ENGAGING & EMPOWERING
Collaboration was a hallmark of the IA project and was evident in many aspects of the work. For example, Focus: HOPE's priorities and feedback guided the focus of the projects; teams addressed issues from multiple disciplines; and community stakeholders provided input and helped conduct the research.

By training residents in research methods and involving them in the process and work, the project approach helped develop human capacity and leadership skills in the neighborhood that extend beyond the IA itself.

Graham sponsored a community block party to encourage further community involvement with the projects and support the HVI. The research teams also shared their work and solicited community feedback through a six-week interactive poster display at the neighborhood branch of the Detroit Public Library.

“It gives me hope that somebody’s paying attention to the community and recognizing the importance of the people and the resources you can get from them.”

Lisa Robinson, Resident, Oakland Boulevard Community Association
President, IA Community Researcher
MAKING A DIFFERENCE
For more than 18 months, the teams engaged in diverse efforts to support the HVI. They gathered data, identified opportunities, developed plans and recommendations, and facilitated several neighborhood improvements. Accomplishments include:

Open & Vacant Space
• Playground renovations at Glazer Academy using designs developed with neighborhood and U-M students
• Visioning plans and design strategies for underutilized spaces
• Property research to help target stabilization and improvement efforts
• Assistance making Focus: HOPE a lead partner on the 26-mile Inner Circle Greenway that will convert an abandoned railroad bed into a multi-use trail
• Designs for transforming a vacant lot near Focus: HOPE’s campus into an attractive, temporary public park

Social Perceptions
• Interdisciplinary inventories of the neighborhood’s social environment through interviews, focus groups, and photographs that reveal residents’ perceptions and concerns

Housing
• Analysis of options to increase affordable housing availability

Education
• Asset map of city-wide educational resources available to HVI residents
• Evaluation of options to mobilize a fundable community-based educational network and foster a college-going culture

Built Environment
• Inventories of the neighborhood’s physical environment to identify strengths and opportunities
• Streetscape plans and a traffic study to help make streets safer and more usable

Economic Development
• Master plan to improve and attract investment to the main commercial thoroughfare
• Audit of community-based skills that can form the basis of new economic collaborations
• Recommendation to create a local exchange system for residents to offer services through a time bank or utilize a local currency

To learn more & access detailed summary reports, visit graham.umich.edu/knowledge/ia/completed

Looking Forward
Recognizing that the implementation of recommendations will require additional resources, the teams developed project proposals that Focus: HOPE may submit to potential funders. While Graham’s collaborative study with Focus: HOPE concluded in Summer 2014, the doors between the two organizations remain open for continuing to build hope in the neighborhood—and in the Motor City.