peaceful. They don’t bother anybody” because these indicate another common theme—that community residents actually do get along most of the time. While this might seem an obvious point (it is true in most human communities) it emerges across the interviews as a form of compensation for some of the other issues and problems (both social and environmental) that people cite.

The same participant later elaborated on this theme. When asked how she refers to the community, she responded with a laugh that it is simply “ghetto.”

Interview 1012

Interviewer: You consider this to be a ghetto neighborhood here?
Interviewee: Ghetto, yes…But nobody don’t bother nobody. You know, but it’s just ghetto. They, they act like they don’t really care about it too much.

Her response to the follow up question is revealing—on the one hand, people in the neighborhood “don’t bother nobody”, but on the other hand, “they don’t really care about it too much.” These passages provide a sense of the mixed response we received concerning the current status of the neighborhood, in terms of both the physical and social environments. Likewise, a 32 year-old African American man with a history of incarceration described the neighborhood this way:

Interview 1018

[It’s] a neighborhood with potential, even though it don’t show it right now, you know? It’s kind of, you know, the outside of it, you know. Inside, I know this neighborhood. I know its potential. I know it’s good people.

I would say, be careful, because a lot of people—you know, it’s just rough for everybody, you know? I don’t—I—that’s—it’s—it’s—not a tough question. It’s just—ah.
Uh, it’s a good neighborhood. It’s a good neighborhood. You’ve still got your knuckleheads. You’ve got your knuckleheads no matter where you go, you know?

In response to this question, another man described the neighborhood simply as “the hood.” When asked to elaborate, he provided more detail concerning conditions in the neighborhood and the behaviors and activities of some young residents, and contends that the blight on some blocks may be driven by the behaviors of residents on other blocks.

**Interview 1029**

The hood. The hood explains everything.

**Interviewer:** What does that mean though?

**Interviewee:** The hood is abandoned houses. People walkin’ around with their pants saggin’, which really means they have a gun somewhere near by or something for you. If it’s a group of people, most likely three or four and they in a group and you look at them and they don’t say nothin’ to you, but you see them lookin’ at you with a mean look, they probably have somethin’ on them. Most of the time. People don’t usually jump up and do things, cuz it is really, really hot over here. There’s not a day that you don’t hear a fire truck or an ambulance or the police over here...The houses might be nice, but the people in it make the neighborhood how it is. The people that have the nice houses over here are also the people that go in the middle and messes up. There are some nice houses over here that’s okay and people don’t mess with. Why? Because the kids that there make sure that they boys don’t mess up they house.

A 19-year old focus group participant described the neighborhood in more hopeful terms, while also acknowledging some of the stresses that accompanied neighborhood life:

**Focus Group 2, “Q”**

I think that, uh, this neighborhood—as a whole—has retained—has retained its nurturing love for all who’ve grown up in this area, um, as a tight-knit community. Um, there are many, many, um, situations that have went wrong here, you know, leaving the—the message and the image um, of destruction and some chaoticness of will. I think that all in all the right investments into this community will trigger a self-healing process, um, for those who still inhabit the neighborhood and love where they stay.

Because all in all, those who have grown up here, nine times out of ten, know who their neighbors are and look out for one another. And to a certain level bringing a bit more safety or peace of mind—to those who’ve grown up around-around here.

A 67-year old man who had spent much of his life in the neighborhood described the same mixed reality, relating the past identity of the neighborhood to its current condition.

**Interview 1019**

Well, what made the neighborhood what it was, was a great place to raise a family. Because you had a high school, junior high, you know, you can catch a bus or you can walk. And you had the library right here. So, a lot of people came over here to raise
their children, so it became, um, a neighborhood, a family oriented, um, neighbor-
hood. You can, um, um, see your friends, see people, and they look out for you. That
made the neighborhood great. You know, uh, that’s passed. So, you’re—you’re hard
fought to, uh, find something that you can say, well I can lay my hat on that is good,
something good about the neighborhood. You still have pockets of good people— but,
uh, you have a great number of bad people. If you don’t live on—see, I lived over here,
so I know the ins and outs of the neighborhood. It’s not-not violent. You don’t have
out-and-out robberies, but you have break-ins—which you’ll have, you know, people
walking down the street, and— I’m gonna rob you, knock you in the head. You don’t
have that. But generally, people don’t usually go out that—stay out late, you know,
like that.

THEME 2: HEALTH OF NEIGHBORHOOD

Question: Do you consider this to be a healthy neighborhood or a healthy place to live (why or why not)?

The two responses below show the range of answers to this question. For those who said “no”, a common
reason was that they did not consider it a safe neighborhood for children. For those who stated that the neigh-
borhood was a healthy place to live, it was because of the relationships or resources within that community
which perhaps did not exist in others. “The people,” or “the community” were seen as factors offsetting some
of the negative aspects of the neighborhood environment. At the same time, other people in the community
were often cited as contributors to its decline.

Interview 1012

Well, uh, from a scale of one to ten I would say a six...You know, it’s not really bad, but
it’s—could be better.

Interview 1022

No.

Interviewer: Why not?

Interviewee: Because it’s not—it’s not a good place for—for kids. Um, it’s not a place that—that
breed that, you know, that instills, uh, really a pride in you because of the—the blight.
But the people, you know, you know the people. It’s—it’s some good people over here.

Interview 1012

Yeah, I do.

Interviewer: And-and why do you say that? What makes it a healthy place to live?

Interviewee: Because we, um, it’s a community. You know, we talk, visit, watch out for each other.
So the neighbors know what’s goin’ on with my kids, I know what’s goin’ on with their
kids. So it’s like we-we-we, uh, socialize more—over here than we did when I was
back on the other side. It’s like you were off to yourself.
The second response was from a woman who had moved to the Oakman vicinity several years ago, after living for decades on the other side of Dexter Avenue. For her, the cohesiveness of the community compensated for some of the “activities” (as she called them) which she sought to avoid in the larger area. It should be noted that her comments refer to her immediate neighbors, and not to the area as whole.

Positive relations with neighborhoods were clearly central to one’s experience of daily life. Two residents on the eastern side of the HOPE Village Initiative area (Zone 4), who were interviewed together, also responded positively to this question based largely on the relationships that they maintained within it:

**Interviews 1027/1028**

**Respondent 1028:** It’s a healthy neighborhood, and most the people I know are healthy.

**Interviewer:** So why do you say? What, what is it that makes it a healthy place to live?

**Respondent 1028:** Cuz it’s home.

**Respondent 1027:** Just the camaraderie to me.

**Respondent 1028:** Yeah. The roots, yeah.

**Respondent 1027:** Because all the kids call me Grandma.

Another elder resident from the Highland Park section responded to the question this way, connecting his sense of the neighborhood as a healthy place to his physical sense of belonging:

**Interview 1026**

Oh yeah, it’s, it’s the land. That’s, that’s what’s important, it’s the land. Yeah, yeah, if you own the land, you own somethin’. Yeah, you own somethin’. Yeah, no like I said, I’ve been halfway around the world and I always wound up back here.

**THEME 3: SAFE AND RISKY PLACES**

**Question: What spaces or places do you frequent and what spaces do you avoid?**

The daily routines portion of the interview dealt with activities within the neighborhood and individuals’ sense of safety and risk. As the examples below illustrate, there were some places that residents viewed as much more likely to be associated with risk. These included commercial spaces such as busy gas stations and blighted areas with multiple vacant or abandoned buildings, especially when combined with inadequate lighting. Although none of the formal interview questions directly referenced abandonment, it was one of the most frequently cited issues.

**Interview 1012**

**Interviewer:** It’s [Davison Avenue] rough. That’s where the pastor had got robbed at that gas station up there on Linwood and Davison.

**Interviewee:** Okay, so where—so what area would you say you avoid?
I don’t go too much Linwood and Davison, Linwood—all, all of Linwood, period. I don’t, I don’t like that area even though I was baptized at that church right there. But I don’t like the area. It’s kind of rough, dangerous.

**Interview 1018**

**Interviewer:** Are there any places within the neighborhood that you specifically avoid, any areas or places in the neighborhood that you avoid?

**Interviewee:** Not really, but gas stations and stores late at night, you know. If I—like, I tell my buddies or somebody with me, you know, “Do you know what you want?” We going straight in, get what we want, and we leaving straight out. There’s no sense in just sitting around, you know? That’s when trouble happens.

**Interviewer:** So you avoid those places because—

**Interviewee:** I don’t want to get stuck up.

**Interview 1014**

One woman stated that she would avoid walking up blocks with numerous abandoned buildings in them because you don’t know who might be in them. We then followed up on this statement:

**Interviewer:** And that’s something you’ve experienced with abandoned buildings? People being inside them?

**Interviewee:** Oh yeah, yeah. I used to be in them, when I was homeless, so I know there’s many more out there. If I was doing it, following other people doing it, you know, just to stay out the cold. You know what I’m saying? Maybe there could be chairs in there. You end up getting in there. You might find a blanket in another house. So you take that one and you go to the one that you feel the most safest in, and you lay around, trying to stay warm, you know.

**Interview 1021**

**Interviewer:** And what—I mean, what’s the significance of the abandoned houses? I mean, for you—you said the other neighborhood you lived in with your sister had a lotta abandoned houses, and you’ve got ’em in this neighborhood, too. Um, why is that—why does that make a difference?

**Interviewee:** Well, it’s kinda more—it’s more so about eyesore, to me—um, plus, I mean, it can—you know, some blocks, you know, you wanna, you kinda wanna avoid ’em, if there’s too many abandoned houses, you don’t know—what’s gonna happen, especially at nighttime. You don’t know know if somebody gonna run out, or—you know. But, if it’s like my block, Pasadena, it’s only like two or three. So—it’s, you can always consider it safer, you know— as would, like I said, Grand and a couple other streets. You might
These quotes are fairly representative of residents’ concerns about safety in public spaces. The car-jacking of Pastor Marvin Winans⁶ at the corner of Linwood and Davison in 2012 was referenced by multiple participants as a kind of index of the level of danger in that area of the neighborhood. As for abandoned buildings, the concern was twofold—the visual unpleasantness of these “eyesores” was compounded by their potential to attract dangerous activities [more on this below].

On the positive side, residents referred to the Parkman Branch Library, to Oakman Boulevard itself, to various churches, and to Focus: HOPE as places that they value or seek out. The following quotes succinctly sum up many of these more positive elements:

**Interview 1020**

I mean where I’m at right here you got the library, you got Focus: HOPE, you got the churches. So it’s like, you got some people in this general area that will help you; you know what I’m sayin’, if you need help. I miss seein’ church people had come up to people and just give them stuff. You know what I’m saying? So, you know, it’s a—now maybe if we was down in the Dexter area, somewhere in there, that’s a whole different story.

Interestingly enough, the LaSalle/Ford Park was a place that turned up as both a positive space (place that you frequent) and a negative space (place that you avoid). This is illustrated by the following quotes.

**Interview 1013**

Well, I would think, to me, what makes that neighborhood special is actually the park [laughter]. If it wasn’t for the park and the way Focus: HOPE sets it up, I don’t think too many people would actually visit that neighborhood.

Interviewer: What is it about that park? Is that park, is that known outside of the neighborhood? Does that park have a reputation?

Interviewee: I would think so, because they also have a spot over there on Grand. They’re supposed to have a Friends for Life thing over there next week. Actually, it’s like when my family get together. You know, everybody get together, have a good time and go on about your business, yeah.

**Interview 1014**

Interviewer: What kind of things do you—would you say are most sort of memorable about this neighborhood or things that stand out, as far as, like—

Interviewee: The way they try and keep the park up.
They do try and keep the park up from when I first came here. It’s done a lot better. They do—Focus: HOPE does it, I guess.

Okay. You’re talking about the park on, ah—LaSalle. Right by Focus: HOPE.

I would like to see a better, I would like to see a nice park that I can walk right across the street too. You know what I’m sayin’? Instead of walkin’ way back. Because you see that park is cool over there, but then if you, I mean LaSalle just in the summer-time it’s, I don’t know. I don’t know if you guys seen it yesterday, but these people be hangin’—Yeah, yeah some in the street. There’s people right there in the street. Yeah, see I don’t wanna be all around that. You know what I’m saying’?

So it’s—it’s places like the park. I don’t go to that park.

Talkin’ about LaSalle?

Yeah. Because of the little crew of guys that be up there and—every day they drunk and they—they killin’ each other off for nothin’—for no reason, for—bein’ drunk—you know. And I don’t know. I know they don’t value life. They don’t respect the older people. They don’t respect themselves, so they don’t have any respect for nobody else. It’s not about respect, but you know. But it’s places I—I—I—I know everybody, but I don’t—mix in with everybody, you know. You know, so I still speak. I’m no better than. I’m just a blink away from bein’—where they were. But, you know, I just—it’s—it’s a—it’s a whole different atmosphere now really I think.

We should note here that the two “positive” comments originated from people (one man, one woman) who live near LaSalle Park or are closely associated with people who live by the park. The other two responses came from people (one man, one woman) who reside or spend most of their time in another section of the neighborhood. Nevertheless, these examples highlight the importance of such public spaces in shaping one’s experience of a neighborhood.

**THEME 4: CHANGES IN NEIGHBORHOOD**

**Question:** What changes do you see taking place in the community? What changes would you like to see?

This question was intentionally open-ended, allowing participants to express their sense of the direction of change in the neighborhood, the forces or factors influencing that change, and how they would like or hope to see it change. In other words, the question was potentially descriptive, analytic or aspirational, depending on the individual. A 44 year-old white woman, who has lived in the neighborhood for approximately ten years
and describes herself as a “homebody”, discussed the social and physical changes she has seen in that time period. Although none of the formal interview questions directly referenced abandonment, it was one of the most frequently cited issues.

**Interview 1014**

Well, I’ve seen a lot of houses become abandoned. And, as for the crowds, this crowd is still the same, except for the younger crowd’s growing up. In the ten years that I’ve been here, I’ve seen them be more disrespectful, and uh, not, like I said, talk to elders the way my kids would never be allowed to talk to like that. You know, there’s just no way. And they just disrespect the neighborhood. They, the young kids disrespect the, you know, not even just their parents—

**Interviewer:** So how is that different than how it used to be here?

**Interviewee:** Because it used to be where the younger kids, you had the parents with them a lot more. Now, you see these five or six year-olds, there’s a group of them. What parent leaves a five and six year-old to take care of a one year-old, and they’re dragging them to the park with five and six other kids. And they’re none of them over the age of ten. I don’t see that. You know, my kids were never allowed to go nowhere at those ages, without a parent or some kind of major supervision. Not another ten year-old supervising the six year-old, you know, but that’s just me, I guess. I dunno.

**Interviewer:** Okay, and you also mentioned abandoned buildings. Um—

**Interviewee:** There’s a lot more abandoned houses...since I’ve been here, that street used to have all kinds of families living in them houses. And now there might be two families on the whole block. And everything’s abandoned. I’ve known a few people that have gotten shot in a few of them houses.

A 32-year-old African American man recounted his own history with the neighborhood and how it had changed. Here the emphasis is on changes in attitude or mindset:

**Interview 1018**

**Interviewer:** Did you move here then? Did you live here then or you—you became—you visited here, you had family here?

**Interviewee:** No. I actually—we stayed in the Jeffries Projects--my mom and us, but my auntie stayed in their house on Grand.

**Interviewer:** On Grand? Okay.

**Interviewee:** So it was like my mom got the house from her great aunt—- because, you know, we’re all from Mississippi-- but they came up here. You know, she worked at Ford—so that’s how she was able to buy her house. So but like when I was younger, everything was different over here. It looked good. It was nice. Everybody spoke to each other. Now it’s more of a war zone—Everybody out for they self.
However, later in the same interview he also references the physical aspects of decline in terms of the loss of housing:

Interviewer: Changes that I’ve been seeing, uh, just the neighborhood’s going down, you know. Every morning I get tired of looking at these two little vacant houses and the weeds and stuff like that.

Interviewee: And how long—do you know how long those have been vacant? Is that a recent—a relatively recent thing, or—

Interviewer: A couple of years, because that was my [friend’s] house, you know. Somebody burnt it down.

Interviewee: Were they living there when it got burnt, or—

Interviewer: Yeah. I can’t recall...when it got burnt, but, um, it—one thing that’s good about [this street], [this street] tends to stay the same. It’s still holding on. As far as around the neighborhood, just a lot of burnt-up houses. I mean, people losing their houses, and you know, when they’re losing their houses, you know, “If I can’t have it, I don’t want nobody else to have it,” so they tend to burn it up, or, you know, insurance jobs or whatever is going on.

A thread of connection between these two different emphases has to do with changes in attitudes as a reflection of generational turnover in the neighborhood and the loss of a stable home-owning class. The following quotes make this connection explicit:

**Interview 1019**

And I did not come back to the home until after my parents passed. And, um, with the-the neighborhood used to be, man, it used to be a really, really nice neighborhood. And, um, what has happened, um, everybody in my generation and, um, has turned 6-65, and people who own the houses, they just died. And they left the homes to be, uh-uh, left the homes abandoned. And we have more abandoned houses on my block than I’ve ever seen. Every—I got three on my immediate block--and then one, two, three, four, five in my near block. The next point, you got seven. The next block, you got four. And it goes all around the area, because the houses were probably built at the same time. And so, they would deteriorate at the same time. And so, the houses are this—uh, then when they’re—when they’re abandoned and become vandalized, it’s for the—for the scrapers. So the neighborhood is, uh, is not good. Not this surrounding area here. But, you know, there are pockets of people who are still, uh, um, you know, taking care of their property.

**Interview 1023**

Well, it has truly changed since I was, you know, since—we first moved here. We moved here back in 1979 from the south—and um, it was more, um, family orientated when we moved here. And um, now due to the economy, due to, uh, a lot of the seniors are dying out. They’re leaving their homes to their grandchildren, and
they’re not keepin’ up the property, and it’s a lot of drug activity goin’ on—within their neighborhoods. So, which is the area I used to stay in, which is not far from here. We end up moving from over there to over here for safety, really. We wanted to--continue to stay in the neighborhood, but we didn’t want to be a part of that, uh, that lifestyle.

In terms of changes envisioned, some individuals largely foresaw a continuation of current trends—that is, further decline. When asked what changes they would like to see, some had very specific ideas on how to make the neighborhood better. One man offered a concrete way to address the problem of vacant houses being used for drug activity:

**Interview 1021**

If-if you can’t, um, go into [inaudible 0:35:01], you should be able to post a-a sign up, when-when the neighborhood calls and says it’s a dope house. Put a big sign, red, in big letters: this is a-a suspected dope house. And um, and put down, if you don’t, um, stop dealing dope, your house will be re-retaken by the city. And if you take this sign down, it’ll cost you five--$5,000 to take this sign off. If you remove this sign, you know, it’ll take you $5,000. And leave it up there, cuz you-just like roaches. You put a light on a roach, they’ll run. Put a light on—you don’t have to—if you do that way, you don’t have to patrol the house. You don’t have to go by and look at the house. They don’t—they don’t—they don’t respond to landlords, gonna respond to that, if he thinks he’s gonna lose his home. And then you don’t have to need that many police officers, cuz we—that sign will be your police officer. That’s all they have to do about these drug houses.

Another respondent had considered the idea of how to address the problems of blight and unemployment at once.

**Interview 1021**

First of all, I think it-it would be, um, more jobs, of course—but that’s everywhere. And, um, the bandos, you know—board ’em up, tear down, or do something with ’em—especially the grass, you know the grass be super high—some of the lots, you know, vacant lots—and stuff like that. Um, me and another guy, we was trying to fig-ure out how we could probably be a part of that. You know, where we’ll cut the grass, or—trying to figure something out, but I think he was saying he had to go through the city, and, I dunno.

*Interviewee:* I mean, so you were thinking about how you might be—you might be able to work on-on that kinda stuff?

*Interviewer:* Yeah, yeah, trying to figure how, you know, we can get compensated on cutting the grass. We-we out there, we do a lotta stuff just voluntary anyway—in the neighbor-hood.

*Interviewee:* Like what kinds of things?

*Interviewer:* You know, cutting the grass in a lot of the, uh, in the front of those houses that we
These ideas pertained directly to both the physical environment and the behavior of individuals within the neighborhood. Simple things like cutting the grass, boarding up or demolishing buildings, and employing or otherwise occupying youth, were commonly mentioned as urgent needs, and some had noticed recent improvements in these areas:

**Interview 1038**

They need to tear out a lot of these vacant and burnt up looking houses around here, basically.

**Interviewee:** You mentioned earlier the grass being mowed and stuff like that.

**Interviewer:** They—I like—well, a lot of the fields are mowed. You know, I don’t see too many of them tall.

**Interviewee:** Yeah. Is that a change that you noticed recently?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, because a lot of places, like, really over the last couple of years when I first came back to Detroit. A lot of them was all tall and overgrown. Yeah, so it’s getting better.

In terms of anticipated changes, one of the more interesting subthemes in our study had to do with the implications of racial and economic change in the city of Detroit. Although no one used the word “gentrification”, and few reported any influx of more affluent groups, a couple participants commented on this possibility in the not-too-distant future. One man was quite positive about a trend—which he had observed in neighboring areas such as Boston-Edison—towards more racial and economic diversity:

**Interview 1025**

And, see, uh, this one thing—uh, what I like about these type of, uh, surveys, you—you all gonna get some information that will maybe assist. Because even, um uh, with Dick Gregory, hear this on one of his tapes. To understand the psyche of, uh, the average, uh, African American person, when there’re more, um, uh, white people or Caucasian people movin’ into the neighborhood, certain black people will start to correct their negative ways. She said if there are a large amount of poor people in one area, they won’t try to move up the ladder. But if you intermix the, uh, poor and—and rich together, maybe they’ll do that. But when it comes down to certain, um, mentalities, certain African American people—just as that philosophy goes, when they go across Eight Mile they don’t litter, but they’ll litter up their own neighborhood.

Others saw the same potential trend of racial and economic change, but leading to a different result:

**Interviews 1027 & 1028**

**Respondent 1027:** They want it back.

**Respondent 1028:** They comin’ back downtown.

**Respondent 1027:** They do want Detroit back.
Cuz Detroit is one of the most beautiful areas in the United States. Michigan is one of the most beautiful states in the United States. You got water here. You got everything here. Downtown used to be a metropolis. I won’t live to see it, but it’s happenin’. All this, it’s just a vicious circle, goes around in a circle. Then after they get tired of downtown again, if they live long enough, it’ll be just like out here.

While this was not a concern that was commonly voiced, residents’ concerns about redevelopment efforts in general might also shape peoples’ ideas about the HVI.

THEME 5: IMPACT OF FOCUS: HOPE

Questions: What changes in the neighborhood have you seen as a result of Focus: HOPE activities? Has this organization had a direct impact on you or anyone you know? Has it had an impact on the way the neighborhood looks? Has it had an impact or changed the risk or safety of the neighborhood or places within the neighborhood?

In terms of positive impacts in the community, Focus: HOPE and the library were again frequently mentioned before these questions were asked (near the end of the interview). As the following passage shows, the problem of improving the neighborhood physically was seen as inseparable from the issue of social behaviors and individual or group attitudes:

Interview 1022

Interviewee: Can you—you—and you’ve talked—when we began you talked about how the neighborhood had changed—

Interviewer: Number one, is I see Focus: HOPE has done a lot for this neighborhood. They—they really gotten involved in, uh, uh, helping people to help themselves. They’re involved in—in beautifyin’ the neighborhood and [inaudible 47:10]. I think that was a brilliant thing they did puttin’ these trees up and down Linwood. You know, doin’ the little garden project on Linwood. And I see ‘em cleanin’ up streets, boardin’ houses up and stuff like that. And I think that that’s a good thing for the neighborhood. But I don’t know, uh, I don’t—let me see. I don’t see how [pause] that’s gonna bring about a permanent change though as long as some of the people like I’m speakin’ of are still doin’ what they doin’ or in the mindsets that they have. They don’t give a damn about what’s goin’ on. They gonna do what they do, and that’s gonna affect the whole pictures. [Laughter]

One 55-year-old African-American man noted that the most important contribution of Focus: HOPE was in the realm of ideals and values, and specifically its model of interracial collaboration:

Interview 1025

I’m very impressed with Focus: HOPE because, um, uh, from what I’ve seen that, um, Focus: HOPE has done—even with that, um, the logo that they have when they have
the picture of the black hand and the white hand that’s working as a unit together. That type of, uh, unity that needs to come about because—my main, uh, concept of people period, we’re all human. And that’s very childish and kindergartenish for people to try to, uh, rate people by the color of their skin. If you see horses out there running around, you don’t see that uh, they’re fighting each other because the color of their skin. All horses, black, brown, white get along. Why are people gonna be more unintelligent than a horse? You tell me a horse or a dog has more intelligence than a human? [Laugh].

