

Greenville West Side Comprehensive Plan – Draft Policy/Program Recommendations

Discussion Points for Steering Committee (October 31, 2013)

CHAPTER 4

Form a West Side Collaborative led by a community-based organization

Responsible Agent(s): Community Organizations

Action Type: Program

- Development of a collaboration, spearheaded by either an existing organization or a newly formed incorporated non-profit entity.
- Role would be to engage existing organizations and provide a framework for coordination around specific issues – not to create new programs.

Expand and retool outreach in the community

Responsible Agent(s): Community Organizations; Service Providers; City of Greenville; Greenville County

Action Type: Policy/Program

- Organize grassroots efforts to deliver the message face-to-face, rather than relying on passive or high level outreach efforts.
- Build trust within community.

CHAPTER 5

Increase neighborhood children’s access to AJ Whittenberg Elementary and Legacy Charter School

Responsible Agent(s): Greenville County School District

Action Type: Policy/Program

- To ensure equality of opportunity, the district should increase outreach to local families when enrollment opens to ensure that all eligible children are aware of the opportunity, and give preference to local neighborhood residents.
- In coordination with efforts to build community collaboration and rethink outreach methods, the schools and local organizations should seek further partnerships to further engage local residents.

Fund a case manager to connect residents to local resources

Responsible Agent(s): Job Training & Placement Providers; Greenville Regional Workforce Collaborative; Local Employers

Action Type: Policy/Program

- Designate a case manager within the West Side, possibly through the Greenville Regional Workforce Collaborative or the West Side Collaborative, to assess potential program participants and make referrals to existing programs and resources.
- Identify a pool of employers that both match resident skillsets, are accessible from the West Side, and willing to serve as “work history incubators.”

Coordinate Parking Strategy in the Village

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville; Greenville County; West Greenville Property Owners, Businesses and Residents

Action Type: Policy/Program

- An approach utilizing a combination of on-street parking and coordinated use of surface lots to support businesses in the district.
- Change zoning regulations, such as adoption of an overlay district that encourages shared parking, to support this approach.

CHAPTER 6

Attract a new neighborhood grocery store that provides healthy food options

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville; Community Organizations

Action Type: Policy/Program

- There are three different retail models that may be a good fit for the West Side: 1) Recruiting a for-profit grocery store; 2) Supporting the creation of a nonprofit grocery store; or 3) Developing a local food co-op.
- Identify a lead organization or community leaders to serve as advocates to prospects. Alternatively, community-based organizations such as foundations, local food banks, and churches will play key roles.
- First step in the process - Conduct a Supply Conditions Analysis; survey local residents and employees; and perform a segmented market analysis of “food eaten at home.”

Develop an Urban Farm and Education Center at the West Greenville Community Center

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville; Greenville Forward/Growing for Good; Other Healthy Food Organizations; Neighborhood Organizations; Residents

Action Type: Policy/Program

- Use the West Greenville Community Center facility to centralize food growing and education in West Greenville and the West End.
- Develop a centralized location for an urban farm with teaching facilities to jump-start Gardening for Good’s efforts in the West Side.

Collaborate with Legacy Charter Schools to Develop an Urban Farm in Southernside

Responsible Agent(s): Greenville County School District; Greenville Forward; Neighborhood Organizations; Other Healthy Food Organizations; Residents; Parents and Students of Legacy Charter Schools

Action Type: Policy/Program

- Expand the existing community garden at Legacy Charter Elementary School as an additional component of the Gardening for Good program – with educational components to build off schools’ existing curriculum.
- Integrate the school into the neighborhood with a larger-scale urban farms that are used by students, their families, and surrounding residents.

Support Sales and Swaps of Locally-Grown Food

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville; Greenville County; Healthy Food Organizations

Action Type: Policy

- City currently permits the sale of agricultural products as a temporary use (Section 19-4.5.3 of the Municipal Code), that requires a temporary use permit which is valid for 90 days at a time.
- Consider changes in policy such as exempting from permitting; determining a threshold, based on the size of sale or number of vendors, that requires a permit and allow smaller sales to occur without one; and/or extending permit lengths.

