



Vision Russell Progress Report

Introduction and Purpose

Building on the momentum of combined efforts to reestablish Russell as a neighborhood of choice, numerous revitalization efforts led by community members and stakeholders are underway and contributing to the area's transformation. The impact of these initiatives are helping make Russell an affordable and accessible neighborhood that prioritizes health and education, provides jobs and boosts the local economy, with neighbors who are connected to each other and the rest of Louisville.

This document is meant to serve as an inventory of the many early successes achieved in the five priority areas and community-generated goals in the VRTP Plan since its completion in January 2017.

Priority A: Improve educational outcomes for children.

Goals

- *Russell children enter kindergarten ready to learn.*
- *Russell school age children are proficient in core academic subjects, and graduate high school college- or career-ready.*

Early education, starting from pregnancy through the first day of kindergarten, is critical to academic success in school. Programs for early learning, Out of School Time, and other academic and positive youth development activities increase the likelihood for success later in life.

Recent Outcomes and Initiatives Related to Priority A:

Beecher Terrace Pre-K Participation and Capacity

As of December, 2017, 52.48% of Beecher resident Pre-K children participate in center-based or formal home-based early learning settings or programs. As of December, 2017, there were 976 center-based or formal home-based early learning/childcare slots offered in the Russell neighborhood

Urban Strategies Literacy Programming

Urban Strategies participates in reading programs to promote early childhood literacy skills, including: 1) partnerships with JCPS and child care centers to participate in Jumpstart's 13th annual Read for the Record campaign in 2018; 2) 2019 literacy initiative, "Russell Reads" will foster equity through Family Literacy and community engagement, emphasizing that parents and trusted adults are children's first teachers; and much of learning occurs beyond the school setting.

Book Rich Environment

LMHA will be serving as a local partner for the Book Rich Environments program, a tri-sector collaboration between non-profit organizations, national government agencies, and corporate publishers that aims to connect families living in public housing communities with a vibrant and accessible culture of books. LMHA's local partnership activities will include distribution of free, high

quality, diverse books to children and families living in HUD-assisted housing; connecting young people and families with literacy activities provided by the public library; and building partnerships to develop and deliver ongoing community and educational programming.

Youth Development

As of December, 2017, 45.5% of Beecher resident youth were involved in positive youth development activities.

Community Children's Programming

Nonprofit Play Cousins Collective facilitate "Play and Learn Labs" at community events in the Summer of 2018 to help bridge the gap between a parent's desire to be involved in community and their need for childcare.

Priority B: Improve Health.

Goals

- *Residents enjoy good health and a strong sense of well-being.*
- *Russell's built environment supports health and safety*

In the time since the completion of the VRTP, there has been significant momentum in transforming the built environment through projects that enhance quality of life and well-being for Russell residents of all ages. Access to health care, increased recreational opportunities, and redevelopment of vacant and abandoned properties all contribute to the overall health and safety of the neighborhood.

Recent Outcomes and Initiatives Related to Priority B:

Louisville Urban League Track and Field Facility

The Louisville Urban League will be developing a \$30 million world class indoor track and field facility on the Heritage West site that previously was to be developed as the Food Port.

Russell Neighborhood Health Center

A \$3 million health care facility is under construction at 15th Street and Broadway that will help increase the number of Russell residents with a medical home, and will replace the Park DuValle Health Community Center at City View.

Hope Wellness Center

Established in October 2018, the Hope Wellness Center is the only after-hours Immediate Care center serving Russell and West Louisville at-large. The project, created by the Black Community Development Corporation (Black CDC), offers high quality care, prevention, and educational programs to residents in West Louisville that will empower individuals to live healthy.

Oasis Grocery Store

Oasis Grocery is a public-private partnership created in July 2018 between Dare to Care, Catholic Charities and Buehler's Grocery in July 2018 to increase access to healthy foods in Russell and surrounding neighborhoods by offering frozen foods, fresh produce, dry staples, and more at prices just above wholesale.

YMCA

The Republic Bank Foundation YMCA is a \$28 million investment located at 1720 W Broadway which will feature a state-of-the-art fitness center, 25-meter swimming lap/family pool, gymnasium, classrooms, modern locker rooms, an indoor track and a Kid's Club that will provide childcare while members exercise. In addition, collaborative partners will bring healthcare, financial service options, and more to the area. Along with its partners, the Y expects to serve about 20,000-25,000 unique visitors each year.