As these examples illustrate, respondents had overwhelmingly positive things to say about Focus: HOPE and its impact on the neighborhood, sometimes going back to the organization’s beginnings and referencing their own relationships with Father Cunningham. However, there were also a few undercurrents of suspicion and criticism concerning the present-day influence and motivations of the organization. Sometimes the suspicion and appreciation were expressed side-by-side, as in this combined interview with a man and a woman, both in their late 70s and life-long residents of the area:

**Interview 1027 & 1028**

**Respondent 1028:** That Focus: HOPE over there is pretty good.

**Respondent 1027:** Focus: HOPE is building.

**Respondent 1028:** Focus: HOPE help the people. That’s Father Cunningham’s thing, Focus: HOPE over there. They help the neighborhood. They help everybody.

**Moderator:** What kind of impact do you, do you—does Focus: HOPE have on you over here?

**Respondent 1028:** Well, he’s helpin’ people. He help people that need it.

**Respondent 1027:** They always help.

**Respondent 1028:** That was kinda the church, but, uh, I don’t know. They buyin’ up all the land.

**Moderator:** So you said they buy up all the land. Is that something that, that you’ve seen take place or that you heard about?

**Respondent 1027:** Yeah, ’cuz—

**Respondent 1028:** I think they got something planned for that area.

**Moderator:** So you think they may have something planned for the neighborhood?

**Respondent 1028:** They always have.

**Respondent 1027:** Oh, they always got somethin’ goin’ on.

**Respondent 1028:** They’ve always had. Ever since they been over there, they’ve had somethin’ planned for this neighborhood.

One 36-year old African-American was especially critical of Focus: HOPE’s lack of attention to the area outside its own campus:
Interview 1030

Really, I—I hate it over here in this area, because Focus: HOPE don’t do nothin’ for this area. Focus: HOPE—if you really care about this area, look at Focus: HOPE. That’s only Focus: HOPE that look good. Focus: HOPE don’t look—look at the area, you know, and I kind of regret even comin’ back in this area, to be honest with you. You know, but I’m in the process where I’m gonna move up out this area, cuz I don’t like it over here no more. You know, like I said, it changed over here. It changed greatly over here. From the time I was comin’ over here when I was a little boy all the way up to now.

At the same time, however, he credited Focus: HOPE with contributing to an enhanced police presence:

Interview 1030

And that’s the only thing I like about this area now, because you see a lot more cops. And then they got a train station right here, just right past Focus: HOPE and they got one right up here on Dexter—past the railroad tracks. So they heavy over here now. That’s the only thing I can say that’s a good thing about over here, but everything else still sucks.

The following passage, from a 59-year-old lifelong resident of the neighborhood, also reveals some ambivalence concerning FH’s relationship to the surrounding community.

Interview 1031

And see, Focus: HOPE, after the riot, Focus: HOPE, they gave Focus: HOPE the money. You see? To make the community better. But Focus: HOPE ended up—you got guys in Southfield come over here to Focus: HOPE—to get skilled trades. And then, once a lot of them peoples get the skilled trades—they go on back to they community. You know? Go onto Ford Motor Company—or goin’ to get they job, you know? But see, Focus: HOPE, they used to pass out food...And then, uh, but that’s when they first started, Focus HOPE. But you know, sometime [sic] when the money come in—see Focus: HOPE done grow. It done got big. So it’s, like, the little people—that they used to look out for in the community, they don’t, you know, it’s, it’s, like, they passed through. You know? So to speak. we used to be able to come up here and, like, if you was a senior citizen and things like that, you could see the doctor. And different stuff like that, you know? 'Cuz this, this was, like, um, this was, like, our community center, Focus: HOPE.

This response suggests that as FH has become more institutionalized, it has lost some of its original connection to the surrounding neighborhood. Later in the interview, however, he noted that the influence of FH does have a beneficial impact on residents, whether or not they participate in programs directly.

Interview 1031

Interviewee:

You know, 'cuz you’ve got, like, say you’ve got a millionaire multi and you got the poor man. So they gonna make sure this property over here— you know, you a tax payer
and everything. And the millionaire multi is—Right, see we ain’t taxpayers like Focus: HOPE is. ’Cuz he a power broker.

Interviewer: But because you’re in there—
Interviewee: In they perimeter. We get a benefit.

It is worth noting these undercurrents of suspicion in the neighborhood because they may affect relationships with particular groups. Each of these four examples expresses a view of Focus: HOPE as representative of a larger power structure, while at the same time acknowledging the roots of the organization in the surrounding community. Based on our findings, this is a minority of the neighborhood population. Nonetheless, we would recommend that such viewpoints be actively engaged when possible.

Collective Efficacy/Social Cohesion Measures

The table below illustrates the most common responses to the battery of questions on Collective Efficacy (CE) and Social Cohesion (SC). The results that stand out here are the high level agreement on the neighborhood as being “close-knit” and the willingness of people to help their neighbors. These results support the findings above in terms of the high levels of social connection that tend to characterize the neighborhood. At the same time, the response to CE question 1, “My neighbors can be counted on to take action if children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner” (Strongly Disagree was the most common response), and SC Question 5, “People in this neighborhood do not share the same values” (Strongly Agree was the most common response), are indicative of the generational/cultural divide that was referenced in many of the interviews.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLECTIVE EFFICACY QUESTIONS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>CE 3</td>
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<td>SC 4</td>
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<td>SC 5</td>
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</table>

SOCIAL COHESION QUESTIONS

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that you “Strongly Agree” and 5 indicating that you “Strongly Disagree”, respond to the following statements:

1. My neighbors can be counted on to take action if children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building.

2. My neighbors can be counted on to take action if children were showing disrespect to an adult.

3. My neighbors can be counted on to take action if a fight broke out in front of their house.

4. My neighbors can be counted on to take action if the fire station closest to home was threatened with budget cuts.

Table 4 | Responses to Collective Efficacy/Social Cohesion Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Mode</th>
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<tr>
<td>SC 5</td>
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</table>
2. This is a close-knit neighborhood
3. People in this neighborhood can be trusted
4. People in this neighborhood generally don’t get along with each other
5. People in this neighborhood do not share the same values.

Inventory of Built Environment

We used the Irvine-Minnesota Inventory (IMI) because it had been field-tested in multiple sites and has been used by both experts and non-experts. The survey was designed to measure features of the built environment that contribute to healthy behaviors such as walking and other forms of physical exercise, while also capturing potential sources of risk such as unrepaired sidewalks and dangerous intersections. What the built environment inventory provides is an objective baseline measure of neighborhood characteristics, especially as they relate to factors limiting or enabling healthy behaviors and social interaction. As HVI efforts may eventually encompass redevelopment of buildings as well as conversion of vacant land to other purposes such as parks and gardens, this constitutes a vital dimension of change.

Table 5 shows results from the survey for four distinct measures (out of the 178 included on the IMI), of which three might be viewed as indicators of community disorder (abandoned homes, graffiti and litter) and one reflects a simple housing feature (prevalence of front porches). While the overall differences are slight and the measure is not finely calibrated, these results do reflect some variability across the four sections of the HVI target area, with Zone 4 showing the highest average score in terms of abandonment, and the lowest score in terms of graffiti, while Zone 1 has a lower overall score on the abandonment index, possibly because of the high percentage of industrial sites which occupy more area within this zone. The abandonment measure does require some degree of judgment on the part of the individuals administering the survey. They were instructed to count structures as “abandoned” only if there were definite indicators, such as boarded up doors and windows or burned out structures. Levels of litter seem relatively low across the neighborhood. The high frequency of front porches might contribute to enhanced community interaction and regulation of behavior.

When combined together, the 100+ variables from the IMI can be utilized to generate scores on 10 dimensions of healthy place characteristics using a tool known as State of Place™, developed by Mariela Alfonso at NYU Polytechnic University. Dr. Alfonso used our IMI results to generate scores for Hope Village, compared to 120 other communities that have been surveyed using the IMI. The results are shown in Figure 5. The figure shows the State of Place Index for the overall neighborhood, broken down into the ten dimensions, with scores normalized so that they go from 0-100%, where 100% represents the total maximum score observed in other neighborhoods.

Figure 5 indicates that the HOPE Village target area falls in the low to medium range on most of the dimensions, except for form and connectivity, where the neighborhood scores higher than most other
neighbourhoods in Dr. Alfonso’s database. This is significant because the top four dimensions (Form, Density, Proximity and Connectivity) are also those which are most difficult and expensive to change. On the other hand, some of the dimensions where the HOPE Village area scores very low, compared to other communities, are Parks & Public Spaces and Recreational Facilities. While these are not necessarily cheap or easy fixes, they do align with some of the possible development projects for the HOPE Village target area, including some of those proposed by other groups involved in this Integrated Assessment (Play & Grounds, Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space, Applied Research and Service by Urban Planning Students in the HOPE Village Initiative Area).

### Table 5: Select Measures from IMI, by Zone

* some/a lot = 3; few = 2; none = 0; NA=8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Abandoned Mode (Mean)</th>
<th>Front Porch Mode (Mean)</th>
<th>Graffiti Mode (Mean)</th>
<th>Litter Mode (Mean)</th>
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<td>3 (2.71)</td>
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<td>2 (1.81)</td>
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### Focus Group Findings

We used focus groups as a form of community conversation, in which ideas flowed in both directions, from the research team to community members, and vice versa. As our overarching theme is the relationship between environmental or neighborhood-level factors and individual outcomes, we framed these discussions around features of the local environ-

![Figure 5 State of Place Index Scores for HOPE Village](Generated by Dr. Mariela Alfonso using IMI data gathered by Urban Sociology Students from UM-Dearborn)

ment that contribute to either enhanced wellbeing or increased risk. We modeled our efforts on the approach used by researchers from the University of Michigan School of Public Health. At this time we have completed two focus groups. One included six residents of the Village of Oakman Manor senior housing facility and the other was conducted at the Parkman Library. Overall, both discussions revealed a “beauty and the beast” (using the words of one neighborhood contact) scenario across the neighborhood.

The first group consisted of seniors, three men and three women, all African American, who had resided at the facility from two years to seven years (it has been open seven years). It was an open-ended discussion about issues related to neighborhood and changes within the neighborhood. We asked them to begin by just saying one or two words that summed up the neighborhood. They began with words like nice, safe, secure, and so on, but the last gentleman, who entered after the conversation had begun, stated the words “appalling” and “sickening” specifically about the level of abandonment in the neighborhood that confronted someone wherever they looked. The conversation proceeded from there, touching on some of the neighborhood’s positive points, such as the redevelopment of the NSO/Bell building and the activities of Focus: HOPE in performing neighborhood upkeep, to the persistence of blight, including...
a vacant lot and two vacant houses that bordered directly on the facility. After the group was over, they asked if we wanted to see the lots they were talking about, as well as their community garden, and so we went out back and I was able to see what they meant and to take some pictures. According to the group, addressing some of these issues through new commercial and housing development (which would also bring in more security) would be the best possible change that could happen in the neighborhood.

The second group included three young men, "Q", "Jeremy" and "Ant" ages 19-20, who were recruited through community contacts. Each of them expressed similar thoughts concerning the challenges that they confront, and the bonds that they share, as youth growing up in a distressed neighborhood. However, they also had many positive things to say about the neighborhood, in terms of relationships between neighbors and the contribution of organizations such as Focus: HOPE. One area of agreement was that more needed to be done to both decrease the sources of negativity (blighted and abandoned buildings, parks, etc.) and increase positive alternatives or “safe havens”, such as recreation centers, educational opportunities, or field trips. One of them, "Q", was given to flights of idealistic oratory. He described the neighborhood as “somewhat peaceful, but on the other side, it can get a little rough depending on what type of people you hangin’ around.” “The right investments in this community will trigger a self-healing process,” he said. “Ant” talked about the neighborhood in terms of blocks and areas and their “representatives.” “Jeremy” said much less than the others, but focused on experiences of individuals with families disrupted by drugs, and how that might shape their decisions.

Photovoice Findings

Photovoice was initially developed to document conditions confronting poor women in rural China, but has since been used to document conditions contributing to violence and substance abuse in Flint, Michigan as well as among homeless shelter residents in Ann Arbor. PI Draus has used photovoice-like methodology in the past, giving cameras to residents of Chicago’s West Side to chronicle and describe neighborhood conditions. For this proposal, photovoice serves several important functions: it provides a means of gauging community perception of the environment; it generates concrete visual data; and it promotes participation, empowerment and ownership of the process.

At the date of this report, we have successfully completed one Photovoice project, with plans to complete two more. Our first Photovoice project developed as a result of a focus group that we conducted with three young African American men (ages 18-19) who had been recruited through a Focus: HOPE event. They were each given one digital camera to use for the span of one week. They were told to simply document places or things within the neighborhood that they felt represented their perspective on life within the community. They were instructed not to put themselves at risk or to take pictures of people (especially children) without express permission. Other than that, the project was left very open-ended. At the end of the week, they returned the cameras and selected ten images to download and discuss. Some examples are included below, using their chosen pseudonyms: “Ant”, “Jeremy”, and “Q.” What the Photovoice project dramatically revealed was how significant the physical landscape and environment of the HVI area was in shaping the perceptions of young people concerning the status of their community, and by extension their own life chances.
“Ant”: This block is just totally, like, destroyed. It is—vegetation is outta control. There’s no houses. There’s no street lights. No stop signs. Nothing. There’s just straight landscaping. [Laughter]… Um, we have a lot of uncontrolled vegetation, it’s like uh, unsafe for anybody to walk up and down the street, because there’s no, no, no—I don’t know. There’s no people on the block. Nobody would see anything if something happened. So that’s not a good place to be.

“Ant”: This is down the street from the first, the picture with all the vegetation. It’s like they dump trash right in the middle, right along the freeway. So you know, where the exits at? It’s like trash in the middle of the exit.

“Jeremy”: Well, to start off, the very first picture I took was the library, because it is the safe—it’s a safe haven. Everybody goes to the library. It’s a real important place to get information and get—and get involved in a lot of positive activities. And it just, it shows life, you know? It’s real nice, and it’s like right in the middle of the community, where you don’t see a lot of nice things at.
Image 4

“Jeremy”: Well, it’s a lot of abandoned houses on there, but I picked these three in particular because the grass is outta control. It’s like trash all over the place in the back—I really didn’t get it in there, but it’s like in the back yards of the places, but some of the bushes are covering it. I don’t think you can see it. I shoulda just got a closer picture, but—yeah. It, it was real—real bad. Like, I wouldn’t even go on this block at night.

Image 5

“Q”: Right here, we’re looking at a seven, seven house space gap, which can be used for anything as far as positive aspects in the neighborhood. It’s a representation of just the vacant spacing...That’s uh, that’s a, that’s a street that’s in the community, surrounded by homes, families and other things.

Image 6

“Q”: And here we have a perfect example of the urban decay. Basically being able to see straight through, straight through the building. The front wall is missing, the front door is missing. The ceilings have been ripped out, torn apart. Bricks and rubble, you know, scatter the area. A basic example of what you would see or what tourists would see, um, driving past. It’s just not a good, healthy, clean look as far as our community goes, being on a main street. [Note: When viewed on Google Earth this building is still locked and intact; formerly a dollar store]
Recommendations

“Our study findings provide support for the implementation of a range of efforts, which we group into three major categories or activity streams: Employment, Place-Making and Peacebuilding.”

As discussed in our introduction, the goal of our study was to provide a descriptive baseline against which the progress of HVI might be measured. Our study was not intended as a programmatic intervention nor was it designed to be prescriptive. The results outlined above might be used to inform a variety of different efforts, and to provide some insight into the perspectives of various groups within the community. We believe that some of the findings merit serious consideration, such as the high percentage of participants who reported an intention to leave the neighborhood. While any conclusions must be tentative, given the relatively small size of our sample and the early stage of the HVI effort, our study findings provide support for the implementation of a range of efforts, which we group into three major categories or activity streams: Employment, Place-Making and Peacebuilding.

Employment

Clearly Focus: HOPE has a long history in terms of employment readiness and job placement programs and a known record of success. To the extent that HVI is able to foster more economic opportunities for those local residents who are marginally or informally employed within the area it will also build a sense of social inclusion. Our interviews suggest
that individuals who need to make money may find employment in the informal market if other alternatives are not available locally. The informal economy provides income, but does not contribute to the city’s tax base, nor does it build the work records of those who participate. Our economic data suggests that the wage does not need to be high for individuals to consider moving to formal employment, but opportunities do need to be accessible.

Place-Making

Continued investment in public spaces outside of the Focus: HOPE campus will broaden areas of perceived safety and inclusivity. Ford/LaSalle Park is one example of a place where Focus: HOPE efforts have already made a noticeable impact, although our findings also indicate that more could be done to establish this as a safe and inclusive space for all residents. Similar focus areas or spaces, such as the Cool Corner Park, the Salsinger Playfield revitalization, and the Ben Hill park revitalization, may open umbrellas of safety and civility throughout the HOPE Village area. By aligning its place-making projects with the Detroit Future City framework, HVI may strategically seek resources based on fulfillment of framework goals. If spaces that are currently associated with risk and danger, such as gas stations, blighted blocks and vacant land, could be transformed into safe, welcoming and interactive spaces, our findings suggest that the aggregate impact on residents would be quite significant.

Likewise, the stabilization of residential neighborhoods through active fostering of legitimate home occupancy, upkeep and ownership, in addition to enhanced board-up and demolition efforts, would contribute greatly to the overall safety and sociability of the neighborhood. As our built environment inventory shows, the neighborhood already has a solid structural framework in terms of form and connectivity. While blight is certainly an issue, the residential density and quality of housing in the HVI area are actually much higher than in other areas of the city, a fact which contributes to some of the inflow of new residents and which may ironically add to the area’s volatility, especially for young men and women.

Peace-Building

In preparing this report, we were drawn to the concept of urban peacebuilding. According to Bjorkdahl (p. 218), “Urban peacebuilding is conceptualized as a transformative strategy, which seeks to transform power relations expressed and represented in the urban landscape.” For Bjorkdahl, this is inseparable from the development of “cosmopolitan spaces of tolerance and civility where a shared civic identity can be developed” (p. 215). This implies that neighborhood redevelopment, difficult as it is, cannot be separated from the even harder work of building and maintaining relationships. Like cities divided by past wars, the landscape of Detroit is still intensely territorialized and infused with past and continuing conflicts. In such settings, peacebuilding needs to be deliberate and continuous. Focus: HOPE’s historical legacy as an organization dedicated to “intelligent and practical action to overcome racism, poverty and injustice” ideally positions it to perform a peacebuilding role by promoting dialogue across boundaries of race, class, geography and generation.

In particular, our interviews suggest that young people navigate a different social environment than older residents, one that is fraught with risk and challenge. Older residents, on the other hand, may see the presence of young people, especially in groups, as a potential threat to their safety and security. To address this, HVI might actively promote intergenerational communication within the local community through its programs and public events. Likewise, if HVI or government, foundation or private partners...
pursue development opportunities, they should be aware of suspicions that may exist concerning the impacts of such projects. Focus: HOPE should continue its practice of sponsoring open discussions with city officials, the newly elected City Council representative, and urban planners. However, while valuable, these distinct forum events may provide limited opportunities to engage with change efforts. Going one step further, HVI might build on the results of this Integrated Assessment with an ongoing participatory mapping process that would provide opportunities for residents to both voice concerns and shape outcomes in a manner that is continuous rather than episodic.

Each of these proposed activity streams builds on Focus: HOPE’s legacy of community involvement and overlaps with the HOPE Village Initiative’s vision of neighborhood transformation. We contend that concrete and measurable progress in each of these areas would have both direct and indirect impacts on community residents. In other words, we would predict that these impacts would be reflected in the perspectives of residents recruited in a manner similar to that which we employed for this study. To the extent that they resemble efforts already planned or underway, we defer to the knowledge of those most directly involved in their design and implementation. We are willing to share or discuss any of our methods and results, in public settings, through planned presentations or informal meetings.
References


Appendices

Appendix A
Instrumentation for the HVI Baseline Study

HVI#____________________ Date____________________

BUILDING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY IN DETROIT:
TRACKING THE IMPACT OF THE HOPE VILLAGE INITIATIVE (HVI)

PROTOCOL AND INSTRUMENTS FOR ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW, INCLUDING DAILY ROUTINES AND
SOCIAL NETWORKS INSTRUMENTS

INTRODUCTION: First of all, I would like to thank you for taking the time to participate in this research interview, and for sharing your thoughts, ideas, knowledge and experiences. We are interested in learning more about daily life within this neighborhood, both in terms of how it has been in the past and how it is today. We are also interested in hearing your thoughts about changes that are taking place in the neighborhood and how they may affect you or others around you. All of your responses are confidential, and though we are tape-recording this discussion, I want you to know that your name or identity will not be connected to the recording, nor will they be shared with anyone.

This interview will cover three main areas: 1) your personal history in the neighborhood and your definition and description of the neighborhood, as you know and experience it; 2) your daily or weekly routines and activities within the neighborhood, including the specific places that you frequent and those you avoid, as well as the personal relationships or associations that you maintain within the neighborhood; and 3) the changes that you have seen in the neighborhood while living here, and those that you observe or foresee taking place now and in the future, as well as their potential effects on you and your life within the neighborhood. In each section, I hope that you will be as open and honest as you can, while also understanding that all your responses are voluntary and confidential: YOUDONTNEEDTETELLMETHINGTHATHOUDONT
WANTTETELLME,ANDNONEOFTHEINFORMATIONTHATYOUGIVEME WILLBECONNECTEDWITH
YOURNAMEINANYWAY. You may also refer to the map at any time to show either the specific locations or the generalized areas that you are referring to.

Once again, the purpose of this interview is for us to get an idea about the neighborhood and peoples’ lives within it, as they experience it on a daily basis, so that we can better understand the impact of changes in the environment (new buildings, abandoned building, empty lots, gardens, churches, schools, streets, businesses, etc.) on peoples’ lives, activities, and identities.

SECTION 1: THE NEIGHBORHOOD

How long have you lived in this neighborhood? Take a minute or two to talk about your life in this neighborhood
and what it means to you. (PROBES: THESE ARE ASKED AS OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS, ALLOWING SPACE TO ELABORATE)

- How would you describe the neighborhood to someone who was not from here?
- What are its most memorable features or characteristics?
- Where does the neighborhood begin and where does it end? (What are the boundaries?)
- What do you call this neighborhood?
- What does it mean to you to be from here? (Are you proud, are you ashamed, are you happy, are you disappointed?).
- Do you consider this to be a healthy neighborhood, or a healthy place to live? Why or why not?
- How would you rate your own health on a scale of 1 to 4 (where 1=Excellent, 2=Good, 3=Fair, and 4=Poor)?

**COLLECTIVE EFFICACY QUESTIONS**

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that you “Strongly Agree” and 5 indicating that you “Strongly Disagree”, respond to the following statements:

- My neighbors be counted on to take action if children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner.
- My neighbors be counted on to take action if children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building.
- My neighbors be counted on to take action if children were showing disrespect to an adult.
- My neighbors be counted on to take action if a fight broke out in front of their house.
- My neighbors be counted on to take action if the fire station closest to home was threatened with budget cuts.