CHAPTER 9

Target Code Enforcement/ Use Abatements and Liens to Fix Nuisance Properties

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville; Greenville County; Community Organizations; Residents

Action Type: Policy/Program

- Prioritize code enforcement in areas that are already distressed and at the edges of these distressed areas to prevent the spread of blight – targeting the blocks adjacent to new community development projects.
- Utilizing Greenville Cares program, outreach efforts to help residents understand and recognize basic code violations to empower local residents.
- Use an approach that offers assistance — rather than just threatening fines - providing information about programs when posting violations.
- Follow up on targeted code enforcement and offers for assistance with an aggressive strategy of nuisance abatements and liens on properties that continue to exhibit violations.

Legislate a Tax-cap for Fixed-income Homeowners

Responsible Agent(s): Greenville County; City of Greenville; Other Taxing Jurisdictions; State Legislature

Action Type: Policy/Program

- Pass a measure that would freeze, slow, or defer property tax increases for vulnerable residents.
- The two main policy decisions are: 1) how the tax rate should be adjusted, and 2) who should be eligible for the rate adjustment.
- Further study is needed to determine the mechanism and target population.
- Utilize South Carolina Homestead Exemption, which exempts the first \$50,000 of fair market assessment value for homeowners who are over the age of 65 or disabled.

Create a Home-selling Education Program/ Tenant Rights Education Program

Responsible Agent(s): Greenville County; Non-profit organizations

Action Type: Program

- Offer educational program to help renters to understand their rights under landlord-tenant law and to empower homeowners to make knowledgeable decisions.
- Workshops could be taught by Greenville County as part of the existing program.

Form a Community Land Trust

Responsible Agent(s): Non-profit Organizations; Citizen Grassroots Groups; City of Greenville; Greenville County; Other Housing Providers; Local Land Trusts

Action Type: Policy/Program

- Community Land Trusts (CLTs) provide affordable housing by unbundling the house structure from the land that it sits on, effectively taking rising property values out of the cost equation. The land is held by the CLT, a member-controlled nonprofit community organization, and leased to member-residents who rent or own the homes.
- A CLT would have the ability to buy single-family homes at current (relatively low) prices, and keep this set of houses affordable to a targeted income group in perpetuity.
- A CLT should use a shared-equity homeownership model that targets working-class households, or about 80-120% AMI. Shared equity appreciation models allow homeowners to build financial resources through their ownership while keeping the initial subsidy in place.

Recruit Local Job-providers to Participate in Employer-assisted Housing Program

Responsible Agent(s): CommunityWorks Carolina and Partners; Large Employer Sectors/Industries; City of Greenville; Greenville County

Action Type: Program

- Create an employer-assisted housing program based on current local models - Home from Work program for employees of Greenville Hospital System, and the Home for Teachers program for Greenville County School District teachers.
- With the program organization already in place through CommunityWorks Carolina, the community can focus on recruiting employers.

Develop a Dedicated Funding Stream through a Housing Trust Fund

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville; CommunityWorks Carolina and Partners

Action Type: Policy

- Develop a dedicated funding stream, using a locally-funded Housing Trust Fund.
- The likely partner in creating this dedicated fund is CommunityWorks Carolina (formerly Greenville Housing Trust Fund). Potential funding sources include: Linkage Fees; Document Recording Fee; Hospitality Taxes; and Private Donations.

Target Home Improvement Loans to West Side Homeowners

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville; CommunityWorks Carolina; Other Housing Funding Sources

Action Type: Program

- Increase funding to existing city rehabilitation loan programs, the Emergency Repair Program and the Community Improvement Program, through Housing Trust Fund, and market directly to West Side homeowners — especially in areas targeted for aggressive code enforcement.

Create a Deconstruction Program

Responsible Agent(s): City, County; Non-profit organizations

Action Type: Program

- City has already adopted a requirement for demolition announcements so that architectural components can be salvaged. Formalizing the practice and develop a marketplace around the procured materials.
- A fully-realized deconstruction program can also create jobs that require fairly minimal training.
- As new infill housing is developed, this program would allow incorporation of recycled building materials from the neighborhood, and help keep artifacts of the neighborhood's history intact.

Use Infill Design Guidelines to Regulate New Housing

Responsible Agent(s): City of Greenville

Action Type: Policy/Code

- Adopt Infill Design Guidelines recommended in the City-wide Housing Strategy, which specifies an appropriate housing typology, building siting, and transitional design.