**SOCIAL COHESION QUESTIONS**

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that you “Strongly Agree” and 5 indicating that you “Strongly Disagree”, respond to the following statements:

- People around here are willing to help their neighbors
- This is a close-knit neighborhood
- People in this neighborhood can be trusted
- People in this neighborhood generally don’t get along with each other
- People in this neighborhood do not share the same values.

**SECTION 2: SOCIAL NETWORKS AND DAILY ROUTINES**

In this section of the interview, I would like to learn more about your daily activities and relationships, the things you do every day, the people you see, and the places that you go. You should begin when you got up in the morning, then describe where you go, what you do, how long you stay, and how far you travel to get there. Try to remember the persons you typically see and interact with in each place that you go to during each part
of the day. Identify the gender, ethnicity, the approximate age of each person, and how long you have known him or her. Also identify the nature of your relation; i.e. friend, neighbor, relative, wife, girlfriend. Do not use specific names for people or specific addresses for places. Identify people by numbers, and places by category (home, friend’s home, family’s home workplace, social service agency, bar, street/intersection, park, bus stop, and so on).

What other specific places in the neighborhood do you frequent or go to on a daily or a weekly basis? These can include churches, homes of friends or family members, stores, corners, parks, schools, gyms, clubs, restaurants—any places where you choose to spend time on a regular basis. We are simply interested in getting an honest and accurate picture of your life within the neighborhood, the things you do and the places you go. What areas do you consider to be safe? What areas can you go to without any risk, in what places do you find company, support, recreation or relief? Where do you go to shop, where do you go to eat, and what do you typically eat?

For each person that you identify, you should state the nature of your relationship: Mother/father, spouse/partner, friend, associate, roommate, etc.)

Is A1 male or female? What is the ethnicity of A1? [USE OPTIONS BELOW]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>African American</th>
<th>White/Caucasian</th>
<th>Hispanic/Latino</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>Mixed Race/Biracial</td>
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</table>

How old is A1? (If you do not know the exact age, provide approximate age).
How many years have you known A1?
On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating that you “Strongly Agree” and 5 indicating that you “Strongly Disagree”, respond to the following statement: “This is a person I would trust with something valuable to me.”

**DAILY ROUTINES/SOCIAL NETWORKS**
**TABLE BELOW WILL BE FILLED IN BY INTERVIEWER**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time/Place (WITH ZIP CODE 1=in, 0=out of neighborhood)</th>
<th>Persons</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Ethnicity/Race</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Years known</th>
<th>TRUST (1-5 scale)</th>
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</table>
Please list any other individuals that you consider to be close relations; that is, people you rely on for emotional or financial support, and who you talk to at least every week, and indicate if these individuals reside in (1) or out (0) of the neighborhood.

Next, I would like to ask you what places or areas within the neighborhood that you specifically avoid, because they are dangerous, risky or simply unknown. This can include specific locations, such as certain intersections or blocks, or it can include whole sections or districts. It may also be that some places are safe for you part of the time, but not safe another part of the time—at night, for example.

How often you go outside the neighborhood, and for what reasons or purposes (work, shopping, church, social activities, school, etc.). Would you do these things within the neighborhood if you could? What kinds of things would like to see in your neighborhood? Do you look for reasons to leave your neighborhood, or do you try to avoid leaving it?

**SECTION 3: CHANGES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

Finally, I would like to take a few moments to talk about changes in the neighborhood. How has the neighborhood changed in the time you have lived/worked here? What evidence of change do you perceive in the environment around you RIGHT NOW? What changes would you like to see? What changes would you not like to see? How have/would changes in the environment affect the places we have discussed? (The safe places? The risky places? The places you go to or the places you hang out? The places you avoid? What changes will help or hurt you in particular? What changes in the neighborhood have you seen as a result of Focus HOPE activities? Has this organization had a direct impact on you or anyone you know? Has it had an impact on the way the neighborhood looks? Has it had an impact or changed the risk or safety of the neighborhood or places within the neighborhood?
1. Age ______

2. Education level ______________

3. Race/Ethnicity
   African American
   Caucasian
   Latino/Latina
   Other _______________________

4. How many members reside in your household?  
   ____________ adults
   ____________ children

5. How many members of the household work?  
   ____________ adult full-time
   ____________ adult part-time
   ____________ adult students
   ____________ child students
   ____________ child workers

6. How many of the household members have health insurance?  
   ____________ adults
   ____________ children

7. How many hours do you currently work per week?  
   ____________

8. What is your hourly wage? ____________

9. If you do not currently work, when were you last employed? ________ At what wage? ________

10. Based on your skills and experience, about how much money per hour would you realistically expect to earn if you looked for a job?  
    $__________________________

11. How much money per hour would it take to get you to accept a job (or if you already work, to change jobs)? $______________

12. Do you rent or own your home?  
   o rent
   o own

13. Have you experienced any housing interruptions due to the recent foreclosure crisis? Explain  
    ____________________________________________________________________________

14. Do you own your own transportation?  
   ____________

15. How often do you use public transportation ______/week

16. How far do you typically travel to work? ________/miles
   school? ________/miles
   shopping? ________/miles

17. How often do you leave the city? ________/week

18. What activities do you typically do outside of the city? ________________________________________________________________________

19. Why have you chosen to reside in this neighborhood?  
    ____________________________________________________________________________

20. Would you relocate if it could be done for an affordable price?  
    __________________________
    Where would you go? ________________
21. How much money did you receive from the following sources in the past 30 days?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>$______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>$______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Assistance (food stamps)</td>
<td>$______</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pension/Social Security</td>
<td>$______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Friends</td>
<td>$______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. What percentage of your total income in the past 30 days did you spend on:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shelter</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<td>Clothing</td>
<td>_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>_________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cigarettes</td>
<td>_________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childcare</td>
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<td>Medical Expenses</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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Legal Issues in HOPE Village
Housing Cooperative and Green Space

Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment


Focus: HOPE
Celebrating Diversity Since 1968
About The Reports

The Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment (IA) is the result of a partnership between the University of Michigan (U-M) Graham Sustainability Institute and Focus: HOPE. The IA was developed to support Focus: HOPE’s comprehensive place-based effort known as the HOPE Village Initiative. The Initiative’s goal: by 2031, 100% of residents living in a 100 block area surrounding the Focus: HOPE campus will be educationally well-prepared and economically self-sufficient, and living in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

The IA recognizes that the success of the HOPE Village Initiative is tied to sustainability factors including the physical environment, economic development, community health, and education. Through collaboration with U-M researchers, residents, and Focus: HOPE staff, the IA developed data, tools, and concepts to advance the HOPE Village Initiative. This document is one of six final project reports completed for IA.

This work was made possible with support from the Graham Sustainability Institute, Focus: HOPE, and neighborhood residents.

Reports In This Series

- Applied Research and Service by Urban Planning Students in the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Building a Healthy Community in Detroit: Tracking the Impact of the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space
- Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
- Play & Grounds
- The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park
Executive Summary

“The Community and Economic Development Clinic...provided legal services to various aspects of the HOPE Village Initiative.”

The Community and Economic Development Clinic of the University of Michigan Law School has provided legal services to various aspects of the HOPE Village Initiative over the past approximately 22 months and continues to provide legal assistance to Focus: HOPE and the HOPE Village Initiative. The initial scope of services included research into ownership models, management options and financing for a mutual housing development such as a cooperative; research into the ownership questions that arose with various parcels of land; and research into ownership, transfer, maintenance and liability questions for a proposed greenway in the community. The scope of services was expanded to include researching and drafting the organization’s application for Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) designation in order for the organization to be certified as a CHDO by the relevant governmental agencies.

Throughout the time of the housing project, the Clinic has provided Focus: HOPE with drafts and final versions of various memoranda outlining options for structuring and financing a housing development. The organization is evolving in its plans and strategies for housing development and financing to address larger challenges in the current economic and housing climate in the City of Detroit and surrounding area. Students have researched title questions that arose on several parcels of land, obtained recorded documents (deeds and
mortgages) and have counseled the organization regarding ownership and the possibility of and challenges to acquiring clean title. Students drafted all the organizational documents for the cooperative. Clinic students also drafted the organization’s CHDO application and are awaiting the revision of the application and process in the City of Detroit. Finally, Clinic students built stronger connections for Focus: HOPE with the greenway efforts underway in Detroit and drafted a memorandum of understanding which could be used to begin discussions between Focus: HOPE and the Detroit Greenways Coalition.

Work product included memoranda and drafts of documents.
Introduction

“An initial interview...identified the goals of the organization and the larger context of community goals.”

The University of Michigan Law School’s Community and Economic Development Clinic work with Focus: HOPE grew out of a request from the organization for several pieces of legal assistance related to the HOPE Village Initiative. The initial request had three components. First, Focus: HOPE wanted to explore further the possibility of an abandoned railroad right-of-way in the HOPE Village target area being converted into a greenway. Second, the Clinic has been working with the organization on researching possible structures and financing for a housing cooperative. Lastly, the Clinic assisted Focus: HOPE with issues of identifying the owners of several abandoned and blighting influences.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, Focus: HOPE asked the Clinic to expand the project. The organization wanted to review the potential for a subsidiary to become a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO), a special designation for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development programs. The Clinic agreed to take on this project.

The Clinic began to work with Focus: HOPE in the Winter semester of 2012. During the first semester, the project team consisted of Alicia Alvarez, the Director of the Community and Economic Development Clinic, Priya Baskaran, the Clinical Teaching Fellow in the Clinic, and a team of four students. Two students worked on the greenway project and two other students worked on the cooperative and land
issues. In the summer of 2012, a summer student took over the work of the two projects, supervised by both supervising attorneys. During the 2012-2013 academic year, Alicia Alvarez was on leave and Priya Baskaran supervised the student work on the projects. Gowri Krishna, a visiting professor in the Clinic, handled some of the work on the projects when Priya Baskaran was not available. Several teams of students worked on the projects during the 2012-2013 academic year.

Each student team began working with Focus: HOPE by engaging in an initial interview that identified the goals of the organization and the larger context of community goals and provided more details about what it was hoping to accomplish. The students learned about the organization’s plans to improve housing opportunities in the community, with a strong focus on a model which provides opportunities for residents to build equity in their homes and to increase green space by re-purposing the old railroad right-of-way near the organization’s campus. The student teams then drafted a letter of engagement, identifying the scope of services the Clinic would engage in for each project and revised them based on requests for revisions from the organization. Students working on the greenway project researched greenway projects already taking place in Detroit and around the country. They also researched state and federal laws impacting on their work.

The students working on the cooperative project researched the state statute that controls the creation of housing cooperatives, the consumer cooperative section of the Michigan Nonprofit Act. Students also researched the various ways to structure a cooperative (conventional and limited equity) and government and private financing options. The Clinic researched both conventional financing and special financing available to cooperatives. Clinic students spoke to individuals at these various entities to get additional information on possible financing. Finally, the students researched alternative ways to achieve some of the organization’s goals of building equity for residents, for example looking to land trusts as a way to maintain community control over the assets.

Focus: HOPE asked the Clinic to look at models for addressing maintenance and liability for a greenway project on abandoned railroad tracks behind its campus. Clinic students researched the federal abandonment process and the benefits of the railroad donating the land to entities which might have the capacity to maintain the greenway. Also included were an analysis of various ownership models, the options for maintaining the green space and the risks associated with the various options.

Community input on the concept of a new greenway was sought as part of the Graham Institute block party and through the Law Clinic’s poster which was exhibited at the Parkman Branch of the Detroit Public Library. In general, comments about the greenway concept were very favorable.

The project objectives included impacting the community by promoting opportunities for converting an abandoned rail corridor into green space, reducing blight, providing safe and affordable housing and increasing neighborhood stability.
Findings

“Exploring the feasibility of expanding housing opportunities... in an effort to stabilize the community”

Housing

Focus: HOPE is exploring the feasibility of expanding housing opportunities as part of its HOPE Village Initiative in an effort to stabilize the community. It is reviewing the feasibility of constructing new multi-unit housing and of creating a “scattered site” development consisting of existing single family homes in the community. This new or rehabilitated housing could be of interest to employees of neighborhood nonprofits. Since the financial crisis of 2008 and the related foreclosure crisis, which affected Detroit deeply, few units of subsidized single family housing have been built in Detroit. The market has not existed for the sale of such housing. Developers had difficulty selling homes for the necessary price even considering the subsidies they may have received. Most low or moderate-income housing depends on several layers of financing, involving both private and public funds.

Homeownership not only gives families the stability and security of a place to call home, but it provides the opportunity to accumulate some wealth. Traditionally in the U.S., homeownership has been viewed as a way to accumulate wealth as housing prices were seen as continuously increasing. For many middle class families their house was their primary asset. That has not been the case in all commu-
Coops and Community Land Trusts present similar problems for an organization. First, the entity developing the project would have to finance the purchase and construction or rehabilitation of the housing units. Second, the individual owners would have to purchase (and perhaps finance) their share in the case of the cooperative, or house in the case of the land trust). This is a particular challenge in this project. Normally, a cooperative owner buys his/her share from the cooperative by getting a "share loan" from a bank. This project has two challenges. First, owners may not be able to get a loan from the bank because the properties may not appraise for the amount of the loan. Share loans are often viewed as more difficult than conventional mortgages since many banks are less familiar with cooperative models and may have concerns with the lack of recourse in case of default. In addition, potential owners may not be able to qualify for a bank loan. The challenge for the developer entity is to receive enough subsidies for the project so that share loans are not necessary and carrying charges for the owners are low, comparable to rents that are considered affordable in the neighborhood.

Greenway

Along with several community organizations, the GreenWays Initiative of the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan has been planning and developing a network of greenways. Initially, Clinic students researched the federal railroad abandonment process, liability issues, funding opportunities and best practices in other cities. Studies also found that Conrail still owned some of the parcels of land and was current on its real estate taxes. The Clinic provided Focus: HOPE a memorandum outlining national and Michigan best practices, the railroad abandonment process, liability questions and funding. Previously, Focus: HOPE had participated in some initial planning activities around an
Inner Circle Greenway, working with the Friends of the Inner Circle Greenway – this project would encompass the stretch of abandoned railroad in the HOPE Village Initiative. Around the same time, discussions were under way to create the Detroit Greenway Coalition. Plans were developing for the Inner Circle Greenway with the Coalition being responsible for the construction and maintenance of the greenway and the City owning the greenway, using a model similar to the Dequindre Cut. The Michigan Greenways and Trails Alliance was also in the process of conducting an appraisal of the railway lines. The Clinic reconnected Focus: HOPE to the work happening around the City and the State. The relevant parties met with Focus: HOPE in November, 2012.
Recommendations

The completion of the greenway project awaits the creation of the Detroit Greenway Coalition and the construction of the Inner Circle Greenway. The Clinic has created for Focus: HOPE the starting documents to begin negotiations with the Detroit Greenway Coalition in order to benefit the community and its residents, if the greenway proceeds.

The CHDO application awaits decisions about the future of the City of Detroit Planning Department and the handling of federal funds by the City.

Additional analysis of the feasibility of a cooperative housing development is required – the Clinic’s continued work depends on the results of this feasibility analysis.
Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village

Sustainability and the HOPE Village initiative Integrated Assessment

Graham Institute Integrated Assessment Report Series Volume III Report 4
About The Reports

The Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment (IA) is the result of a partnership between the University of Michigan (U-M) Graham Sustainability Institute and Focus: HOPE. The IA was developed to support Focus: HOPE’s comprehensive place-based effort known as the HOPE Village Initiative. The Initiative’s goal: by 2031, 100% of residents living in a 100 block area surrounding the Focus: HOPE campus will be educationally well-prepared and economically self-sufficient, and living in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

The IA recognizes that the success of the HOPE Village Initiative is tied to sustainability factors including the physical environment, economic development, community health, and education. Through collaboration with U-M researchers, residents, and Focus: HOPE staff, the IA developed data, tools, and concepts to advance the HOPE Village Initiative. This document is one of six final project reports completed for IA.

This work was made possible with support from the Graham Sustainability Institute, Focus: HOPE, and neighborhood residents.

Reports In This Series

• Applied Research and Service by Urban Planning Students in the HOPE Village Initiative Area
• Building a Healthy Community in Detroit: Tracking the Impact of the HOPE Village Initiative Area
• Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space
• Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
• Play & Grounds
• The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park.
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“Participants had a clear understanding that market-based skills were at best a partial and incomplete mapping of the full range of skills that they could offer to the community.”

Mapping Community Economies set out to identify productive activities of HOPE Village Initiative (HVI) area residents that are often neglected or undervalued by the traditional metrics - unemployment, business investment, business startups and educational attainment and - used to evaluate local economic growth. Through the use of in-depth surveys and interviews we were able to collect data on 147 skills comprising 13 skill clusters on a sample of 31 HVI residents.

An additional objective of this project was to build-up local capability within the HVI area to undertake community-based research. To that end a community-based participatory research method was adopted. Members of the HVI neighborhood were selected to join the research team. These community researchers were hired and trained in qualitative research methods and human subjects research principles. The training took place within the HVI neighborhood using training materials created specifically for community residents. The training corresponded to the process for certification in human subject research for the social and behavioral sciences. One benefit of this aspect of the project is that a trained cadre of researchers is now available to assist in carrying out further community-based research.
The results of the skills survey reveal that HVI residents possess a wide range of skills including specific clusters of shared skills. This was especially the case for skills related to social and household reproduction (home maintenance, child and elder care, food preparation, transportation, home construction). These are areas which are necessary for human well-being but often fall outside of the formal market or are sites of undervalued, exploited or contingent low-wage labor.

An especially interesting survey result was that skills are contextualized based on the way in which they are used. There were distinct differences in the skills that residents identified as skills for which they might be hired compared to skills at which they were best or skills that they would be able to teach. This suggests that survey participants had a clear understanding that market-based skills were at best a partial and incomplete mapping of the full range of skills that they could offer to the community.

The recommendations emerging from this project include the need to extend the skills audit to include more HVI residents, especially younger age cohorts. An additional recommendation is to engage community residents who possess similar skills clusters to form interest groups in order to explore the possibilities for combining their talents within a range of possible economic structures including social enterprise, cooperative business and community-owned enterprise. Another recommendation was that the HVI neighborhood consider adopting a local exchange trading system (LETS) or community currency to broaden the opportunities for residents to contribute their skills and talents to the local economy.
Introduction

“The Mapping Communities Economies project focuses broadly on local economic development. In neighborhoods characterized by extensive poverty and long-term unemployment, conventional measures of economic development that focus exclusively on the market economy (paid employment, for-profit businesses) fail to adequately identify the non-market skills, abilities and assets of the community and its residents. So, an overarching goal of the project was to identify the potential for enhancing the social economy of the HVI neighborhood. The social economy extends beyond the traditional market economy and economic structures oriented toward growth, profitability and investor returns. The social economy, by contrast, is characterized by a wide range of economic activities from profit-based social enterprise to the non-profit and not-for-profit provisioning of goods and services.”

At a more concrete level, the goal of this project was to build the capacity of the HOPE Village neighborhood in the areas of community economic development...
and community leadership. The project involved a team of neighborhood residents in a community economy audit to identify the full range of their neighbors’ productive skills and interests as well as community-based assets. This includes mapping the skills of community members and the assets of the community.

By expanding our understanding of the diversity of economic capabilities possessed by residents we hope to develop new, more empowering and sustainable pathways through which participants can recreate their local economy.

Project Objectives

The Mapping Community Economies project fulfills two of the primary objectives of the HVI initiative: Economic Development and Community Leadership and Organization. First, the aim of this research was to identify skills and capabilities, often latent or undervalued, possessed by HVI residents. This knowledge can be used to explore economic development possibilities that utilize the skills uncovered by the survey research. The second purpose of the research project was to develop leadership potential among community residents, particularly the community researchers, that leads to actions to promote community ownership, build social capital and create networks of engaged advocates for neighborhood economic and social development.

Project Methodology

The project broadens the scope of what is to be counted as productive economic activity. In that regard it reflects the analytical perspectives of feminist, and post-structuralist economics. The feminist contribution to this study is found in the rejection of the reliance on traditional metrics (GDP, paid labor) to measure economic well-being. Instead, economic activity is re-cast as provisioning for families and communities through the performance of reproductive household labor (e.g. child care, elder care, cooking, cleaning). The post-structuralist contribution is located in attempts to de-center profit-making, market-based economic activity in order to highlight the diversity of economic practices performed in neighborhoods and families (e.g. community gardens, churches, food pantries).

In addition, the methodology used in this study applies a community-based participatory research (CBPR) model. CBPR is a collaborative research approach in which the division between researcher and research subject is erased. The rationale for this approach lies in a respect for the scientific value of indigenous knowledge. CBPR approach, along with the closely associated participatory research action (PAR) method, acknowledges the rich diversity of lived experiences within neighborhoods and the ability of community residents to co-create, along with the academic researcher, rigorous, meaningful research informed by place and the human scale of the lived environment.

The research was carried out in two phases. First, HVI community residents were recruited. Fliers and notices were placed in the public library, the community laundromat and neighborhood block club newsletters. Thirty-one individuals contacted the PI (Pietykowski) expressing interest in the position. Of those, eleven lived well outside of the HVI neighborhood. During the month of September (2012) sixteen interviews were conducted with community residents. Eight residents were selected to join the research team.

In advance of the recruitment process and in preparation for training the community researchers, IRB approval was requested. This was the first CBPR proposal to go before the UM-Dearborn...
IRB. Therefore extra care was taken on both the part of the PI and the IRB committee to create meaningful and practical mechanisms for designating community members as individual researchers. So the IRB approval process was divided into two phases. Phase 1 approval applied to the recruitment and training of community researchers. For this phase of the process the research ‘subjects’ (the community researchers in training) were exposed to no more than minimal risk. In addition, a waiver of PEERS certification was obtained conditional upon the creation, approval and administration of alternative training modules in human subject research and research ethics.

A training schedule, consisting of two half-day sessions, was formulated and a training manual was created. The manual was approved by UM-Dearborn IRB. The topics covered included:

- Overview of qualitative research principles and objectives
- Research ethics (Belmont Principles)
- Informed consent
- Confidentiality
- Professional and personal integrity
- Risk exposure
- Introduction to qualitative research and research design
- Survey research protocols
- Interview techniques

By training community residents to conduct social and behavioral science research the HVI neighborhood now has a cadre of home-grown community researchers who can continue to participate in community-based research after this particular project has concluded.

Once the training concluded, IRB approval of Phase 2 of the project was requested. In Phase 2 the research subjects now included the neighborhood residents who would participate in the interviews and surveys. In this case, due to the sensitive nature of questions/answers that might reveal participation in the underground/illegal economy the risk level was adjusted to reflect the potential for minor risk to human subjects.

Community researchers’ input was used to revise the interview protocol. This was an iterative process. For instance, the qualitative research consisted of two parts: (a) an open-ended question interview about the economy and the role of the subject in the economy; (b) a skills and community asset survey. Based on community researcher experience the order of the research instrument was changed so that the skills survey preceded the interview. In addition, community researcher input was instrumental in determining the community-based vendor to work with in order to process the human subject incentive program. A $20 gift certificate to Cadillac Hardware was provided to each study participant.

In general, the involvement of community researchers conformed to the following key principles of CBPR (adapted from Israel)⁷:

1. Recognize that the community has an identity, history and legitimacy;
2. Build upon the strengths, assets and resources within the community;
3. Facilitate collaborative, equitable involvement of all partners in all phases of the research;
4. Integrate knowledge and action for mutual benefit of all partners;
5. Promote a co-learning environment that is attentive to social inequalities;
6. Involve a recursive and iterative research process;
7. Disseminate findings and knowledge gained to all partners; and
8. Involves a long-term commitment by all partners.
Findings

“A review of this data reveals that HVI residents possess both a wide range of skills together with clusters of shared skills.”

The data generated by the survey included responses to a skills audit in which residents were asked if they possessed skill in 147 separate tasks. In addition an open-ended survey was also administered. In this portion of the survey residents were asked if there were additional skills they possessed which were not reported. They were asked which skills they were best at, which skills they could use to obtain employment, which skills they would be able to teach and what skills they would like to learn. They were also asked to identify community assets. Finally, an open-ended interview was conducted. This interview focused on the meaning of the economy and their role in it.

A demographic break-down of the 31 participants in the survey reveals that all were African-American with a median age of 55 and a mean age of 57. Forty-six percent were male and fifty-four percent were female. Most of the residents live on or near Oakman Boulevard (Figure 1).

Key Findings

A review of this data reveals that HVI residents possess both a wide range of skills together with clusters of shared skills. This is especially the case in areas of social and household reproduction (home maintenance, child and elder care, food preparation, transportation, home construction). These are areas which are necessary for human provisioning but often fall outside of the formal market or are sites of undervalued, exploited or contingent low-wage labor.\textsuperscript{11,12}

In which specific clusters do a significant number of residents have skills? Of the 31 residents surveyed, we can set a minimum threshold of at least 12 residents (40 percent) in order for a skill to be strongly represented in the sample. We can then calculate the percentage of individual skills within each cluster that meet the 40 percent threshold. The results are presented in Table 1. In addition to the household provisioning skills mentioned above, administrative and supervisory skills, office skills and sales skills are also well-represented by HVI residents.

In the category of “other skills” not identified in the survey residents mentioned social skills and mentoring skills. These interpersonal skills are often overlooked in traditional approaches to human capital development. In addition, specific skills relating to community development and non-profit management - notably community organizing and grant writing - were mentioned. Several forms of artistic expression were also identified by residents in the HVI neighborhood. Finally technical skills relating to engineering and industrial design were also mentioned.
In response to the request to identify their best skills, residents provided an exceptionally wide variety of competencies from project management, organizing and record keeping, to people-skills and parenting to home repairs, art and massage therapy. It’s important to note that this list differs from the list of skills for which residents thought they could be hired. While there is some overlap (e.g. project management) the skills for hire were more specific to a particular industry or set of marketable tasks. This is a useful list, a starting point, for thinking about the stock of labor market skills possessed by HVI residents.

Different still was the list of skills residents felt that they would be able to teach. It’s informative to examine the differences between this list and the skills for hire list. The skills that residents could teach, on the whole, focus much more on personal development and enrichment. This suggests possibilities for creating opportunities for these non-marketable skills to be utilized in the HVI neighborhood. As a general rule, care should be taken to define “skills” broadly and to provide opportunities for residents to choose how and in what capacity they would like to contribute their skills to the community.

Finally the skills residents would like to learn are split between specific trade and business skills (computer, financial, business, skilled trades), on the one hand, and self-improvement, enrichment and recreational skills on the other.

Community Assets Survey Results

The community assets survey comprised thirteen questions asking residents to identify local businesses, neighborhood associations, non-profit groups, religious organizations, health and public safety providers, and educational institutions as well as to identify green space, vacant land and particular portions of the local housing stock that was an asset to the HVI neighborhood.

The social and institutional assets of the community designate sites for the creation and maintenance of financial, human, social and cultural capital [Appendix A Table 3]. But they, in turn, also represent community institutions within which information is shared and community events are discussed. In the case of businesses and business associations, by far the most frequently mentioned business was Cadillac PRO Hardware on Davison near Linwood. This was also the business chosen by the project community researchers to which community members would receive a gift certificate in return for their participation in the study. The Linwood Business Owners’ Association was mentioned by ten percent of the study participants. The remainder of commercial enterprises was a mix of locally owned and national chains. More research would need to be conducted in order to determine why these businesses were perceived to be assets to the community.

In the category of citizen organizations, the Oakman Boulevard Community Association (OBCA) was identified as an asset by 60 percent of the survey participants. Similarly, in the category of cultural events several Focus: HOPE events - the Focus: HOPE walk, concert series, movie night - were among the most frequently cited assets to the community. The Russell Woods concerts also received multiple mentions as did events at the Shrine of the Black Madonna and the OBCA. In light of the high visibility of the OBCA in the HVI neighborhood, it is not surprising that the OBCA newsletter was frequently identified as a community asset.

A total of sixteen different religious institutions were mentioned as community assets. The Church of the Madonna and the Greater Quinn AME church were identified by the majority of survey participants.

Three non-profit community development and social service agencies were by far the leading community assets in the HVI neighborhood. They are Focus:
HOPE, Neighborhood Services Organization (NSO) and Lutheran Child and Family Services (Wellspring Lutheran). In the eyes of HVI residents these are important social service anchor institutions serving the community. In terms of educational resources, the Parkman Library was listed as a community asset by 90 percent of survey participants. Glazier Elementary, Joy Academy and Stewart Elementary were also listed as educational assets.

Community residents identified a large number of parcels and parks that they considered to be neighborhood assets (Table 4). The gardens along Linwood as well as the small parks in and around Focus: HOPE and the plantings along Oakman Boulevard were most frequently identified as assets. In the category of commercial buildings, the former Michigan Bell building (now NSO) and the Focus: HOPE campus were mentioned most frequently as assets. When strictly commercial buildings are identified it’s unclear from the survey results whether the building function, building architecture or some combination of both functional significance and architectural quality contributed most to its perceived asset value.

Finally, the housing stock most often cited as an asset to the community consists of the homes along Oakman Boulevard and Ewald Circle. But even in this category, individual residents identified other blocks of housing that they personally felt were assets (or potential assets) to the HVI neighborhood.

While the sample size was relatively small (n=31), the in-depth quality of the interviews combined with the participation of community researchers who were recruited from the neighborhood and who, in turn, recruited their neighbors to take part in the research project resulted in a rich, fine-grained set of responses that can be used as confirmatory as well as exploratory data to be used for identifying potential partnerships, developing educational initiatives, and providing a local, place-based context for participatory planning and community development projects.
“Each of these recommendations will have a positive impact on social equity in the HVI neighborhood by creating opportunities for members of the community to participate in the local economy.”

**Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1**

The survey data and interviews comprise a stock of local knowledge about the community assets, resident skills, and how residents understand the distinctions between skills available for the market economy and those that can contribute to the wider social economy. The result for the community should be a much richer comprehension of the range of diverse economic practices, with employment in a profit-making enterprise but one of several means to enhance the economic well-being of the community. The recommendation is to utilize this data to explore a range of participatory community-based human and social capital development initiatives.

**Recommendation 2**

Ideally more residents should be included in the survey in order to get a better picture of the skill set of residents in the HVI neighborhood. The demographic profile of the current survey participants is skewed to an older population so it would be especially useful to include more residents in their 20s and 30s in the survey.
Recommendation 3

Based on a more representative survey of HVI residents it would be possible to identify clusters of similar skills that residents possess. A call could then be issued to encourage the formation of interest groups around particular skill clusters, for example cooking and catering; home repair; elder care; project management; or ‘soft’ skills training.

Participants in interest groups, with guidance from a trained facilitator, could then develop a plan for creating an economic organization that is compatible with their vision for a community enterprise. Models of entrepreneurship, principles of cooperative and community-owned businesses could be introduced and discussed.

Recommendation 4

Compatible with Recommendation 3, a local exchange trading system (LETS), community currency or time bank could be established for the purpose of matching skilled residents with community needs.\textsuperscript{15, 16} The objective would be to provide an opportunity for HVI residents to offer their services to each other. In order to avoid the difficulties associated with bartering - directly matching mutually desired needs - a unit of currency can be created. The currency could be valued at the prevailing living wage for an individual.\textsuperscript{17} If a service is estimated to take 2 hours the payment would be made in two units of the community currency. Highly skilled labor could be valued more. This system would require the active participation of locally owned business in honoring payment (or a proportion of payment) for goods and services in community currency. For example, a local hardware store might adopt a policy to accept ¼ of the purchase price in community currency. The owner of the hardware store could use the accumulated community currency to purchase local supplies or hire labor to work in the store. Worker salaries, with the consent of the worker, could be paid in part with community currency.

Impact of Recommendations on Social Equity

Each of these recommendations will have a positive impact on social equity in the HVI neighborhood by creating opportunities for members of the community to participate in the local economy. Underutilized resources in the form of undervalued skills and assets will be (1) identified; (2) connected to a skill cluster and (3) productively engaged to meet tangible community needs.

In addition, by creating local alternatives to goods and services which may currently be ‘imported’ from outside of the neighborhood, local economic development is enhanced by plugging the leakages of money and spending that escape from the local economy.\textsuperscript{18} This is especially the case with the use of community currency since this form of money has a limited geographic range explicitly intended to encourage local spending and re-spending.

Replicability

The skills audit and community assets survey are easily adapted to different communities and different scales of implementation. The open-ended interview, data from which are still being analyzed, is much less scalable given the labor-intensive nature of both the interview itself and the analysis of the qualitative data.

The recommended actions are also replicable so long as there are adequate community-based resources in the form of the organizational capacity necessary to conduct the survey and implement a participatory development plan based on the survey results all the
while keeping the community engaged and in control of the process.

### Ongoing Role of Researchers

The qualitative analysis of the interview data is still ongoing. Moving forward, the Mapping Community Economies project team would be able to assist Focus: HOPE to carry out the implementation phase of the project detailed in the recommendations section of this report. The community researchers, four of whom are still active in the project, may also be available to continue to work on the project.
References


10. McKnight JL, Kretzmann JP. Building Com-


Appendices

Appendix A

Table 1  Skill Reporting by Cluster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill Cluster</th>
<th>Percentage of skills possessed by over 40% of residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child Care</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration And Supervision</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Maintenance</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Work</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Preparation</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building And Construction</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating Equipment And Machinery</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2  Resident Skills Categorized by Type

(Number in parentheses represents the frequency mentioned, if >1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Skills</th>
<th>Art</th>
<th>Counting money</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivational speaking</td>
<td>Art, card making, party decorations</td>
<td>Real estate sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills [3]</td>
<td>Presentation design</td>
<td>Property mgmt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child care</td>
<td>Art teacher</td>
<td>Cooking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>Acting</td>
<td>Cooking - fried chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling/mentoring</td>
<td>Jewelry making</td>
<td>Baking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor education</td>
<td>Sign painter</td>
<td>Blueprint and schematic reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun safety</td>
<td>Art restoration</td>
<td>Installation of engineering systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marksmanship</td>
<td>Designer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant writing</td>
<td>Framing and matting art</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing</td>
<td>Film production, editing, camera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mtg. facilitator</td>
<td>Film production, editing, camera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment: Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
### Best Skills

- Project management (5)
- Problem solving
- Organizing (5)
- Balancing accounts
- Record keeping
- Property mgmt (2)
- Home improvement
- Maintenance
- Home repairs
- Construction
- Carpentry (2)
- Home remodeling (handicap accessibility)
- Painting
- Electrical low voltage installation
- Cleaning
- Christmas lighting
- Interpersonal Skills (4)
- Motivational speaking

### Customer service
- Household mgmt (2)
- Child care (2)
- Parenting (2)
- Teaching/Mentoring
- Gardening (3)
- Cooking (3)
- Food design
- Sewing, Knitting and crocheting (2)
- Auto Repair
- Art
- Dance

### Skills For Hire

- Project management (4)
- Customer service
- Interpersonal skills
- Public speaking
- Sales
- Communication
- Partnership creation
- Motivational speaking
- Activity director
- Events coordinator
- Editor
- Speech writing
- Community organizing
- Working with youth
- Teaching (3)
- Driver Ed
- Household mgmt (2)

### Child care (2)
- Care programming for elderly/disabled
- Computer
- Office skills
- Banking
- Bank teller
- Health care
- Massage therapy
- Property mgmt (2)
- Real estate
- Security
- Moving
- Furniture assembly
- Gardening (2)
- Landscaping

### Sewing/Crocheting
- Cooking/Catering (2)
- Art
- Creative design
- Blueprint and schematic reading
- Truck driving
- Auto repair
- Welding
- Design, install handicap accommodations
- Construction
- Maintenance
- Carpentry (3)
- Painting (3)
- Vinyl installation/siding/roofing
- Home repairs
Skills Can Teach

- Interpersonal skills
- Public and motivational speaking
- Diversity training
- Civic advocacy/organizing
- Partnership creation
- Project management
- Career management
- Dress for success [female]
- Life skills
- Mentoring/values training for men
- Teaching reading
- History
- Creative writing
- Health maintenance for elderly
- Household mgmt
- Child care
- Hair braiding
- Knitting
- Cooking/Culinary Arts
- Home repair
- Property mgmt
- DIY home maintenance
- Maintenance
- Carpentry
- Painting
- Roofing
- Electrical repair
- Electrical work
- Auto repair
- Mechanical repair
- Small machinery operation (e.g. lawn mowers)
- Welding
- Driver Ed
- Marksmanship
- Gun safety
- Self-defense
- Sports fishing
- Archery
- Music
- Painting and drawing
- Public art design and layout
- Fresco painting

Skills Would Like To Learn

- Proposal and grant writing
- Public speaking
- Communication
- Community organizing
- Adoption navigator
- Counseling degree
- Health care mgmt degree
- Business plan creation
- Business skills
- Accounting
- Real estate license
- Electrical
- Electronics
- Computer programming
- Computer software application
- Computer training
- Info technology
- Computer repair
- Web design
- Finish carpentry
- Carpentry
- Masonry
- Home repair
- Plumbing
- Crane operation
- Operate hi-lo
- Machinery operation
- Alternative energy design and installation
- HVAC
- Auto repair
- Bldg trades
- Bus driving
- Driving Commercial Truck CDL
- Fitness
- Rock climbing
- Relaxation techniques
- Dress making
- Knitting
- Professional cooking
- Fruit carving
- Ice sculpting
- Guita
- Piano
- Tango
- Second Language
- Photography
- Leaded glass repair and design
- Make-up artist
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Table 3</strong> Social and Institutional Community Assets</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(number in parentheses represents the frequency mentioned, if &gt;1)</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Associations of businesses or individual businesses:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cadillac Pro Hardware[7]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Linwood Business Owners Assoc [3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rite Aid[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• HP Business Assoc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CVS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Glory supermarket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Simply Casual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• D &amp; L Convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Party store Dexter and Ewald Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dollar General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Al’s Plumbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Kelly’s Windows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Happy’s Pizza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Church’s Chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• McDonalds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wendy’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• White Castle</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural organizations and cultural events in the neighborhood (festivals, concerts, etc.):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE concert series[5]</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE Walk[5]</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE movie night[3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Russell Woods music in park[4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shrine of Black Madonna[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• OBCA Picnic[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• OBCA annual events</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ford Lasalle Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ford Lasalle park community day</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bingo at Church of Madonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Broadstreet Parade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Church of Madonna yard sale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Concert at Ball and Leslie in July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detroit kids fishing derby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detroit Repertory Theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Family on Grand organizes festivals in August</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Flowery Mt. Baptist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE artist gallery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE community festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Khary Frazier festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MLK Program in Churches</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Citizens’ associations/block clubs/senior citizen organizations:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Linwood Davison Lodge Oakman (LLDO) Neighborhood Assoc[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• OBCA Security Patrol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Oakman Manor</td>
</tr>
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<td>• Oakman Manor Activity Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ewald Circle Hopes &amp; Dreams Block Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Russell Woods block club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detroit Area Agency on Aging</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood newsletters, papers, webs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• OBCA Newsletter[18]</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE[4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Be on Lookout website [BOLO][2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 10th precinct newsletter[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• OBCA Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Oakman Manor newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Central Woodward NE newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Linwood Lodge Davison Oakman (LLDO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rainbow PUSH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NAACP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detroit News</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious organizations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Church of Madonna[11]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Greater Quinn AME[6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Muslim Center[3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Nation of Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• St. Gregory[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dexter Ave. Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dexter Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• After Christ Christian Ctr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Greater St. Matthew</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Healing Spring Baptist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hopewell Baptist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Institute of Divine Metaphysical Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Linwood Church of Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Shrine of Black Madonna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Spirit and Truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• St. Luke</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non-profit community development and job training organizations:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE[31]</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NSO[4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lutheran Child Family Services[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Boys and Girls Clubs of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community Lighthouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Greater Quinn AME outreach group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• HP Human Rights Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ManPower 14th &amp; Woodrow Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Meals on Wheels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• MSU extension Stepping Stones outdoor ed. Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public social service agencies:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE[8]</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NSO[5]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lutheran Family Services[4]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detroit 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• DHS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• DMC Petoskey and Davison</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Govt social services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Muslim Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Rafael Johnson men’s mentorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wayne Co. Child Family Services</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library and schools:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Parkman Library [28]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Glazier Elementary[7]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Joy Academy[3]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stewart Elementary[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alternative school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus HOPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gabriel Richard Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• HP Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Northwester HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sampson Weber middle school</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hospitals and health clinics:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• HF Hospital[8]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• DMC[6]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Detroit Medical Clinic on Davison[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dr. Yoo pediatrician[2]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Davison Health Clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hamilton Health Clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• HUDA Clinic, Muslim Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Muslim Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Senior discussion at Greater Quinn AME</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment: Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
### Table 4 Physical and Environmental Community Assets

*(number in parentheses represents the frequency mentioned, if >1)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vacant land/ open space/ green space:</th>
<th>Commercial buildings (particular buildings):</th>
<th>Housing stock (identify particular blocks):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ben Hill park</td>
<td>Oakwood Manor</td>
<td>Kendall St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ewald Circle and Wildemere</td>
<td>Post office on Fenkell</td>
<td>Lasalle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former site of Pettengill elementary</td>
<td>Pro Hardware</td>
<td>Lasalle Blvd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glazier playground</td>
<td>Queen’s Laundromat</td>
<td>Monica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Quinn AME community garden 12th &amp; Davison</td>
<td>Sander’s bldg.</td>
<td>Pasadena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I-96 Oakman to Chicago</td>
<td>Sav-on Foods on Dexter</td>
<td>Pasadena/Grand/Clements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LaSalle Ford</td>
<td>Village of Oakman Manor</td>
<td>Russell Woods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McKenzie field</td>
<td></td>
<td>Santa Rosa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant lot (former deli) on Dexter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sturtevant between Holmer and Petoskey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zussman Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tuller between Davison and Schoolcraft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Waverly block</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Figure 2 Home Maintenance Skills

Figure 3 Health Care Skills
Figure 4  Building and Construction Skills
Figure 5 Office Skills

- Taking Phone Messages
- Keeping Track of Supplies
- Filing Alphabetically/Numerically
- Operating Adding Machine/Calculator
- Receiving Phone Orders
- Typing
- Writing Business Letters (not typing)
- Entering Information into Computer
- Bookkeeping
- Using a spreadsheet program on a computer
- Word Processing
- Web design, managing a Facebook page
- Operating Switchboard
- Shorthand or Speedwriting

Figure 6 Operating Equipment and Machinery Skills

- Repairing Automobiles
- Assembling Items (e.g. machinery; equipment; furniture)
- Repairing Radios, TVs, VCRs, Tape Recorders
- Repairing Other Small Appliances
- Using a Forklift
- Fixing Washers/Dryers
- Repairing Auto/Truck/Bus Bodies
- Repairing Trucks/Buses
- Operating a Dump Truck
- Repairing Large Household Equipment (e.g.,
- Repairing Heating & Air Conditioning System
- Operating a Crane
- Repairing Elevators
Figure 10 Administration and Supervisory Skills

Figure 11 Sales Skills

Figure 12 Music and Movement Skills
Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment: Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village

**Figure 7 Food Preparation Skills**

- Washing Dishes for Large Numbers of People (over 10)
- Clearing/Setting Tables for Large Numbers of People
- Serving Food to Large Numbers of People (over 10)
- Preparing Meals for Large Numbers of People (over 10)
- Baking
- Catering
- Bartending
- Operating Commercial Food Preparation Equipment
- Meatcutting

**Figure 8 Transportation Skills**

- Driving a Car
- Driving a Van
- Driving a Vehicle /Delivering Goods
- Hauling
- Driving a Bus
- Driving a Commercial Truck
- Operating Farm Equipment
- Driving a Taxi
- Driving a Tractor Trailer
- Driving an Ambulance

**Figure 9 Child Care Skills**

- Caring for Children (1 to 6)
- Caring for Babies (under 1 year)
- Caring for Children (7 to 13)
- Taking Children on Field Trips
Figure 13  **Security Skills**

![Bar chart showing security skills]

- Neighborhood Watch
- Guarding Residential Property
- Ushering at Major Events
- Crowd Control
- Guarding Commercial Property
- Guarding Industrial Property
- Armed Guard
- Installing Alarms or Security Systems
- Repairing Alarms or Security Systems
- Firefighting

Figure 14  **Other Skills**

![Bar chart showing other skills]

- Assisting in the Classroom
- Assisting at Church
- Moving Furniture or Equipment to Different Locations
- Managing Property
- Sewing
- Assisting at Library or Community Center
- Crocheting or Knitting
- Hair Dressing
- Phone Surveys
- Hair Cutting
- Upholstering
- Jewelry or Watch Repair
- Tailoring
- Dressmaking
Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment

About The Reports

The Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment (IA) is the result of a partnership between the University of Michigan (U-M) Graham Sustainability Institute and Focus: HOPE. The IA was developed to support Focus: HOPE’s comprehensive place-based effort known as the HOPE Village Initiative. The Initiative’s goal: by 2031, 100% of residents living in a 100 block area surrounding the Focus: HOPE campus will be educationally well-prepared and economically self-sufficient, and living in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

The IA recognizes that the success of the HOPE Village Initiative is tied to sustainability factors including the physical environment, economic development, community health, and education. Through collaboration with U-M researchers, residents, and Focus: HOPE staff, the IA developed data, tools, and concepts to advance the HOPE Village Initiative. This document is one of six final project reports completed for IA.

This work was made possible with support from the Graham Sustainability Institute, Focus: HOPE, and neighborhood residents.

Reports In This Series

- Applied Research and Service by Urban Planning Students in the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Building a Healthy Community in Detroit: Tracking the Impact of the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space
- Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
- Play & Grounds
- The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park
Team

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Maria Arquero
Craig Borum
Jen Magret
School of Natural Resources & Environment
Robert E. Grese
College of Engineering
Aline Cotel
Lorelle Meadows

Acknowledgments
This work was made possible with support from the Graham Sustainability Institute, Focus: HOPE, and neighborhood residents. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions of our research assistants, including Lin Lin, Le Nguyen, Katharine Pan, Robert Primeau, Anna Schaefferkoetter, Laura Reading, Andrew Wolking and Wen Zhong.
In 2011 Focus:HOPE entered into a partnership with the University of Michigan’s Graham Environmental Sustainability Institute to sponsor an Integrated Assessment (IA) initiative. The “Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment” brings U-M researchers, Focus:HOPE staff and community stakeholders together to address the question, “What are common analytical approaches, data sets, tools and policies to advance decision making for the HOPE Village Initiative?”

Play&Grounds brings together six U-M researchers representing four distinct disciplines (Architecture, Urban Planning, Natural Resources and Environment and Civil and Environmental Engineering) to propose a place-based design initiative that prioritizes the potential of interconnections between public space, community building and environmental stewardship to restore and transform open space and embody the civic aspirations of the HOPE Village residents. The outcomes of this work include three main components summarized in the current report:

1. An OPEN SPACE VISIONING PLAN that focuses on the analysis and design possibilities tied to streetscapes and under-utilized, vacant open space. Methods of data acquisition in this planning effort include a three-component inventory composed of an analytical GIS (geographic information system) dataset, and a photographic and a plant species studies. Together with this data, the team has engaged in participant observation in numerous community

“An important component...is the role of visualization as a form of design advocacy.”
events during the duration of the project, and has organized dedicated conversations with residents on the theme of open space.

2. The CLASS WORK OF A SERIES OF UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN COURSES, each contributing creative and integrated design-research approaches in line with the overall ambitions of community engagement and environmental stewardship. These courses include undergraduate and graduate level courses, and bring together the disciplines of Architecture, Engineering, Landscape Architecture and Urban and Regional Planning [images of student work in Appendix, Figure 26].

3. The conceptualization, development and implementation of a "PROOF OF CONCEPT" design to transform the vacant lot at the corner of Oakman Boulevard and Linwood Avenue into a public park and market space. The construction is scheduled for the spring of 2014, and the broader visioning report documents the process and drawings for the schematic and design development phases.

This report documents the methods, community engagement events and recommended future directions tied to these three components. An important component in all three has been the role of visualization as a form of design advocacy. Through the diversity of representation methods and techniques, from maps, to photographs, to diagrams and realistic renderings, multiple facets of the existing open space network are expressed for consideration. This plurality in the way of looking, seeing and representing the current state and identity of these spaces, helps establish design intervention priorities and solicit feedback and test approaches to the recuperation of open spaces as safe, beautiful places that have the power to cultivate civic pride.

Recommendations include a variety of strategies that focus on two main open space components: streetscapes and vacant lots. In addition, we identify a focus area to prioritize investment. This area stretches between two important cultural anchors in the HOPE Village: New Paradigm Glazer Academy and the Parkman Public Library Branch. Other important places within the focus area include the Ford-LaSalle Playground, the Focused Hands Community Garden, and a series of residential streets that enable connectivity. Overall, the response to vacancy brings vegetation, shade, and color to these lots without requiring a large amount of regular garden maintenance by the residents or Focus:HOPE. When looking at the streets as transportation and civic infrastructure, our emphasis is on partnerships and funding sources that provide opportunities to establish official bike lanes and streetscape improvements (including street tree planting, sidewalk maintenance and street lighting). In this sense, the proximity to the Focus: HOPE Campus, the Oakman Boulevard Historic District and Linwood Avenue brings an important institutional oversight and could capitalize on the current work of residents and business associations, and the leadership of Focus: HOPE.

Finally, the report recognizes the challenge of the implementation of this strategic framework and recognizes that Focus: HOPE will continue to play a critical advisory and leadership role in this effort. Additionally, the success of this initiative will require the engagement of a dynamic and transient neighborhood population. It is only through residents’ stewardship that the potential for small interventions to have a cumulative impact greater than the "sum" of each would be possible. In themselves, the small positive changes hold the potential to “attract” additional investment (monetary or otherwise) and these changes are as likely to emanate from within the community as they are to come from the ongoing, organized efforts of Focus: HOPE. Finally, our findings suggest the need to develop strategic programmatic activities that can foster and invite more frequent occupation of spaces to help transform under-utilized spaces into a thriving, living part of the city.
Introduction

“Open space supports numerous environmental, economic, and social functions, many of which are interconnected.”

Focus: HOPE & the Graham Institute for Environmental Sustainability

Since 1968, Focus: HOPE has been serving Detroit residents through its mission of “recognizing the dignity and beauty of every person,” pledging “intelligent and practical action to overcome racism, poverty and injustice” and building “a metropolitan community where all people may live in freedom, harmony, trust and affection.” Over the years, this has meant an expanded slate of programs spanning food provision, career training, and neighborhood safety. Recently, a larger piece of Focus: HOPE’s work has been concentrated on improving the quality of life in its immediate neighborhood, through community development initiatives including support for local schools, community arts programming, and beautification activities focused within a 100-block area adjacent to the organization’s campus, called HOPE Village. Behind all of Focus: HOPE’s initiatives lies a holistic approach to problem-solving, and an indisputable commitment to place.

Most recently, the HOPE Village Initiative (HVI), was initiated to develop “a safe, strong and nurturing neighborhood where children and their families can develop to their full potential.” The HVI is a place-based initiative, dedicated to reinforcing support...
networks and resources within a defined area. Taking part of its inspiration from the Harlem Children’s Zone, Focus: HOPE is looking to partnerships and strategies from different sectors and disciplines that can help them address the neighborhood’s needs from multiple perspectives.

The Graham Sustainability Institute, based at the University of Michigan, is dedicated to fostering connections between members of the campus community, stakeholders, decision makers, and practitioners in order to generate new knowledge and strategies for solving complex problems “at the human-environment interface.” The Graham Institute facilitates these partnerships through the integrated assessment (IA) framework, a research methodology that emphasizes collaboration and synthesis of information across disciplines. The typical IA process defines a problem, taking into account the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, examines its short- and long-term impacts, and describes possible alternatives for action, along with potential costs and benefits. IAs are designed to promote cooperation and shared understanding, as well as comprehensive analysis of important issues that cross disciplinary and jurisdictional boundaries.²

The Sustainability and the Hope Village Initiative Integrated Assessment arose as a partnership between Focus: HOPE and the Graham Institute and was established to fund U-M faculty-led research that would advance the understanding and implementation of sustainable practices in the HOPE Village area. Focus: HOPE and the Graham Institute invited researchers to think in terms of sustainable community to support the six interlocking priorities of the HVI:

1. Community education and leadership programs
2. Early childhood to post-secondary education
3. Parent and family programs
4. Community health and safety initiatives
5. Community / economic development initiatives
6. Community building

Furthermore, in order to facilitate the engagement of the teams with community members, Focus: HOPE initiated a series of communication opportunities. Coordination efforts were overseen by an advisory committee (made up of community members) given the charge to encourage engagement while protecting against overburdening involved community members. The project objectives are positioned in relationship with the overall goals of the HOPE Village Initiative, aligning with the environmental and social sustainability agenda championed by Focus: HOPE. Through the HVI, and the work of the six selected teams, Focus: HOPE is working to foster an environment that ensures both opportunity and support for every resident in the 100-block service area. This report is a coordinated outcome of the HVI and a tool toward the integration of the findings and recommendations emanating from this initiative.

**Team Overview and Areas of Focus**

Play & Grounds supports the establishment of an open space network, in the HOPE Village, that fully realizes the potential of public places to nurture and invigorate the community that uses them. To facilitate this, our research inventories the current state of public open spaces in the HOPE Village area and utilizes visualizations to communicate possible approaches and outcomes to initiate conversations surrounding desired future directions for activation and occupation.

Play & Grounds also introduces a framework for understanding different typologies of open space within HOPE Village and how these relate to the benefits of sustainable places. It also considers the feasibility of these components in terms of the unique conditions and demographics of the HOPE Village, showing what a successful open space
In support of these ambitions, Play & Grounds brings together science and design through teaching, research, and creative professional practice across four disciplines: Architecture, Urban Planning, Natural Resources & the Environment, and Civil & Environmental Engineering. It consists of three components:

1. A strategic plan that consolidates opportunities tied to underutilized and/or vacant open space. The resulting documents, drawings and models establish time-based scenarios that provide a baseline assessment of the neighborhood’s open space assets, and serve as a fund raising tool for the implementation of future projects.

2. The coordination of a series of University of Michigan courses, each contributing creative and integrated design-research approaches pursuing the overall ambitions of community engagement and environmental stewardship. This coursework advances the findings of the strategic plan, and was conducted between Fall 2012 and Fall 2013. It includes graduate and undergraduate courses in the departments of Engineering, Civil & Environmental Engineering, Natural Resources & the Environment, Architecture, and Urban Planning (Figures 1 to 3).

3. A small, constructed “proof of concept” component that integrates an appreciation for water with the establishment of an anchor in the open space network and serves as a catalyst for future fund raising and implementation efforts. The design and installation of this component is underway and being coordinated with Focus: HOPE and members of the HOPE Village community.

Open space supports numerous environmental, economic, and social functions, many of which are interconnected. For example, a streetscape that is maintained for pedestrians and cyclists promotes non-automotive transportation. This is good for the atmosphere as well as the health of residents, who have an opportunity to exercise and socialize, while
enjoying cleaner air to breathe. Open space design that provides public amenities like street trees or benches contributes to the comfort of those using the space. As such, public open spaces are accessible more frequently and for longer periods of time.

Well-maintained streetscapes can also impact safety, by increasing the number of people using and watching the street. They encourage “eyes on the street,” neighbors and public space users who are able to observe the street’s activities and who become its guardians. Streetscaping can also delineate an area protected from traffic. More people using a space also means more opportunities for social interaction. That, in concert with efforts at place-making, can help residents become more familiar with one another and build a stronger sense of civic pride.

Of course, different types of open space can support different combinations of different functions. Some excel at providing ecosystem services, helping to improve the quality of the water, the ecosystem, and the air while some can provide economic benefits helping landowners with energy efficiency or offering opportunities for employment, training, or research. Others can have impacts on health, safety, educational opportunity, community strength, and, ultimately, happiness.

Open space in the HOPE Village neighborhood is abundant, but frequently underutilized. It encompasses playgrounds, a playfield, gardens, pocket parks, schoolyards, an extensive sidewalk system, and a reserve of vacant land that includes an overgrown abandoned railway. Some of these areas, like Salsinger Playfield and the Ford-LaSalle Playground are part of the City’s parks system and are already open to the public at all hours. Others, like the Focus: HOPE Community Park, and the Cool Corner Park, are privately held, and may be reserved for special events or are subject to more restricted access hours. Still others, like the vacant lots and abandoned rail, are bound by more complex issues of ownership and management. These latter two groups are included on the basis of their potential, through collaborative partnerships and strategic design, to contribute positively to the overall function of the HOPE Village landscape. The importance of a flexible strategy to tackle the uneven distribution of residential vacant land will be key for the future livability of the neighborhood.

Thoughtful open space design and programming, incorporating knowledge about users’ needs and desires as well as both the area’s history and an overall vision for the neighborhood, can successfully support Focus: HOPE’s goals in the HVI overarching goals. The various open space sites within the HVI area hold numerous opportunities to impact the health, safety, education, and happiness of the surrounding community. Toward this end, the project also seeks to aid in the implementation of an open space vision by identifying potential partnerships and funding sources.

Play & Grounds represents an optimistic and generative design methodology for redefining the value and importance of the future of the built environment. In this endeavor we see the HOPE Village as a potential model for other community leaders and partnerships throughout the city of Detroit.
Findings

“Community input played an essential role...informing planning and design proposals.”

Research Methods of Data Collection: Introduction to the Inventories

The HOPE Village Initiative focuses on the area surrounding the Focus: HOPE campus in Detroit. It aims to develop a safe, strong and nurturing neighborhood where families can develop to their full potential. The next pages examine spatial, demographic, visual, historical, and cultural data from the HOPE Village area and the surrounding city. It is a process of building familiarity with both the neighborhood as a place and as the people living within it.

This section introduces the research methods of observation and data collection. The information has been structured through the creation of three different inventories: (1) a GIS Inventory, (2) a Photographic Inventory, and (3) a Plant Species Inventory.

GIS Inventory

The GIS Inventory sought to bring together layers of geospatial information describing the physical characteristics that describe HOPE Village today, and specifically, build an understanding of the distribution, ownership condition and materiality
of spaces that can be considered “open” and have the potential to contribute to the planning of an open space network. A Geographic Information System (GIS) allows for the storage, manipulation, and display of geographical data. GIS can support complex analyses and decision-making through visualizing relationships and interactions between such things as policy, demographics, environment, and activities across space. This work primarily built upon available data and derived new knowledge and findings through the synthesis of information, and later through design approaches and constructions.

The definition of the “boundaries” of HOPE Village was an ongoing discussion throughout the grant and the final GIS Inventory reflects the most current approach to defining this area. It is important to note, and remember, that the definition of this boundary is important to bring focus to the study of something that continues to be an integral part of larger city systems as well as metropolitan networks. Perhaps the most direct opportunity to physically re-establish a more vibrant connection to the open space networks developing throughout Detroit is the former railway corridor now being considered for redevelopment as a greenway. This opportunity was studied in much more detail in the work of the team from the Law school focused on Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space.

The GIS inventory includes geographic data derived from an original database created by U-M volunteer Thomas Skuzinski for Focus: HOPE, and further expanded to incorporate relevant layers for our project. The original database contained parcel information from the 2009 Detroit Residential Parcel Survey (DRPS) and 2010 U.S. Census information at the block and tract levels. Play & Grounds validated open space sites from this database against observations during site visits and consultation with Focus: HOPE staff to identify areas with public access or that could potentially contribute value to the network. These sites, along with new polygons delineating sidewalk and utility corridors using aerial photography, are included in the inventory and further classified into typologies according to the research design. Additional data was sourced from the City of Detroit, Wayne and Washtenaw County LiDAR, and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).

A simple view of the neighborhood’s parks and transportation lines (Figure 4) shows a conversion between two clearly gridded road systems at Oakman Boulevard, and identifies Linwood as a major thoroughfare connecting to both the John C. Lodge and Davison Freeways. The unique rotation of street angles at Oakman Boulevard is an historical artifact that marks the northern border of the 10,000 Acre Tract granted to the city by Congress along with approval for Judge Woodward’s radial plan.

Figure 4 also shows that the residential street grid is divided in multiple places by more intensive transportation infrastructure. Together, the Lodge Freeway and Linwood divide the neighborhood into eastern, central, and western portions, while the abandoned rail corridor creates a north-south divide. These divisions coincide with marked differences in the characters of each portion, as seen both on the ground, and in block group maps developed by Focus: HOPE. They also impact residents’ ability to connect to other areas of the neighborhood, either by allowing rapid circulation from one area to another, as in the case of Linwood, or by limiting connectivity to a few points of passage, as in the case of the Lodge Freeway.

The parks shown on this map are publicly-owned by the city: Salsinger Playfield, Ben Hill Memorial Playground, and Ford-LaSalle Playground. All of them are well used by the residents for a variety of recreational activities and events. In addition to these amenities, Focus: HOPE owns and maintains two other parks open to the larger community. These are the Cool Cities Park at Oakman and Woodrow Wilson (with restricted access hours for specific
The zoning map (Figure 5) shows that single- and two-family residency is the predominant land use, constituting 87.2% of the HVI’s parcels, with commercial and industrial districts distributed along main transportation lines. Viewed alongside the parks and transportation lines, it’s clear that the rail line isn’t the only impediment to north-south connection between the HVI’s different areas: 2.8 acres of intensive industrial district surround the rail and buffer the northern and southern residential blocks from one another. The aerial view in Figure 7 shows that these sites contain large structures on large lots, and include both the former Paul Robeson Academy (it should be noted that the building was demolished in the summer of 2012), and part of Focus: HOPE’s Campus along Oakman Boulevard. One potential concern that arises from this analysis is that the residential northwestern section of the neighborhood actually has relatively limited mobility when compared to the others. Despite the fact that the railroad is no longer active, the industrial properties along it act as formidable barriers to movement from that area to other areas of the neighborhood, forcing travelers onto Fenkell Street, Linwood, Wildemere Avenue, and Dexter Avenue. It also highlights the importance of those streets, of which Fenkell and Linwood are both commercial corridors.

Land cover data (Figure 6) is derived from the National Land Cover Database 2006 dataset. Based on Landsat satellite data from 2006, this dataset uses a classification scheme containing 16 different land classes applied across the contiguous United States (for a more detailed description, see the full “Play&grounds: Open Space Visioning Plan”). This form of remotely sensed land cover imagery augments aerial imagery (Figure 7) by offering an abstract reading of the materiality. While we can easily see from the aerial image that the neighborhood consists of structures and yards, the land cover data helps us see the intensity of that development in terms of materials and perviousness. It shows that certain abandoned areas of the neighborhood are vegetated to a degree that they conform to at least one definition of “open space.” It also reinforces the sense that the neighborhood contains physical divisions between residential areas—in this case, they show up as the darker red lines of more intensely developed commercial and industrial space, as well as the highways.

Topographical analysis was completed using LiDAR data of Wayne and Washtenaw Counties from the spring of 2009 (Figure 8), and takes into account the built environment as well as land elevation. It shows that all of the HVI neighborhood falls within an elevation range of 623 – 653 feet above sea level. In effect, this means that the neighborhood’s topography is fairly uniform, with a slight depression in the south-central area and along the highway, which is recessed. Topographical data is useful
for determining the direction that water might flow and collect, such as during a storm or flood. Flow accumulation modeling (Figure 9) uses that information to generate a drainage network that shows the relative difference in water quantity that an area would be expected to receive given the direction of flow in surrounding areas (for a more detailed description, see the full “Play&grounds: Open Space Visioning Plan”). The findings point to lower accumulation throughout the neighborhood, with three lines of high accumulation along the highway and crosscutting two residential areas where water is especially likely to collect.

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Figure 8 Topography Map

Figure 9 Flow Accumulation Map

Population (Figure 10) and residential vacancy (Figure 11) analyses add yet another layer to our understanding of the neighborhood, and can be viewed at multiple scales. The map showing total population by block group is a broad-scale interpretation of the data, which comes from the 2010 U.S. Census. Although at a glance, it’s clear that the neighborhood’s central block group is the most populated, it should be noted that over 175 housing units have been added to the east block groups since the 2010 Census. In any case, census block groups may not be the most helpful unit of analysis in understanding the demographics of this neighborhood. One reason is the seemingly arbitrary distinction that they draw between neighboring blocks, and the association of other blocks that are farther removed from one another. They also obscure variations in population that might greatly differentiate one part of the neighborhood from another. This is clear when we look at a map that shows population by block. We find that the more highly populated areas are still clustered in the central part of the neighborhood, though they tend to be located towards the west and on blocks that contain multi-family housing units.

The map of residential vacancies shows the number of vacant housing units that can be found on each block. It is most useful when interpreted along with
other data or knowledge about the neighborhood, and can serve to add dimension to population analysis. What we can glean from this is that even in blocks that reported 90-124 residents in the 2010 Census, 17-22 of the housing units may be vacant. So, even though those blocks with higher populations may have more residents, they are still not occupied to the full capacity of the housing stock.

Using a combination of land use information, residential parcel survey data, aerial imagery, and local knowledge, we have created a dataset that displays the neighborhood’s open space assets [please see the full “Play&grounds: Open Space Visioning Plan” for notes regarding the accuracy of the data and discussion of verification]. Maps made from this information help to visualize the distribution of open space assets over space and explore opportunities for design interventions.

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**Photographic Inventory**

The photographic inventory is authored, in large part, by Shannon Cobb, a young resident of the neighborhood and a regular participant in Focus: HOPE’s photography workshops. Ms. Cobb was tasked with photographing the framework’s nine open space typologies, and the active nature of these areas and their users. As a resident, Ms. Cobb has been instrumental in her ability to photograph others using the neighborhood’s public open spaces. Her photography shows community engagement, educational programming, playful occupation of open spaces in addition to the Village’s specific physical features. The photographic inventory provides a culturally rich database that presents the social aspects of the HOPE Village landscape more faithfully than data is able to do alone.

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*Figure 12 Examples from the Photographic Inventory*
Plant Inventory

The report also contains a plant inventory of the HVI neighborhood that shows the characteristics of existing species and lists other viable species that may bring positive aesthetic and ecosystem impacts. This inventory was completed with the assistance of Lin Lin, a recent graduate of the University of Michigan’s graduate program in Landscape Architecture using a walking survey covering each major segment of the neighborhood. The work was augmented with previous work completed by Tetra Tech and the Greening of Detroit.

Research Methods of Design: the Sustainable Open Space Framework

Our findings also include the use of design synthesis to visually examine open space frameworks and to initiate conversations with community members surrounding shared visions for the future of HOPE Village. Our findings suggest that landscape is a critical interface between physical and cultural worlds, and its design enhance the resilience of both. Moreover, the framework considers that applying this concept to public open space, which belongs to the community, provides unique opportunities to nurture community building efforts and civic engagement.

Our partnership believes that small landscape interventions play a critical role in fostering community and inspiring a commitment to the environment that we live in. The targeted areas for intervention position youth as central participants in achieving a sustainable future. Working for and with the younger members of the community is an important step in ensuring their engagement in the future implementation of this framework.

The proposed framework considers land use strategies and their appropriateness for different segments of the open space network, with special attention to specific issues such as the suitability of urban agriculture, strategies for the temporary occupation of vacant properties, storm water management practices, and the design of the soft mobility (non-motorized) network. In particular, we focused on nine typologies of open space: playgrounds, playfields, parks & plazas, schoolyards, community gardens, alleys, rail & utility corridors, streetscapes and vacant land (Appendix, Figure 24).

The framework is a product of case study research, observation and expertise, and an evaluation of the unique character of the HOPE Village neighborhood.
It was developed alongside the inventory, taking into account the current usage patterns and physical characteristics of the open space areas. The nine typologies of open space are a way of organizing the spaces cataloged in the inventory. These are associated with ten components of sustainable open space—land use strategies and elements that can be implemented in an open space area (Figure 15).

These, in turn, are associated with their individual benefits, according to their impacts on the three cornerstones of sustainability: environment, economics, and society. The typologies, components, and benefits are organized into a matrix in order to show and compare the relationships between them. This method of organization was inspired in part by the City of Philadelphia’s Green Plan, a preliminary survey of green spaces, green elements, and quality of life indicators. The importance of an approach such as this is to enable decision making in response to individual opportunities while keeping in consideration a relative hierarchy of potential. The matrix also recognizes that in any circumstance of site-selection, it will continue to be important to make these decisions in coordination with the residents living near sites being considered and to solicit their ideas and opinions about the priorities they’d most support.

The framework analyses and visualizations also provided a base set of information that we brought to public engagement meetings to initiate conversations. Community input played an essential role in defining a focus area and informing planning and design proposals in the initial phases of this project. The research team sought diverse perspectives by targeting a range of age groups in different settings. To interact with youth, the team directly engaged three separate groups with activities and discussion. The first group consisted of participants in one of Focus: HOPE’s summer photography workshops for students from the fourth to eighth grades. The second consisted of neighborhood teens and volunteers from Summer in the City’s summer program (SITC). The third involved the participants of the SITC summer program (Figure 14). To engage older generations, the team looked to the Village of Oakman Manor, a senior home located at the corner of Oakman and Woodrow Wilson, east of the Lodge Freeway. Other public engagement initiatives include an open charrette to involve adults and families, and meetings with members of the Oakman Boulevard Community Association, and the Linwood Business Owners Association (Figure 14).

Our findings throughout the framework have been very much influenced by the conversations and interactions we’ve had the privilege to participate in. We found the most success by attending events that were organized around an event which shared a possible interest in nurturing an open space network, such as the summer in the city program where the children were clearly excited and opinionated regarding what makes for a great play space. In this way, as we continue to cooperate with Focus: HOPE, and more specifically, develop the construction plans for the vacant corner of Oakman and Linwood, we will continue to seek out events that are already active and underway within the HOPE Village neighborhoods in order to continue conversations.
to solicit feedback as well as build a constituency that feels a sense of connection and commitment to those open spaces undergoing a transformation from underutilized to integrated and active.

6 Glazer Playground Improvements

During winter semester 2013, students from Professor Bob Grese’s landscape architecture design class from the University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment worked with children and teachers at New Paradigm Glazer Academy to develop design ideas for revamping the schoolyard.

The project was a unique partnership with Focus: HOPE and Christ Church Cranbrook. University of Michigan held a series of workshops with children at the school and created imaginative plans for renovating the school’s playground and creating a series of garden spaces in the schoolyard.

With generous support from Christ Church, Focus: HOPE was able to hire one of the students from the class—Robert Primeau—to work as an intern through the summer and work with Glazer to generate a plan for playground improvements that could be implemented in a series of volunteer workdays in August to have new playground equipment in place when children returned to school in September.

Robert sought advice from playground equipment manufacturers and carefully evaluated existing equipment and what could be purchased with the funds that had been raised. In the end, it was decided to remove the larger of two existing play structures that had key broken features and to repaint the smaller of the two structures. Features to be added included a new basketball play area, re-surfaced track, climbing structures, swings, benches, a zip-line, and balancing structures. Dozens of dedicated volunteers from the community, Glazer, Christ Church, and UM joined to install the equipment and prepare the play areas to open when classes began in September (see Appendix, Figure 27).
Recommendations

“Residential streetscapes hold a large responsibility for the quality of life of the residents living there.”

Focus Efforts within a Focus Area

Following the broader framework and inventory analysis, we first recommend that future efforts of open space revitalization and investment be initially focused in an area of the HOPE: Village that holds the potential to establish a central open space network that ties together established and important neighborhood institutions. The area is anchored in the east by Glazer Elementary, and in the west by the Parkman Branch of the Detroit Public Library, two of the main civic assets in the neighborhood.

The area was selected based on six major considerations, and informed by the project’s inventories, site visits, discussions with Focus: HOPE’s Community Development staff, feedback from the Community Advisory Board, and input from the community. The considerations included:

1. That the area include recognized neighborhood and city assets
2. That the area serve a diversity of users from the neighborhood and beyond who could be involved in the design process
3. That the area be large enough to illustrate a variety of networking opportunities
4. That the area be diverse enough to integrate different typologies of public open space
5. That the area be small enough to increase the
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Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment: Play & Grounds

as some of the more highly populated blocks in the neighborhood.

For example, LaSalle is an important route for many residents as a two-way connector to Davison. Automobile traffic is relatively light along LaSalle, with Linwood serving as the main thru-street for non-local traffic. LaSalle is also a fairly active street. Residents there, many of whom live in the apartment buildings along that stretch, will often sit together outside near the curb. The park, meanwhile, serves as a destination for play.

In addition to possessing the potential to reinforce those assets that are already serving as anchors within the community, the focus area fosters three types of open space recommendations that are more extensively described and illustrated within the broader Play&Grounds visioning plan. The work showcases ideas for streetscape improvements, strategies for reclaiming residential vacant lots, and playground improvements, as exemplified by the newly constructed play equipment, installed over the summer in the Glazer Academy schoolyard, as an outcome of the work done in the School of Natural Resources and Environment’s Landscape Architecture studio, coordinated by Robert Grese (see Appendix, Figure 27).

In selecting this area, we recognize that both the library and the elementary school are two important anchors for the community. The Ford-LaSalle Playground and the Focused Hands Community Garden are each within a block of either the school or the library. Each holds opportunities for youth and families. Between these two sites are a handful of the neighborhood’s open space amenities, as well

6. That the area be a currently active space where interventions and their effects would be noticeable

The area of focus also affords the opportunity to coordinate improvement efforts for the neighborhood open spaces with efforts already underway to improve the business corridor along Linwood. Here, the ongoing streetscaping design process spearheaded by the Linwood Business Owners Association and Focus: HOPE, is an important component within a broader open space network to provide continuity in the quality of urban spaces throughout the neighborhood and encourage improved conditions for walking and biking.
The importance of Linwood Avenue in the HOPE Village is manifold: on one side, it is the main thoroughfare for many Detroiteres to access the Lodge Freeway in their daily commute in and out the suburbs. On the other, it is the main commercial artery serving the needs of the neighborhood. For these reasons, the face of Linwood Avenue plays an important role in the overall image of the neighborhood, not only for the residents, but for the city at large.

The current state of Linwood, with higher rates of commercial vacancy and high density of fast traffic, does not serve the residents, as it lacks the capacity to support storefronts that host basic services and amenities including, but not limited to, healthy food options. The corridor needs to retain its business fabric, and invest in the urban landscape to better serve the residents and, in turn, be a more desirable environment for business owners to enjoy success and stability.

The streetscape proposal for Linwood, therefore, includes a complete street approach to welcome multi-modal transportation options such as bikes, bus transit and pedestrians. In addition to this, the renders showcase trees and planted stormwater gardens [rain gardens or swales], all of which would both add to the quality and experience of the environment as well as afford opportunities to forge partnerships with municipal, institutional and foundation supported initiatives aimed at the development and support of bikeways and green infrastructure.
Invest in the Temporary Occupation of Key Vacant Nodes

The approach to residential vacancy has followed a two-tier approach. First, the team developed a series of scenarios to discuss with residents. With these visualizations the team solicited ideas and learned about attitudes towards residential vacant lots among members of the community. The scenario approach was the perfect tool to challenge preconceived notions about the desirability of “solutions” being applied elsewhere in Detroit. In this sense, we discussed the desirability of community gardens, parking lots, playfields or blotting among different age groups, from different areas in the community. The options presented in the scenarios triggered interesting conversations and revealed equally important attitudes. Emerging from these discussions are four recommendations surrounding priorities for the temporary occupation and transformation of vacancy in the HOPE Village.

1. We recommend that landscape efforts focus on plants and groundscapes that offer low maintenance and provide a distinct aesthetic difference from the plants that otherwise “naturalize” vacant properties. Residents expressed a positive opinion of the presence of community gardens within the neighborhood but little to no desire to directly participate in them. Rather, residents expressed strong support for continued tree-planting efforts as well as landscaping that could bring color to the lots.

2. We recommend that residents who are interested in taking care of adjacent, vacant properties be encouraged to do so by aiding or recognizing the importance of their efforts to care for otherwise uncared for properties.

3. We recommend that efforts to develop or provide outdoor facilities for teens locate on vacant properties that are not directly adjacent to occupied residential lots. Most residents expressed concern about this type of occupation of vacant properties due to a perceived conflict owing to noise and activities that could go late into the night and disrupt quiet residential areas. While the perceived conflict may be greater than any actual conflict that might arise from this situation, the stress and anxiety triggered by this perception is very real and must be respected until the time that perceptions can shift into a more positive light owing to more positive experiences. Teen activity spaces are significantly lacking in the HOPE Village, so we additionally recommend that the development and design of spaces which could appropriately host basketball, dance and other recreational activities continue to be a high priority for Focus: HOPE’s community outreach efforts.

4. We recommend that the vacant site at the corner of Oakman and Linwood serve as the first site for the implementation of vacancy transformation design strategies. The identification of this site emerged out of conversations with Focus: HOPE staff, community residents and librarians at the Parkman Branch Library. The potential of this site is enormous, given its adjacency to the Focused Hands Community Garden and position of “gateway” entry to the Focus: HOPE campus and the Oakman Boulevard Historic District. Current design development has identified three primary implementation aspects including:

1. the demolition of the existing fence around the entire parcel and removal of uneven asphalt surface (shared costs with Focus:HOPE), in preparation for the future plans of development of a market place;

2. the design conceptualization, development and implementation of the park in the southern
portion of the site (a rectangle of dimensions 100’x35’, contiguous to the Focused Hands Gardens). The design includes a treatment of the ground including a geometrical pattern alternating plantings and gravel areas, planter boxes of galvanized steel with seating areas, the planting of a mature tree, a soft fence facing the north side of the park, and the insertion of a small water feature (this element pending matching funds from the University of Michigan Office of Research); and

(3) continued efforts to program the space for use as a market space to increase the occupation and visibility of the site. Growing out of this recommendation to start transforming the image of the site, the DreamUp! event welcomed visitors and residents alike during the Eleanor’s Walk for HOPE in October 2013 (Figure 24).

Implementation Strategies: Potential Partnerships and Programs

Implementation is an important aspect of achieving the ideas represented in this open space visioning plan to enable HOPE Village to move toward more sustainable public open space design. To that end, we describe some possible alternatives for the types of actions that Focus: HOPE and its partners may need to undertake in the next phase of their planning efforts. The following is an abridged summary of the implementation strategies that we recommend, given the complexity of decision making when there are so many pieces of a networked “puzzle”.

1. In most, if not all, of the vacant properties, partnerships will be necessary to achieve the implementation of a transformation strategy. Focus: HOPE has sponsored many successful partnerships in the past and we see a great value in an approach that builds on past relationships. We recommend that partnerships formed with the shared interest in transforming vacant properties extend beyond partnerships associated with coursework and class projects at local universities and institutions. While a large amount of exciting work has come from this type of partnership, the implementation of these ideas has limited potential owing to the lack of funding sources as well as the limitation of the timing of academic semesters. A large number of governmental, institutional, non-profit, for-profit and community based organizations are identified as other potential partners (for the full listing, see the full “Play&Grounds: Open Space Visioning Plan”).

2. A second avenue toward successful implementation of an open space network will require the continued involvement of community outreach and education. In particular, we recommend that local community efforts continue to find ways to reach both targeted (bike riders, for example) and larger audiences. Recent discussions surrounding Pop Up Parlors and informal occupations of existing properties to sponsor activities and conversations possess a great deal of potential to build community support and help everyone imagine vacant properties as occupied once more. In addition, we recommend that efforts extend to groups beyond the boundaries of HOPE Village, in order to build networks with others in the city and to position the efforts happening within HOPE Village as crucial components of a larger urban network. Possible groups could include those already working on efforts to establish greenway and bike lane efforts.

3. Perhaps the most challenging component of implementation surrounds decision making targeting priority locations and intervention time lines. The design visualizations that compose a significant portion of the visioning plan of Play & Grounds make significant effort to communicate the necessity for design thinking to be synthetic.
While the acquisition of individual components of street furniture or planting beds, etc. will undoubtedly bring positive benefits to the HOPE Village community, continuing to involve design professionals in conversations will enable ongoing discussions about how to make more out of a little. In other words, we recommend that the involvement of design professionals can assist Focus: HOPE’s efforts to make positive change and transform the physical character of the community through the targeted implementation of components and phasing of longer term projects. The full report identifies possible avenues to contact and engage design professional.
professionals in the Detroit Metro area that could be potential partners, in addition to our ongoing commitment to continue our own engagement with Focus: HOPE.

4. It is through these partnerships with the larger community (HVI residents and businesses, donors, academic institutions and philanthropies), that designers can work closely with Focus: HOPE to leverage funding opportunities that advance the agenda for the transformation of the public space network in the HOPE Village. Under the umbrella of this grant, this team has already identified a series of funding opportunities: National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the Knights Foundation, Art Place, Kresge Foundation, just to name a few of the identifies targets. In addition, working through the University of Michigan, this team has also identified opportunities to match external funds through the Office for the Vice President of Research at the University of Michigan (OVPR). For the full listing of potential funding sources, see the full “Play&Grounds: Open Space Visioning Plan.”
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Figure 24 DreamUp Event in the Linwood Oakman Corner
## Appendix

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAYGROUNDS</th>
<th>PLAYFIELDS</th>
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<td><img src="image24.jpg" alt="Schoolyard Image 5" /></td>
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*Figure 25  Open Space Typology Photographic Matrix*
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<th>ALLEYS</th>
<th>RAIL &amp; UTILITY CORRIDORS</th>
<th>STREETSCAPES</th>
<th>VACANT LAND</th>
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**TYPOLOGIES**

**COMPONENTS**

- PLAY STRUCTURES
- TREES
- STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
- MEADOWLAND
- FOOT AND BIKE PATHS
- URBAN AGRICULTURE
- URBAN FURNITURE
- LAND RECLAMATION
- PUBLIC ART
- BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS
Running in Circles seeks to mediate stormwater run off in Detroit and investigate its playfulness as a result of its juxtaposition with schoolyards. As a neighborhood planning unit, the school in Detroit was the loci of the community. However, changes in Public School District policies determined that students could go to any school within Detroit that they chose. This generally meant that kids with access to a vehicle and economically well off could travel further to go to good schools while the less fortunate could only attend the nearest walkable school, leading to an inequality in educational facilities. This project seeks to re-establish the schoolyard as a catalyst for the community by opening up the site to its neighbors and inviting them to partake in liquid activities. Storm water is collected from the street and filtered through series of wetlands while also being chemically treated so that it is clean enough to interact with. The water travels into various reservoirs and design elements where it can be used for education or amusement.

While taking place in the FocusHope community, the projects can span across 5 school sites and perhaps act as a larger model for the rest of Detroit. The project can take advantage of grants coming through FocusHope as well as educational grants while using the community to build and sustain the project. With children as the focus, they can take part in learning how to care for their community and experience new ways to play.
Figure 27 Glazer Playground Project build-day
The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park

Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment

The Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment (IA) is the result of a partnership between the University of Michigan (U-M) Graham Sustainability Institute and Focus: HOPE. The IA was developed to support Focus: HOPE’s comprehensive place-based effort known as the HOPE Village Initiative. The Initiative’s goal: by 2031, 100% of residents living in a 100 block area surrounding the Focus: HOPE campus will be educationally well-prepared and economically self-sufficient, and living in a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment.

The IA recognizes that the success of the HOPE Village Initiative is tied to sustainability factors including the physical environment, economic development, community health, and education. Through collaboration with U-M researchers, residents, and Focus: HOPE staff, the IA developed data, tools, and concepts to advance the HOPE Village Initiative. This document is one of six final project reports completed for IA.

This work was made possible with support from the Graham Sustainability Institute, Focus: HOPE, and neighborhood residents.

About The Reports

Reports In This Series

- Applied Research and Service by Urban Planning Students in the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Building a Healthy Community in Detroit: Tracking the Impact of the HOPE Village Initiative Area
- Legal Issues in HOPE Village Housing Cooperative and Green Space
- Mapping Community Economies and Building Capabilities in HOPE Village
- Play & Grounds
- The Development of a Community Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation in the HOPE Village Neighborhoods of Detroit and Highland Park
Executive Summary

“This efforts would strengthen opportunities for area youth by providing information, options, resources and support to pursue higher education, career opportunities, and pathways that lead to expanded opportunities.”

The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good is honored to present this report to the Graham Institute relating to the HOPE Village Initiative (HVI).

When developing plans for our work with the HOPE Village Initiative, our team set many goals for the project. The vision of our contribution included:

- Promoting college access and educational attainment
- Researching community needs through holding dialogues focused on education
- Identifying and galvanizing support from the University of Michigan community
- Assisting the HOPE Village Initiative staff in developing a formal Local College Access Network (LCAN)
- Supporting the creation of mechanisms to develop a stronger college going culture within the community

To promote college access and educational attainment, the National Forum has contributed to the HVI through the creation of a number of project outcomes and products. The National Forum team has researched and organized the production of a community assets
map in the form of a resource booklet. This booklet provides a listing of educational organizations within Detroit and the programs they offer which are available to residents of HOPE Village and the surrounding communities. This resource is targeted to persons working within the HVI target community and can be used by a variety of persons for information and referrals.

In addition to the assets map, the National Forum also conducted a number of Community dialogues in the spring of 2013. With a focus on education and college access, all three dialogues were designed to collect specific information that could be used in helping the community consider how it might develop specific programs (including a possible LCAN) to promote greater college access and success for its citizens.

To cultivate future student support from the University of Michigan, the National Forum has created a pre-service training presentation for those planning to work in HOPE Village or in the surrounding communities. The presentation provides information on the community with a focus on the principles of service learning.

Finally, regarding the development of an LCAN, there are several options available to HOPE Village, which we present in this report. The initial focus on creating a new LCAN has become subsumed under collaborative work in the development of a Highland Park LCAN with HOPE Village as a potential partner in this new LCAN. The goal of these combined efforts is to create a stronger college going culture in HOPE Village.

In order to capitalize upon the work that has been completed through this project, a number of next steps are identified. These recommendations will assist with maintaining and further developing a college going culture in HOPE Village. Many of the recommendations made by community members during the dialogues suggested programming for parents and students geared towards promoting a college going culture. This programming could include tutoring, mentoring, guest speakers, and college fairs all within the trusted community space of Focus: HOPE. These efforts would strengthen opportunities for area youth by providing information, options, resources and support to pursue higher education, career opportunities, and pathways that lead to expanded opportunities.

Focus: HOPE and the HOPE Village residents have the capabilities to create a thriving educational culture across the community to transform the HOPE Village neighborhood through generating in residents the hope, expectations, and knowledge to increase college attendance and success.
Introduction

“This project was built on the premise that changing the educational attainment and college-going practices within the community would have positive impacts for the community as a whole.”

The National Forum on Higher Education for the Public Good (National Forum), affiliated with the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education at the University of Michigan, has been actively involved in community-based research and interventions related to the challenge of building community agency in support of educational opportunity for over eight years. Based on this experience, we believe that for community building to be sustainable it must be rooted in active, authentic, and broadly endorsed community leadership and supported by widespread community input.

The National Forum has made a long-term commitment to our work of increasing college-going culture in several Detroit neighborhoods. It began in 2005 with the launch of the “Access to Democracy Project which brought together residents in five communities across the state of Michigan to deliberate issues related to the wide range of factors shaping educational attainment. The National Forum has also been involved in the formulation and sustained partnership of several Local College Access Networks (LCANs) in the Detroit community and in Jackson.

i. LCANs are community-based college access alliances supported by a team of community and education leaders representing K-12, higher education, the non-profit sector, government, business, and philanthropy. The National Forum has been actively engaged in LCANs located in three neighborhoods in Detroit. However, there are as many as nine LCANs located throughout the city, all harnessing local partnerships to move towards common goals.
The National Forum is staffed primarily by doctoral and masters’ students studying higher education. Our work on the HVI was led by two faculty members affiliated with the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE); Dr. Betty Overton-Adkins and Dr. John Burkhardt. Additionally, a doctoral student affiliated with CSHPE, Esmeralda Hernandez, managed the day-to-day operations of the project team. The project team consisted of several five CSHPE masters’ students, as well as three undergraduate students at the University of Michigan, all with backgrounds and expertise in community organizing and mentorship.

The Project Premise

In today’s society, education is important and some level of college attainment is becoming increasingly important to acquiring economic and social well-being in the United States. This project was built on the premise that changing the educational attainment and college-going practices within the community would have positive impacts for the community as a whole. However, building to that impact would require a number of fundamental steps:

1. Learn from the community its hopes and aspirations for its young people relative college
2. Understand and help to articulate the opportunities and barriers to obtaining these aspirations
3. Connect a network of resources to the community

In order to pursue these steps, the Forum team identified activities that would lead to specific project outcomes:

- Researching community needs through holding dialogues focused on education
- Spearheading the development of pre-service tools for those volunteers outside the HOPE Village Community to understand how they enter and support ongoing projects within the community
- Assisting the HOPE Village Initiative staff in developing a formal Local College Access Network (LCAN)
- Collecting and organizing into a useable form educational resources in the Detroit area that might directly impact the work in HOPE Village

The project worked with a basic assumption that suggests that parents (and communities) often have hopes that their children might go to college, but they have no real expectations it will happen, nor do they have realistic strategies that can see the fulfillment of their hopes.

Figure 1 Community Agency

The dialogic methodology used as a basis of the project was chosen to surface these assumptions and where possible help move community persons toward more knowledge-based and action-based strategies.

Developing the Dialogues

The HOPE Village community exhibits low educational attainment and parental engagement. The percent of students who have not met Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) scores in 2011 for the four elementary/middle schools in the HOPE Village area fall significantly below Michigan levels. Schools in the area often score a 2 out of 10 points possible in state evaluation scores.1 There are no Detroit public high schools within the HOPE Village boundaries. However, the high schools that are available to students continue to perform below national and state standards. Further, many students are not graduat-
ing and not moving on to higher education. The four schools within the HOPE Village area are also finding it challenging to engage parents and begin college preparation early in students’ educational paths.

While the numbers tell a certain story of the HOPE Village community, they do not tell the whole story. That is why the National Forum chose to develop a series of dialogues where the community could voice what they believe were the factors behind these stories, and more importantly, what needed to be improved or initiated within the bounds of HOPE Village to begin to see a change in the college going culture of the community.

Project Methodology

This project used Participatory Action Research (PAR) as a tool to develop a series of community dialogues. PAR is a method that involves those directly impacted by the issue to be involved in the research, problem analysis, and eventually solution-making. Five HOPE Village residents were hired as community researchers and were involved in all portions of the research process along with researchers from the National Forum. Together, the conceptualization, recruitment, and analysis of the dialogues were carried out.

Researchers from the University of Michigan researchers and the community researchers trained on a specific form of dialogue and developed the particular methods that would be used to answer the questions above. The conversations with the community were based on a method of intergroup dialogue developed at the University of Michigan by Dr. Mark Chesler. Intergroup dialogue is unlike debate or deliberation. Rather, it emphasizes learning as something both the facilitators and the participants share. An important part of the dialogue is to understand that participants can have differences and similarities in experiences and perspectives and to have a shared learning experience, everyone should challenge themselves and the preconceived notions they hold in an attempt to broaden the perspectives of all participants.

The research team recruited dialogue participants from nearby schools and community events. Posters were displayed inviting community members to the dialogues and incentive strategies were discussed by the team to promote turnout for the dialogues. After several attempts, three dialogues eventually came to fruition. One dialogue had a mixture of adults and youth (youth were defined as below 21 years of age) while the other two dialogues consisted of one adult group, and one youth group. This was done intentionally to minimize power dynamics that occur between youth and adults as well as uncover any assumptions that adults had of youth and vice versa.

Keeping this method of dialogues in mind, the research team developed a guideline for the community dialogues in HOPE Village. Considering that higher education is an important subject that is highly valued and debated in many communities, the research team used several tools to create a space for a conversation in which all involved engaged in co-learning. Before the dialogues began, all participants received a sheet of guidelines for the dialogues. Guiding statements were read out loud by the participants or by the facilitators. Items on the guideline sheet included “Step up and Step Back” and “Challenge the idea not the person” along with explanations of these items. The full guideline sheet can be found in Appendix A.

As a second way to build trust and comfort among participants, the research team included an icebreaker activity before the dialogues. Participants were paired and answered a question such as, “if you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?” Questions allowed participants to interact and engage a question that was not difficult or controversial in order to feel more comfortable when the dialogue began around a potentially divided subject
like higher education. The full list of questions can be found in Appendix B. Feeling comfortable as a community member and trusting in the process allows community members to be as honest and open about their answers as possible, and to engage with the facilitator and other participants.

Questions asked in the dialogues were open-ended and included questions such as “Do you feel you have access to higher education?”, and “Is higher education important to you and your community?” The facilitator asked probing questions if they needed more clarity or detail about what a participant said. Participants were also encouraged to ask probing questions.

As an incentive for community members participating in the dialogues, each community member was provided lunch, a gift bag containing small token gifts (i.e. candles, hand soap, nutrition bars), and was provided some booklets providing tips on getting to college. Furthermore, a raffle was held at the end with prizes ranging from gift cards to a blender.

**Pre-Service Training**

This project was part of a focused involvement with the HOPE Village Community with a number of University of Michigan programs and departments. As such it has attracted a wide range of students and faculty. Given the number of volunteers from outside the community that work with Focus: HOPE, it is important that training is available on how to enter and benefit the ongoing work. With the guidance of community members, the Edward Ginsberg Center for Learning and Service, and prior scholarship on service learning and community building, we were able to create a pre-service training that would help students think about service to communities generally as well as think about HOPE Village specifically.

The pre-service training focuses on three main areas: the HOPE Village community, Asset-Based Community Development, and a set of service principles that all students should keep in mind when working in communities. The training is designed to take 2-4 hours and include activities and video clips to accompany the material presented (more detailed information in Appendix C). To help guide the trainer, the pre-service training will include a PowerPoint presentation and a trainer’s manual.

**LCAN Cost-Benefit Analysis**

Should HOPE Village pursue an officially recognized Local College Access Network (LCAN)?

The HOPE Village Initiative aims to develop a safe, strong and nurturing neighborhood where children and their families can develop to their full potential. To accomplish that goal, we will offer an interconnected web of opportunities and support, with education at its center. We expect to build a community where people want to live, work and raise a family – and where children have every opportunity to achieve their greatest potential.

As the National Forum and Focus: HOPE work together towards the educational goals stated in the HOPE Village Initiative’s (HVI) mission, the assumption has always been that whatever actions might be taken, a coalition built on community voices would be at the forefront. The question at hand is the form that this coalition will take. Initially, the National Forum intended to contribute to this goal by assisting in the development of a local college access network (LCAN) through the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN). LCANs are “high-quality, community-based college access strategic alliances” that are committed to building a college-going culture and dramatically increasing the college going/complete-
tion rates within their community.” However, several factors went into the decision not apply for an LCAN and to enter into collaborations with neighboring LCAN’s instead.

In light of Focus: HOPE’s existing relationship with the Central Woodward/North End LCAN in Youthville, and the new partnership with the Highland Park LCAN, it was important to consider whether creating a stand-alone LCAN serving HOPE Village would produce benefits that justify the additional hours and reporting. Additionally, there were some questions about where such an LCAN might be organized since several of the schools that serve most HOPE Village students already have LCANs. Focus: HOPE requested we prepare a cost-benefit analysis to understand the variety of options available to HOPE Village and the benefits and trade-offs associated with these options. We initially envisioned three models as representations of the possible directions that college-access-coalition-building could take. However, after further research we identified three methods that would best allow for the development of the access network, and Focus: HOPE is currently using one of those models (Model C), working with leaders from the Highland Park LCAN to bring services to the Focus: HOPE campus that will be available to youth in the area.

- **Model A (HOPE Village LCAN only):**
  Create a freestanding LCAN for the HOPE Village neighborhood through Focus: HOPE

- **Model B (HOPE Village-CW/NE LCAN):**
  Create an LCAN in partnership with the Central Woodward/North End LCAN

- **Model C (CW/NE LCAN only):**
  Work through Highland Park and the Central Woodward/North End LCAN to strengthen and localize services for HOPE Village

See Appendix D for more information.

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**Community Asset Map**

In a community whose assets are being fully recognized and mobilized, these people too will be part of the action, not as clients or recipients of aid, but as full contributors to the community-building process – Kretzmann & McKnight, 1996

Remaining consistent with the idea of asset-based community development, we collected and produced an asset map detailing the educational resources in and around HOPE Village. The resources compiled go beyond the static locations of schools and libraries. They also include opportunities where residents can gain skills and services that encourage pursuit of higher education. The organizations listed range from tutoring services to financial assistance programs, mentoring programs, day camps for children, parenting classes, and religious programs. The availability of an asset map is seminal to closing the potential gap between community organizations that are looking to serve individuals, and the individuals who would take advantage of these opportunities if they were aware of them. Many times in communities it is not the case that people are not seeking help, but instead many are unaware of where they can go for help. Furthermore when the organizations are not being utilized they can potentially lose funding which will undoubtedly hurt the community. The community asset map was made possible through the cooperation of the partners in the community. Many of them took the time to complete surveys about the programs their organizations offer, as well as the services they offer. Therefore, the Forum was able to compile the data into an excel sheet which organizes each resource according to the opportunity it provides. The “map” is intended to be used by persons in agencies, organizations and other leadership roles as a resource for information sharing and referral.
The dialogues, community asset map, pre-service training, and LCAN decisions constituted the activities that we engaged throughout the grant period. The findings for this project focus on the community dialogues, which tell us the most about the state of educational aspirations and attainment in the community.
Findings

“If we have higher expectations and believe in our children doing better, seeking better, you know that it starts there.”

The three dialogues revealed community thoughts about access to higher education in HOPE Village. From the transcripts, several themes were identified throughout the dialogues. These are organized under five main categories: Purpose of higher education, barriers to higher education, parents and teachers, community as social capital, and college going expectations. We also include other observations of the dynamics within the dialogue.

Purpose of Higher Education

Participants—both youth and adult— noted several purposes of higher education, both implicitly and explicitly throughout the conversations in all dialogues. It was clear the benefits of higher education for the individual were known to all three groups. College is understood as a mechanism for students to learn new skills, gain knowledge, get a good job, or be successful. Many times these purposes were interrelated and mentioned simultaneously. The assumptions that participants held about higher education underlined many of their experiences and opinions about access and barriers in the community. One youth participant noted:

“Education is like future, of like knowledge. You can succeed in life.”

Later the same participant also commented,
“Higher education is important to me and my community because like, it’s jobs out here but just with a high school diploma, it’s not really you know, fit. You need more now, they ask for more.”

In addition to skills, some participants noted that higher education was necessary to gaining access to information and knowledge that is not available to them in the Detroit schools. For example, majors in higher education or specialized vocational training are opportunities for students to practice their interests. As one participant claimed, “knowledge is power.” Higher education is believed to be the key to gaining that power.

Although most agreed that higher education facilitated job seeking and skill building, not everyone believed that higher education was necessary for one to live a successful life. For youth, success was mostly defined as having a stable or large income. Any postsecondary options that led to that outcome were considered, and college was not always one of them. A few youth in particular mentioned careers that did not require credentials or degrees as alternatives to pursuing higher education and becoming successful.

“I think education is great to have. But, you don’t need it to succeed in life. It is great to have though. [Facilitator: So what are other ways that people can be successful?] Well you can be an entrepreneur. Like you might need a little intelligence for that but you don’t really need to go to school for that. Like, you could invent something then you can travel all over the world. Or you can be a rapper or basketball player.”

Both the youth and the adults also rejected the common view of higher education as the four-year institution. Alternative higher education systems like two-year community colleges, trade schools, or certification programs were important to participants who believed some students just needed skills and credentials that would allow them to give back to their communities.

“Everybody will not go to a four-year university or a two-year community college. Some people just need to work on cars; some people need to open up a business. You know what I mean?”

Despite these alternative views, participants also believed that the purpose of higher education was not only important for the success of the individual, but also for the community. In other words, participants saw higher education as being directly related to community empowerment and growth. For example, training a community member to become a business owner in their community brings resources and social capital back to the community. Therefore, the education of an individual is important for the vitality of the community as a whole.

“Some people need to be a mechanic, because I can’t always go out to the dealership… I need a mom and pop on the corner who knows just as much, don’t have as much overhead, but that gives it to me two hundred dollars cheaper… who is that person? Not doctored.”

The perception of the need and purpose of higher education is fundamental to the attitudes that a community has towards access to higher education. Participants believed higher education was important for the individual and the community and opposed narrowly tailored definitions of higher education and postsecondary options. The following themes provide more clarity to these perceptions.

**Barriers to Higher Education**

Dialogue participants suggested a multitude of barriers to access to postsecondary education in
their community. The factors noted by participants were identified at multiple levels. Understanding that there are barriers at the individual level, educational systems level, and societal level is evidence that community members understand the complexity of educational issues in general and how they affect access to higher education.

**Individual Barriers**

Most of the adult participants felt that many youth did not understand the importance of education. Community members believed youth in the community had a tendency towards negative activities (sex, drugs, stealing etc.). Adults associated these bad choices with the tendency to drop out and negative attitudes towards pursuing postsecondary options. The following participant highlighted perception of youth and the distractions keeping them from understanding the value of education:

“They feel like all they wanna know is sex, drugs, going out to the club, poppin’, fighting, and hooting and hollering, and what he-said-she-said that and the fifth...Like they don’t understand the actual value of knowledge.”

However, the perception of youth was not all negative. Participants attributed delinquent behavior of youth to contextual factors such as the schools and the environments in which youth are growing up. One participant also voiced how role models can have a negative influence on youth:

“Eight year old breaking into a house here and there, and they looking up to the wrong people. Ain’t no telling how or what level they stopping school. They feel like they should go that way instead of getting an education on” (italics added).

Further, a participant shared a personal experience to illustrate that youth can very often be misunderstood.

“As a child I wasn’t very aggressive or negative, but I was very adventurous and it was misunderstood for ‘oh, he’s bad, he doesn’t listen’. I turned out to understand the work. A lot of times, it was no problem for me to actually grasp it. I kind of got bored of it and would just go do something else.”

The perceptions that adults have of the youth in the area were mixed. However, there was agreement that many other factors were involved in shaping individual aspirations and access. Many of these factors involved schools, which are spaces youth tend to spend a majority of their time.

**School Barriers**

Participants expressed an overall dissatisfaction with the school system that was serving the youth in their community. For many, the dissatisfaction was with what students were learning and how it was being taught to them. Participants perceived schools as teaching students concepts that did not apply to their backgrounds or appeal to student interests. For example, a teacher in the community who was participating in the dialogues noted that the texts students had to read in schools did not necessarily cater to the personal histories of the students. Furthermore, most participants agreed that the standardized instruction being provided to their children did not create an environment that catered to their interests. As illustrated by the personal experience in the last quote, participants were concerned that youth were bored in school. Personal negative attitudes for her school experience had one adult saying “it just wasn’t interesting.”

“Learning needs to be more personable more suited to each person’s traits and what their abilities are. You know, their own creative identities. If you know everybody is learning
Further, participants were disillusioned by the idea that they could not change the system of education even if they were involved in the school system as parents. One participant recounted a negative experience with being involved in the schools.

“I thought that if I was involved as a parent that I could impact the education they would receive and the environment but I was unable to do that... You know back when I believed in public education, then I thought that me appearing onto PTAs, staying on my kids at home would make them [successful] but there were many distractions, they’re not stupid. They graduated, all of them, but the environment itself and the system that’s in place didn’t engage them.”

Adults in particular believed that schools and the stakeholders within the school system have the most influence over their children’s academic preparation. Therefore, the barriers at the school system level were very pervasive in conversations.

Environmental Barriers

Participants related the education and access to the condition of the community several times throughout the dialogues. Participants indicated issues in the community such as violence and poverty had a direct connection with the level of aspiration to postsecondary education and the level of preparation students need to pursue those aspirations. One participant commented:

“In some students, the issues that you deal with are so detrimental to their ability to come in the class and focus. For example some of our youth are dealing with incarcerated parents or maybe, you know, nobody is at home. You know, nobody is feeding them, there is not food at home. Or just different levels of issues and probably maybe their gas and water is turned off...the lights, maybe they can’t study...I know my next door neighbor is running a generator to keep their lights and gas on...they have school aged children.”

Rather than schools being a safe-haven for students, participants said issues the community has dealt with outside the schoolhouse gates were now being reflected on school campuses. One participant noted, “Not only is violence in the streets. It’s starting to be inside the schools.” When this participant was asked why they thought that was happening, the participant said that schools were ignoring the issue and that schools did not think it was their responsibility or job to stop the issue from spreading. Violence and crime both in the community and in the schools were believed to be distracting students from their education:

“I would have to definitely agree about the violence just kind of overtaking the schools...issues around fighting, or you know, just bullying other students. And it really kinda seems to be an issue of, almost survival. It’s like they know that this is what they’re gonna expect during the school day. So they already kinda seem to come prepared to encounter that on the daily. So that definitely takes away from the academic side of the school.”

Economic Barriers

Participants recognized their community’s low-income status as very important, and as having major implications for education. Paying for college was a particularly salient issue for adults in the conversations. Most perceived that communities that are more affluent did not have to worry as much about how to pay for college. Those communities that did have to think about paying for college had difficult
helping their students navigate early and secondary education and the college application and choice process. Participants agreed that setting expectations was not enough, and therefore resources to help parents be part of the navigation process were important. Some participants also described the socioeconomic status and personal situation of parents as a major influence for students. Parents with low levels of education and low incomes felt that they were limiting their students’ higher education options.

Another male participant noted he was a parent of a daughter who had college aspirations. However, the economic situation of the participant limited the postsecondary options for his daughter.

“My daughter has aspirations to go to an art school but it is very expensive, we can’t afford it right now, so she’s going to go to community college in the fall. So we’re dealing with having a daughter going to college there’s a lot of factors, and I’ll just mention the one; being able to afford college is also a very serious concern for people in our community.”

This quote suggests that even those students with parental support and aspirations of attending certain institutions are being deterred because of their families’ income status.

Parents

The dialogues highlight the community’s perceptions of parents and teachers as important actors in increasing students’ educational outcomes. Participants repeatedly spoke of the role of the parent setting expectations for their children and being involved. Many of the adult participants were parents themselves, and noted the challenges to helping their students navigate early and secondary education and the college application and choice process. Participants agreed that setting expectations was not enough, and therefore resources to help parents be part of the navigation process were important. Some participants also described the socioeconomic status and personal situation of parents as a major influence for students. Parents with low levels of education and low incomes felt that they were limiting their students’ higher education options.

Community as Social Capital

Participants regularly recognized the effect that community agents can have on the college-going decisions of youth. Teachers, parents, and communities as a whole were cited as important factors in the decisions of students to do well in the school years leading up to high school graduation and matriculating into higher education. Although participants recognized that community agents could be empowerment agents for youth—and gave personal experiences and opinions as examples—they also realized that community agents could also be negative examples for youth. In addition to community agents being active in facilitating or impeding the access of youth in the area, the dialogue highlighted the detrimental effect of community agents taking a neutral stand and doing nothing towards building a college-going culture for youth in the area. Participants noted the contrast between their community and communities in other areas.

“I think other areas have community involvement. Detroit is just, I don’t know what we waiting on, they just...they don’t want anybody in the schools and they don’t wanna go outside the schools.”

Some of the adults reminisced about a time when the community seemed more connected.
Community connection—or what one participant would call "community kinship"—was believed to be the source of social capital in the community. One community member tells of a time when everyone in the community had a role in taking responsibility for the other youth and adults in the neighborhood. The following are examples of how community members described what their community was like in the past.

"You had a lot of very different types of people. You had a mixture but it was a working class. You had the mom and pops who owned the stores that live right around the corner or lived upstairs over the store, or right down the street. You had ministers on the block. People knew each other from the local churches... And everybody supported one another... It was almost everybody was striving for better. And there was a different level of even self-respect, families were proud of their names you know, you had the Williams who stayed on this block and then the Martins were over there and uh Mr. Smith and Mrs. Jackson. There was still a sense of pride for being us or who even in our madness. And you had your churches plugged in and that's how people received a lot of their information and the spiritual guidance and do a few relationships and then you had your store owners so we were able to shop and serve on another. But it seems that things have changed and so because of that, the expectations, I think of the community, has changed."

**College-Going Expectations**

The participants perceived a stable community environment as the best place to cultivate a college-going culture. In the adult dialogue, there was a consensus that what empowers the community directly impacts the individuals of that community in a positive way. In particular, the participants felt that all of the community played a critical role in setting the expectation to go to college. Expectations are understood not only to be the responsibility of the community as a whole, but also the responsibilities of individual families and the schools. Setting an expectation for youth to go to college was seen as a foundational step in building the college-going culture.

"I think expectations have a lot to do with it. When it comes to parents, when it comes to the teachers, then when it comes to the community. And if we have higher expectations and believe in our children doing better and seeking better, you know that it starts there. And a lot of us lose hope with the world and things improving. So I think we have to start with higher expectations."

The quote above gives some evidence of the gap in the community between aspirations and expectations. As noted above, community members agreed that higher education was important and necessary to both increase personal development and facilitate their social mobility. As such, many of the adults expressed wanting their children to go to college, and youth expressed similar aspirations to attend higher education. The same participants also expressed assumptions about the community and experiences that lowered their expectations. For example, one male adult participant thought that his involvement with his local PTA would help him fulfill the aspirations he had for his sons. His negative experiences regarding his attempts to change the schools changed his expectations. Similarly, while his daughter aspired to get a higher degree, his financial reality did not reflect his expectations. However, expectations continued to be important. Even if the mother or father of a family did not pursue higher education, having expectations set in motion the steps necessary to assist their children in navigating the college-going process.

"Some people are privileged to go to college from family expectations. You know, coming
Observations on Adult and Youth Perceptions

In addition to the dominant themes in the dialogues, facilitators noted the group dynamics and trends within the discussions. Adult participants were more likely to reminisce on the past and bring examples of how expectations and community dynamics used to function in the area. Furthermore, adult participants often went back and forth from blaming youth for making bad educational decisions and understanding that factors in their environment often led youth to make bad decisions. Surprisingly, youth were very likely to blame themselves for their educational outcomes with statements like “I just don’t work as hard as I know I should.” However, in the adult and youth dialogue when one adult participant blamed the youth for not trying hard enough, a youth participant quickly pointed out that youth were not the only ones at fault. Some youth also pointed to teachers as having a large impact on educational experiences of students and that when teachers do not take the time to explain things again, or show that they care about their students’ education that it can negatively impact them. Alternatively, youth pointed out that when teachers have high expectations, it can reflect well on their own educational expectations. Therefore, while some students blame themselves, other youth situated their negative educational experiences within larger contexts.

In addition to differences in attitudes between adults and youth, participants in two of the dialogues expressed they were unfamiliar with the term “higher education.” Not knowing what higher education is may be an indicator that the language surrounding options after high school is not prevalent enough in the community. Building a college-going culture involves normalizing all terms related to higher education. Thus, the findings may indicate the need for community organizations, businesses, and other community members to facilitate more conversations in the community concerning postsecondary education. The community also perceives many barriers to access to higher education. In many cases, they display tones of powerlessness or hopelessness in being able to change the college-going culture of the community. This is especially true when the educational system is directly related to the perceived barrier. These insights into the experiences and views of community residents can inform how community organizations and other community actors respond to the issues addressed.

Limitations

While the general dialogues were successful and yielded important information, there were limitations to the work. Despite the plethora of strategies used to recruit participants, only three of the five dialogues that we planned had enough participants to go forward. Visiting schools was an effective form of recruitment. Participants also appreciated the food, tokens of thanks, and raffles that were provided at the dialogues. However, recruitment still needs further attention in future projects. Future projects need to employ alternative strategies to address employment. Rethinking systems to compensate participants for their time may be necessary. Further, projects may benefit from accessing established community groups and encouraging dialogues in familiar settings (churches, block clubs, library etc.)
Community members have identified several barriers they believe should be addressed but that can be daunting to tackle all at once. One strategy to prioritize barriers may involve identifying the barrier that can most readily be addressed. Prioritize barriers that (1) are already being addressed through existing initiatives, (2) can be addressed by new initiatives with limited resources, and (3) can involve community leaders and residents. The following are recommendations for Focus: HOPE, as it considers how to address the barriers identified.

Recommendation 1
Provide spaces where students and parents can find support through educational professional but also through dialogue with each other.

The community has multiple sources of support for students and adults pursuing postsecondary education. Education professionals such as teachers, counselors, or admissions officers that work in HOPE Village or have access to the area are obvious sources of support and information for students and their families as well as adults. Education professionals, however, cannot create college-going culture alone. Every member of the community has a role to play in increasing educational attainment for HOPE Village. For example, community business owners could help support students by offering incentives in the form of discounts to students who have filled out the Federal and Financial Aid (FAFSA) documentation. Seniors
conversations may occur at school or at home depending on the type of environment the student has in those spaces. However, outside of those spaces, students are not receiving regular messages about going to college. Community leaders such as ministers, storeowners, and librarians are the starting point community conversations around higher education. The more youth are exposed to the expectations and the process of going to college, the more the language of college going will become normalized. However, many times community leaders are also uninformed. Organizations can help by disseminating college information to community leaders at critical points of the year. Organizations can encourage community leaders to have conversations, offer incentives, and be active in building the college-going culture.

**Recommendation 2**

Increase the opportunities for community-based activities for students of all ages geared towards developing academic and social skills that are supportive of college access and college success.

Building community spaces first requires the identification of existing areas where residents already tend to congregate. These spaces can take many forms such as spaces on the Focus: HOPE campus, recreation centers, block club meetings, libraries, or churches (to name a few). These are areas where the exchange of information is already taking place. Once these spaces are identified, it is recommended that an aspect of each space be built around college going. Take churches for example. A church can adopt a college information board or dedicate a portion of their meeting time to deliver college information to their members. Libraries can have a college corner with college information. Recreation centers can develop programming that increases expectations and encourages college going.

Identifying leaders in these spaces is also important. The dialogues reveal that higher education is simply not talked about enough in the community. Some
can additionally serve as a motivator, especially if those students are able to speak about their experiences both transitioning to and in college. With that, college tours can prove even more beneficial when visited consecutively as opposed to single isolated trips. This allows students to compare and contrast and helps to shift the student mindset from “will I go to college?” to “where will I go to college?” This also emphasizes the idea of best fit as students have the opportunity to think critically about what they need and want from a college.

Fostering a college-going culture also must include rigorous support of the college application process. The earlier students are aware of what the college application asks for the sooner they can set themselves up for success. Making meaningful connections with middle and high schools to offer application awareness workshops their students is one way of accessing larger groups of students and also advertising relevant community resources like free ACT prep classes and extracurricular opportunities. Some students participating in the focus groups specifically noted a lack of extracurricular opportunities provided to them by their school. More extracurricular opportunities, both implementing new ideas and exposing students to what already exists is crucial. More opportunities means students are more able to explore their interests and use their experiences to strengthen their college application. Collaborating with local businesses means opportunities for job shadowing, internships and career fair participants.

Students participating in the focus groups also expressed a strong desire for more experienced and relatable tutors, specifically those who are current college students. Several identified this as potentially more of a mentorship opportunity so that they could improve their academic skills from role models with insight on the college process. As a partnership with Highland Park LCAN continues to develop, this is one idea for addressing academic support and college preparedness.

Recommendation 3
Identify means of supporting college counselors and the work they do with students.

As students approach 11th and 12th grade, the importance of access to a college counselor is invaluable. Currently in Michigan, a college application week exists where students are encouraged to submit as many applications as possible. While this is important for the encouragement of application submittal, it results from the lack of individualized support. Students with permanent college counselors are able to walk through the process and most importantly assess colleges that are the best fit for them. Attending a school that is the right fit is directly connected to retention and graduation rates. It is also important to have a counselor who can work with students on developing their personal statement, request ACT and application fee waivers and answer difficult application related questions.

In addition to students, college counselors can also work with parents to demystify the process for their child. Adults in the dialogue expressed the need for a specific person to go to for help with the application process and with financial aid. Paying for college was of particular concern for parents in the dialogues. Having an expert to walk them through the options for financing their child’s education can be invaluable.

A current model that is working to get more counselors in the schools is Michigan College Advising Corps a program run by the Center for Educational Outreach at the University of Michigan. The program trains recent college graduates to become full-time college counselors in underserved high schools throughout Michigan. While this model is successful in bringing more counselors to the schools, the mere presence of informed full-time staff would be a major enhancement.
Recommendation 4
Provide concrete “how to” information and timelines for parents geared to identifying specific steps in preparing their children for college.

A common theme from parents in the focus groups was hopelessness. Parents discussed how they emphasized good grades and pushed their children to be successful in school, but that it ultimately was not enough. Several parents discussed the necessity of consistently holding high expectations and how students from other communities are assumed successful from the beginning. For some parents, a lack of knowledge around the college process is detrimental, and as mentioned, there can be an intimidation factor when attempting to seek out resources. For some, safe spaces are valuable; for others public workshops can provide valuable information on fostering a college-going household. Either way it begins within the community. Parent workshops must be more than just FAFSA application completion night. Empowering parents, who may be unfamiliar with the college process, to embrace it and learn its intricacies can have a resonating impact. Workshops with guest speakers who address their successes and failures as parents of high school graduates can be valuable in addressing the value and urgency of an all-hands-on-deck approach. Parents feeling a sense of hopelessness can learn effective strategies from other parents instead of a third party facilitator. This can similarly take the form of general discussions or dialogues. What we saw in the focus groups was parents sharing their stories and working together to identify where they believe a lot of the problems lie. From there they were able to think about potential solutions or ideas that might tackle some of these challenging concerns. Through the leadership of a few parents and a venue, these valuable discussions could easily come to fruition both in more formal and informal settings.
References


Appendices

Appendix A
Guidelines

Guidelines for Dialogue

1. **Confidentiality.** We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange.

2. **Our primary commitment is to learn from each other.** We will listen to each other and not talk at each other. We acknowledge differences amongst us in backgrounds, skills, interests, and values. We realize that it is these very differences that will increase our awareness and understanding through this process.

3. **We will not demean, devalue, or “put down” people** for their experiences, lack of experiences, or differences in interpretation of those experiences.

4. **We will trust that people are always doing the best they can.**

5. **Challenge the idea and not the person.** If we wish to challenge something that has been said, we will challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.

6. **Speak your discomfort.** If something is bothering you, please share this with the group. Often our emotional reactions to this process offer the most valuable learning opportunities.

7. **Step Up, Step Back.** Be mindful of taking up much more space than others. On the same note, empower yourself to speak up when others are dominating the conversation.

The Program on Intergroup Relations
The University of Michigan, 2010
### Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| 10 mins| **Welcome**  
Introductions (The idea of a Dialogues)-Introduce Facilitators  
Go over Agenda and Goals (Framing the Workshop)  
We are going to have a dialogue. A dialogue is in a sense a conversation that is unlike a debate. Where we look for shared meaning and invite others to engage in a discussion regarding:  
• Personal experiences and perspectives  
• The differences and similarities across these perspectives  
• That challenges ourselves and the preconceived notions we hold in an attempt to broaden our perspectives. |
| 10 mins| **Guidelines (Hand out Paper Copy)**  
-Popcorn read out & add on if needed |
| 12 mins| **Icebreaker - Concentric Circles (create inner and outer circle)**  
Q1: If you had a time machine that would work only once, what point in the future or in history would you visit?  
Q2: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?  
Q3: If your house was burning down, what three objects would you try and save?  
Q4: If you could talk to any one person now living, who would it be and why?  
Q5: If you HAD to give up one of your senses (hearing, seeing, feeling, smelling, tasting) which would it be and why?  
Q6: If you were an animal, what would you be and why?  
Q7: Do you have a pet? If not, what sort of pet would you like?  
Q8: Name a gift you will never forget?  
Q9: Name one thing you really like about yourself.  
Q10: What’s your favourite thing to do in the summer? |
| 5 mins | **Transition**  
- Now that we know each other a bit better we are ready to begin our dialogue about education and education after high school.  
- This is an open conversation  
- We encourage you to ask questions freely to each other as well as us or respond to one another’s experiences  
- This is a conversation between all of us and not just us  
- We are co-learning,  
- Emotions are important to people learning |
60 mins With that... Exercise #1 (Feel free to share/provide a personal experience if no one is sharing to start the dialogue.)

1) What does education mean to you?
2) Is higher education important to you and your community?
3) What are your educational goals?
   Adults: What are your educational goals for your children?
   Youth: What do you think others expect of you? (I.E. Mentors, parents, etc.)
   Do you share the same expectations for yourself?
4) Are you doing anything to reach your reach higher education? If so what?
5) Do you feel you have access to higher education?
6) Do you think you can reach your educational goals?
7) Are there any resources in your community that can help you access to higher education?
   Are there other communities that have more access to higher education?
8) What do you think will help you access higher education in this community?
9) Do you feel as though something is interfering preventing you from reaching your educational goals or accessing higher education?
10) What would you do about those barriers in order to ultimately reach your educational goals/aspirations?

15 mins Debrief
- Next Steps...?

5 mins Closing Activity
One word go around

3 mins Closing Remarks
Thank you for joining us this afternoon. We’ve heard a lot of stories and personal experiences about and what that means to you all. This is a conversation that I hope will continue furthermore my hope is that we can take these thoughts and turn them into actions as to further serve the community and its agenda for furthering education whatever that may mean to each and every one of us.

Right now we will have the raffle.

Be sure to grab a gift bag on the way out!

Once again thank for your participation! =] Enjoy the rest of your evening.
Activities

Our training is meant to do more than introduce the concepts of ABCD and our nine principles. Therefore, the training we have provided includes activities that encourage student volunteers to think actively about some of the concepts taught and about how they will put them into practice. Each activity provides a space for students to share their perspectives and reflect as a group on how these perspectives are relevant to their service in HOPE Village.

Video Clips

While ABCD and Principles of Service can be applied to any community in which students practice community service, it is important to realize that each community is different. To give students the best understanding of the community, it is best to turn to community members themselves. Therefore, the training we have developed will include video clips to be played at different points of the training that showcase community members. Some of the topics that these clips will cover are:

- What community members think about HOPE Village
- What community members identify as some of the community’s assets
- What community members would want to see in a volunteer coming into their community

Trainers

Our pre-service training includes a powerpoint presentation as well as a detailed trainer’s manual with steps on teaching these concepts, an overview of the activities, and additional reading to assist with understanding the concepts we have briefly outlined above. As such, anyone from an organization should be able to conduct this training for incoming students.

1. Respect- Respect has been found to be “the single most powerful ingredient in nourishing relationships and creating a just society”. It is a basic attribute for working with people in all types of communities and situations. We most often talk about respect as something we do to others. We give, show, or

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Appendix C

Pre-Service Training Information

Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD)

Asset-Based Community Development was developed largely by scholars John Kretzmann and John P. McKnight. The idea was in response to issue that many look to our cities and “disadvantaged” communities as inherently deficient, full of problems, and “needy”. This view of our communities has led to community members losing agency, and feeling they have no control over their futures. As a result of the internalization of negative outside views, community members become clients of services who receive aid from outside sources. Kretzmann and McKnight noted that for outside assistance to contribute to the communities assets rather than to further the internalization of the client, they needed to practice asset-based community development.

Students who engage in community service in areas like HOPE Village may have an inherently deficient view of the community that they will be working with. Furthermore, students may develop a “savior mentality” in which they believe their work is going to solve the communities’ problems and empower community members. Having an understanding of asset-based community development would benefit student volunteers because they may be able to expose the false or negative assumptions about a community, and focus on taking the good in the community and creating change.

Principles of Service

We also believed it was important for students who volunteer at HOPE Village to keep in mind certain principles that are often cited in service learning and community building literature, but rarely listed and explained in one place. From the scholarship in the area of service, we have developed the following list of principles that will be included in our training for students.

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Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment: Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation
hold persons in high respect. Showing respect is a basic part of engaging people. For some it means giving a positive feeling of regard or deference. For others it is proper acceptance or courtesy.

2. Integrity-integrity involves two fundamental intuitions: first, it is primarily a formal relation one has to oneself or between parts or aspects of one’s self; and second, that integrity is connected in an important way to acting morally (as defined by one’s social and cultural environment). Research related to integrity identifies it in a number of ways: 1) the integration of self; 2) the maintenance of an intentional values identity; 3) standing for something; and 4) moral purpose.³

3. Openness- Openness is a state of mind and attitude that facilitates receptivity to people, ideas, cultures, and environments, especially those circumstances from one’s own. Persons that exhibit openness are seen as earnest and sincere in their approach to situations. Openness connotes a genuineness freedom for us to share but also to have others share their experiences and perspectives without judgment. Persons seen as demonstrating openness are often judged to be honest and caring.

4. Building Relationships- Developing and continuously strengthening relationships with community members and organizations through practices that encourage equity and mutual growth. Relationships are usually transactional for short term tasks (each side brings something the other doesn’t) and transformational for sustained change (both sides are flexible, reflective, and change as a result of their interaction).⁴

5. Awareness- the ability to consciously shift perspectives and behaviors into an alternative cultural worldview.⁵

6. Self-Awareness- Also known as Intrapersonal awareness. Capacity to create an internal self that openly engages challenges to one’s views and beliefs and that considers social identities (race, class, gender, etc.) in a global and national context; integrates aspects of self into one’s identity.⁶

7. Awareness of Others- Also known as Interpersonal awareness. Capacity to engage in meaningful interdependent relationships with diverse others that are grounded in an understanding and appreciation for human differences; understanding of ways individual and community practices affect social systems; willing to work for the rights of others.⁷

8. Community Empowerment- Community Empowerment is achieved through the fostering of individual, civic agency among community members. Fostering individual, civic agency involves the promotion of decisions makers (community members) who have the authority to execute action within the community as a democratic group.⁸

Reference

6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment: Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation

Creating a formal structure through which community members can collectively organize in order to “coordinate and expand programs, services and resources that lower barriers preventing students from pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities” (MCAN). The work would also mean identifying an administrative structure, establishing relationships and formal program structures with an identified local high school or middle school, and creating an effective community oversight and engagement process for the LCAN. When those structures were in place, the community would then be in a position to apply to the Michigan College Access Network for funding to support an LCAN within HOPE Village. The funding from MCAN would come with a prescribed set of expectations and procedures that would additionally require staff hours and reporting procedures.

As we began to explore these options for development of an LCAN, the National Forum team encountered a number of issues. First, we discovered that an existing LCAN had been organized in the community several years prior and served community students. While we could not document the exact number of HVI students served, it was clear, based on school attendance patterns, that a significant number of students from HVI would be enrolled in the current LCAN service area.

Focus: HOPE had an existing, though not well defined relationship with this LCAN -- the Central Woodward/North End LCAN in Youthville. Members of the HOPE Village staff had been invited to serve on the advisory committee for this LCAN and had met occasionally, with the LCAN leadership. While specific goals had been generated through the LCAN related to all students in the target areas, there was no effort to specifically identify how the program impacted HVI.

A second issue that we encountered was deriving community input and support for the development of an LCAN. Earlier discussions with the HVI advisory committee had expressed possible interest in an LCAN; however, the community had little information about the LCAN nor had systematic processes been engaged to ascertain community interest in the LCAN process.

Appendix D
LCAN Cost-Benefit Analysis

Cost-Benefit Analysis or Feasibility Considerations

Should HOPE Village pursue an officially recognized Local College Access Network (LCAN)?

The HOPE Village Initiative aims to develop a safe, strong and nurturing neighborhood where children and their families can develop to their full potential. To accomplish that goal, we will offer an interconnected web of opportunities and support, with education at its center. We expect to build a community where people want to live, work and raise a family -- and where children have every opportunity to achieve their greatest potential.

As the National Forum and Focus: HOPE began its work together towards the educational goals stated in the HOPE Village Initiative’s (HVI) mission, one of the initial assumptions has always been that whatever actions might be taken, a coalition built on community voices would be at the forefront. Additionally, there was a particular model of this community-based coalition that was an early model of the work that might be done to build a strong college-going culture within Hope Village. Initially, the National Forum intended to contribute to this goal by assisting in the development of a new local college access network (LCAN) through the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN). LCANs are “high-quality, community-based college access strategic alliances” that are “committed to building a college-going culture and dramatically increasing the college going/completion rates within their community” (MCAN). Because the National Forum had had some experience in working with another community [Brightmoor] in developing such a community network, this project started with the development of an LCAN as an early goal for our involvement in HOPE Village.

Establishing an LCAN in HOPE Village would mean creating a formal structure through which community members can collectively organize in order to “coordinate and expand programs, services and resources that lower barriers preventing students from pursuing postsecondary educational opportunities” (MCAN). The work would also mean identifying an administrative structure, establishing relationships and formal program structures with an identified local high school or middle school, and creating an effective community oversight and engagement process for the LCAN. When those structures were in place, the community would then be in a position to apply to the Michigan College Access Network for funding to support an LCAN within HOPE Village. The funding from MCAN would come with a prescribed set of expectations and procedures that would additionally require staff hours and reporting procedures.
Out of these issues, the National Forum determined that its focus for this aspect of the project needed to be looking at the benefits or feasibility of considering the development of a new LCAN as a mechanism for developing a college-going culture within HOPE Village.

With this focus in mind, the team then began a process of:

1. Learning more about the LCANs in the Detroit area, what they offered and who they served
2. Through the community dialogues, getting a better sense of the educational aspirations and needs within the community
3. Considering the best approaches to developing an LCAN structure or LCAN-like structure that might serve HOPE Village
4. Building relations with Detroit LCANs on behalf of the HOPE Village project

Using the Local College Access as a model for building college-going aspirations and preparedness for young people, increasing community knowledge and support for college success, and developing clear outcome measures to facilitate the goals of college access and success, the team proposed three possible models for HOPE Village to consider. Based on our learning process, the team arrived at three possible models of LCAN development that might serve HOPE Village:

- **Model A (HOPE Village LCAN only):** Create a freestanding LCAN for the HOPE Village neighborhood through Focus: HOPE
- **Model B (HOPE Village-CW/NE LCAN):** Create an LCAN in partnership with the Central Woodward/North End LCAN
- **Model C (CW/NE LCAN only):** Work through Highland Park and the Central Woodward/North End LCAN to strengthen and localize services for HOPE Village

The benefits, trade-offs, and steps necessary to move forward with each of the models is noted in the charts that follow.
Table 1  
**OPTION ONE  Focus on creating a freestanding Local College Access Network (LCAN) for HOPE Village**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>DISADVANTAGES</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free-Standing LCAN</strong></td>
<td>Creating a free-standing LCAN will provide optimal support to residents of HOPE Village.</td>
<td>Having an LCAN for HOPE Village may contribute to an overlapping of resources between communities of close proximity that may be already engaged in similar work. In addition, being a member of MCAN may also challenge autonomy as there are procedures and goals the LCAN must follow.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The target of the outcomes for the LCAN will be those identified with input from community residence and developed to meet goals and outcomes that benefit the community. The LCAN can benefit HOPE Village by receiving membership to resources and support from the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) such as access to data, program evaluations tools, grant opportunities, and training programs. Being a member of MCAN will also unite HOPE Village with other LCANs around a shared vision and goal of increasing the community’s postsecondary educational attainment level to 60% by 2025.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Mode &amp; Services</strong></td>
<td>EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE</td>
<td>THINGS TO CONSIDER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 1: Drop-in information center only</td>
<td>Option 1: Less engagement and community participation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 2: Coordinated resources for college preparation (workshops, application assistance, FAFSA and scholarships)</td>
<td>Option 2: Leaving out interest populations who may not be college bound [i.e., want to work]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 3: Coordinated resources for college preparation and job preparation</td>
<td>Option 3: May require more resources [e.g., staff, support, funding, space]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative Staff</strong></td>
<td>Partial-time LCAN Director or Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 1: request assignments of current Focus: HOPE staff person[s]. This option will utilize staff that is familiar with the Focus: HOPE community and the mission. This is also most cost effective, as it will not need to add an additional employee to serve this position.</td>
<td>Option 1: May stretch resources; may install staff not particularly interested or prepared for this role</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Option 2: Hire new staff person for this responsibility. This option will provide a new perspective and expertise. This position may be supported through the use of grant funds or other sources.</td>
<td>Option 2: New staff may not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Option 3: Identify local volunteers or college students to serve as resources. This will provide opportunity for community members and/or college students to engage in leadership. This option is cost effective with minimal personnel expenses.</td>
<td>Option 3: The staff may have other immediate obligations that may affect their commitment. The staff may also not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clerical or Support Staff</strong></td>
<td><strong>Space or Facility</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recruitment and Resources Materials</strong></td>
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</table>
| **Hire members/leaders from external educational organization, the Focus: HOPE community, and/or university students as interns to support the structure of the LCAN. This will help build a strong network of diverse leaders and staff that can advance the mission of Focus: HOPE and the LCAN.** | **Option 1: Allocation of space by Focus: HOPE**<br>This option is the most cost effective and will provide an accessible space within Focus: HOPE for community members to convene for workshops, discussions, training, and strategic and organizational planning. | **Option 1: solicit from colleges, universities and other college or career preparation agencies. This option will align community resources and build partnerships based on trust.**
**Option 2: develop brochure or fliers to promote the LCAN. This will assist with the establishment of HOPE Village as an LCAN and as an official community resource** |
| **Personnel hiring may be restricted due to funding** | **Option 1: Depending on Focus: HOPE’s allocation, the space may be limited by the size, structure, atmosphere, etc.** | **Option 1: May be restricted with access to certain resources such as databases.**
**Option 2: May be restricted due to funding. May also limit legitimacy and building trust without external partnerships** |
| **Option 2: Rent an external space**<br>This option allows the LCAN to rent a space that is most ideal and meets the needs of the community (e.g., accessible to public transportation, large enough space to accommodate large audience and participants, a welcoming atmosphere, etc.) | **Option 2: Rent may be more costly and it may not be in the proximity of the Focus: HOPE parameters. This may limit the accessibility to the center to some members of the community.** |
### Sustainability and the HOPE Village Initiative Integrated Assessment: Based Coalition to Promote Career and College Preparation

#### Create LCAN Partnership

**ADVANTAGES**

Having an LCAN will provide optimal support to residents of HOPE Village. The LCAN can benefit HOPE Village by receiving membership, immediate support and resources from the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN), such as access to data, program evaluations tools, grant opportunities, and training programs. Being a member of MCAN will also unite HOPE Village with other LCANs around a shared vision and goal of increasing the community’s postsecondary educational attainment level to 60% by 2025.

**DISADVANTAGES**

Having an LCAN for HOPE Village may contribute to an overlapping of resources between communities of close proximity that may be already engaged in similar work. In addition, being a member of MCAN may also challenge autonomy as there are procedures and goals the LCAN must follow.

#### Program Model & Services

**EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE**

The Central Woodward/North End LCAN can collaborate with Focus: HOPE in developing and provide services relevant to the HOPE Village community at Youthville. OR the Central Woodward/North End LCAN can provide their existing services onsite at Focus: HOPE in serving HOPE Village area schools.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER**

**Option 1:** Drop-in information center only

| Option 1: Less engagement and community participation |
| Option 2: Coordinated resources for college preparation (workshops, application assistance, FAFSA and scholarships) |

| Option 2: Leaving out interest populations who may not be college bound (i.e., want to work) |
| Option 3: Coordinated resources for college preparation and job preparation |

| Option 3: May require more resources (e.g., staff, support, funding, space) |

#### Administrative Staff

**Part-time LCAN Director or Coordinator**

| Option 1: request assignments of current Focus: HOPE staff person(s). This option will utilize staff that is familiar with the Focus: HOPE community and the mission. This is also most cost effective, as it will not need to add an additional employee to serve this position. |
| Option 1: May stretch resources; may install staff not particularly interested or prepared for this role |

<p>| Option 2: Hire new staff person for this responsibility. This option will provide a new perspective and expertise. This position may be supported through the use of grant funds or other sources. |
| Option 2: New staff may not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Staff</th>
<th>Option 3: Identify local volunteers or college students to serve as resources. This will provide opportunity for community members and/or college students to engage in leadership. This option is cost effective with minimal personnel expenses.</th>
<th>Option 3: The staff may have other immediate obligations that may affect their commitment. The staff may also not be familiar with the community served by Focus: HOPE.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Clerical or Support Staff</td>
<td>Hire members/leaders from external educational organization, the Focus: HOPE community, and/or university students as interns to support the structure of the LCAN. This will help build a strong network of diverse leaders and staff that can advance the mission of Focus: HOPE and the LCAN.</td>
<td>Personnel hiring may be restricted due to funding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space or Facility</td>
<td>Option 1: Allocation of space by Focus: HOPE. This option is the most cost effective and will provide an accessible space within Focus: HOPE for community members to convene for workshops, discussions, training, and strategic and organizational planning.</td>
<td>Option 1: Depending on Focus: HOPE’s allocation, the space may be limited by the size, structure, atmosphere, etc.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Option 2: Rent an external space. This option allows the LCAN to rent a space that is most ideal and meets the needs of the community (e.g., accessible to public transportation, large enough space to accommodate large audience and participants, a welcoming atmosphere, etc.)</td>
<td>Option 2: Rent may be more costly and it may not be in the proximity of the Focus: HOPE parameters. This may limit the accessibility to the center to some members of the community.</td>
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### Table 3  
**OPTION THREE Current LCANs to bring services into the target geographic area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work With Existing LCAN</th>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>DISADVANTAGES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The desired goals of an LCAN are to improve the chances that students from a particular geographic area will be able to enter and graduate from college. The LCAN helps to focus attention and resources on these community students. HOPE Village is situated in a geographic area where several LCANs already operate and does not need to duplicate these resources. HOPE Village already has access to the programs and needs to concentrate its time on ensuring that the existing LCANs give specific attention to students who live in the HOPE Village zip code. Given limited resources within the neighborhood, HOPE Village could more wisely use its resources to galvanize community support for the existing program and pressure these programs to better serve its needs.</td>
<td>It is hard coming into organizations and making demand on its resources. While there is current willingness to address the needs of HOPE Village by the existing LCANs, personnel changes that are happening could see HOPE Village as less of a focus in the future. Additionally, HOPE Village will have less autonomy over ensuring that its students get the attention and resources needed to be college ready and successful.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Model &amp; Services</th>
<th>EXAMPLES OF WHAT MIGHT BE DONE</th>
<th>THINGS TO CONSIDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOPE Village invites the Central Woodward/North End LCAN to expand its services into the target zip codes and provide additional follow up for these students through various programs already existing through Focus: HOPE or the LCAN. Additionally, HOPE Village could work with the LCAN to develop specific parent and community outreach efforts that may be beyond the current score of the LCAN. Some of the same options in Plan Two might also be employed in this option with the exception that the LCAN is taking on these roles without the assistance of HOPE Village.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Option 1: Add a study center or other program at HOPE Village but managed by the LCAN</td>
<td>Option 1: Less engagement and participation by the LCAN with HOPE Village students and parents</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2: Enlarge current activities that attempt to coordinated resources for college preparation (workshops, application assistance, FAFSA and scholarships) within the HOPE Village settings</td>
<td>Option 2: Leaving out interested populations who may not be college bound (i.e., want to work)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 3: Coordinated resources for college preparation and job preparation with Focus:HOPE activities</td>
<td>Option 3: May require more resources [e.g., staff, support, funding, space] from the LCAN that may not be available</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Staff</td>
<td>No new personnel required</td>
<td>Option 1: LCAN staff or volunteers take on these roles</td>
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<td>Option 2: Use volunteers from local colleges to help coordinate the delivery of new services. HOPE Village has already started building a relationship with a number of local colleges and can capitalize on these</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Option 3: Identify local volunteers or college students to serve as resources. This will provide opportunity for community members and/or college students to engage in leadership. This option is cost effective as well with minimal personnel expenses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical or Support Staff</td>
<td>LCAN staffing handles clerical and support responsibilities.</td>
<td>Personnel hiring may be restricted due to funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space or Facility</td>
<td>Option 1: Allocation of space by Focus: HOPE to the LCAN</td>
<td>Option 1: Depending on Focus: HOPE’s allocation, the space may be limited by the size, structure, atmosphere, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This option is the most cost effective and will provide an accessible space within HOPE village for community members to convene for workshops, discussions, training, and strategic and organizational planning.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Option 2: LCAN operates out of its own existing space</td>
<td>Option 2: LCAN operates out of its own space that may not provide visibility and access for HOPE Village community</td>
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<td></td>
<td>This is a cost effective way to handle any space needs and does not require the LCAN or HOPE Village to spend additional dollars</td>
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Conclusion and Next Steps

The National Forum team has spent time working with the local LCANs to determine feasible ways to bring an LCAN’s services, if not an actual LCAN into HOPE Village. From the initial idea of developing an LCAN and applying for funding through the state of Michigan, the National Forum team concluded during the time of the project, that Option One, building a freestanding LCAN would not be feasible for a number of reasons, the primary one being the presence of the Central Woodard/North End LCAN operated by Youthville. Staff from Focus: HOPE was already involved in the advisory committee for this LCAN. The Youthville LCAN was working in five different schools that served as sites for HOPE Village students.

Given the existence of this LCAN, the other two options became the focus of our work. Option Two, developing a partnership with the North End LCAN, became one of the foci of our work and allowed the National Forum team to begin developing a relationship with the director of the LCAN. We were able to connect him to some University of Michigan resources, to advertise some of the HOPE Village program events, and to begin a discussion of what a closer relationship with HOPE Village might look like in terms of structure and resources. We found the biggest issues were not the lack of desire to serve HOPE Village but the limited resources available through the LCAN and a lack of understanding of how HOPE Village might be specifically served. We also began to understand the complexity of the work with identifying students to begin to target HOPE Village residents.

In the course of this work with the North End LCAN we learned about plans to develop another LCAN through Highland Park High School, an area that has a small overlap with the HOPE Village geographic boundaries. We began working with the planning group for this LCAN and have contributed significantly to development of the LCAN proposal that is being submitted to MCAN. In the course of this work, we arranged time for the LCAN developers to meet with HOPE Village representatives to ensure that HOPE Village (and Focus: HOPE).

Given the work we have done with the local LCAN, we believe the initial goals of this part of our project have been accomplished. We have 1) make the North central LCAN more aware of HOPE Village as an interested and targeted community to be served and 2) we have linked the HOPE Village Community to the pending development of the Highland Park LCAN. Through both of these efforts, we hope that more HOPE Village students will be directly prepared to enter and be successful in college.

While we believe we have accomplished the goals of this segment of our work, we understand there is still more that could be done to work with college students in the HOPE Village area. We recommend that Focus: HOPE and HOPE Village continue to pursue the following:

- Develop a survey of community focus on college interests and goals
- Create a specific goals related to college access and success for residents of HOPE Village
- Continue work with the existing LCANs to be able to provide information about HOPE Village students and their needs related to preparation for college and receive from the LCANs updates on what is happening with various educational programs being provided
- Develop specific community activities that call attention to college access (College recruitment Day)
- Ensure that persons from HOPE Village continue to attend the LCAN meetings and serve on various committees