Passport Health and Well-Being Campus

Passport Health Plan is constructing a Health and Well-Being Campus at 18th Street and W Broadway which will serve as its headquarters. The \$24 million, 337,000-square-foot four-story building with three connected structures will create jobs, incorporate affordable housing, and increase access to health care.

Sheppard Park Improvements

\$600,000 improvements to Sheppard Park including a new sprayground, tuned drum play area, walking path markers, new landscaping, trash cans, picnic tables, benches, a restroom facility and new swings.

Humana Foundation/Fund For the Arts Creative Placemaking Project

Russell community members created six mosaic gateway signs under the direction of local artists Gwendolyn Kelly and Bryan Holden which will be installed in high-traffic areas throughout the neighborhood, including one at the Beecher Terrace management office.

Opportunity Corner

Coming in 2019, Opportunity Corner will be a unique shipping container market place open year round on two formerly vacant lots at the corner of 18th and Magazine Streets to be used by persons who live in and around the West Louisville neighborhoods and Louisville's community at large. This project is being funded by Choice Neighborhoods Action Activity Grant funds, and is a partnership between the Black CDC and Louisville Grows, and will include a community garden and orchard.

Lily Pad

A vacant lot has been transformed using Choice Neighborhoods Action Activity Grant and Louisville Metro Government funds into the Lily Pad, an open-air space community space, complete with platforms, chairs and benches. It's located behind the Sweet Peaches building near the corner of South 18th Street and West Muhammad Ali Boulevard.

Murals and Other Public Art

Space Reserved for list of new Public Art projects.

Veterans Flag Memorial at KCAAH

The Colonel Charles Young Veterans Flag Memorial was unveiled on November 11, 2018 as part of the Freedom Flag Project created by the National Association for Black Veterans (NABVETS) at the Kentucky Center for African American Heritage (KCAAH). The memorial was installed to honor a native son of Kentucky Colonel Charles Young. An unheralded military hero, Charles Young (1864-1922) was the third black graduate of West Point, the first African American US national park superintendent, the first black U.S. military attaché, the first African American officer to command a Regular Army regiment, and the highest-ranking black officer in the Regular Army until his death. An exhibit about Colonel Charles Young is on display at KCAAH for the public to view.

Building Our Blocks

Building Our Blocks (BOB) brings together Louisville Metro Government agencies with community

leaders and partner organizations to take steps to minimize blight, deter crime, beautify neighborhoods and build hope – one block at a time. BOB partners lend their time and resources to connect directly with residents to strengthen community engagement and provide on-the-spot services during the event. BOB focused 100% of their 2018 efforts on four outreach events in the Russell neighborhood to build off the synergy of Vision Russell. BOB distributed Vision Russell materials in conjunction with their outreach events.

Vacant and Abandoned Property Control

Louisville Metro Vacant & Public Property Administration, in conjunction with the Landbank Authority, has acquired 126 properties in Russell since January 2017, and have sold 36 properties which will be returned to productive use. They currently have 43 parcels available for reuse, and are working to improve health and safety in Russell by initiating 141 foreclosures, and demolishing 43 dangerous structures in the neighborhood.

Priority C: Create strong retail/service centers and expand economic opportunity for all.

Goals:

- *Russell residents are financially secure.*
- *Existing Russell businesses are encouraged to stay and grow, and new commercial activities are drawn to the area to further stimulate growth.*

Economic development activities that provide job training, employment opportunities, and increased neighborhood resources and amenities have increased significantly since the completion of the VRTP.

Recent Outcomes and Initiatives Related to Priority C:

Section 3 Jobs

Economic development for Beecher Terrace and its residents is important, new jobs will be available during the transformation of Beecher Terrace and the Russell neighborhood through the HUD Section 3 program. Over 800 individuals have signed up to be considered for Section 3 job opportunities associated with Choice Neighborhoods Implementation grant. Anyone interested in Section 3 opportunities should contact LMHA at section3@lmha1.org, or by text or voice to 502-276-5008.

Employment/Workforce Development

- Urban Strategies hired a new case manager to work with the formerly incarcerated and those in recovery who are current / former Beecher Terrace residents.
- As of December, 2018, 102 Beecher Terrace residents had been enrolled in job training or other workforce development programs during the grant period. Of these, 58 have completed their training.
- As of December, 2018, 93 Beecher Terrace residents have obtained new employment.
- Urban Strategies, Inc. co-hosts Workforce Wednesdays with KentuckianaWorks Career Center.
- Choice Neighborhoods partner, Bishop and Chase, holds individual financial literacy sessions for Beecher and Russell residents

Louisville Urban League Job Training Programs

- Louisville Urban League, Inc. is providing job training through its *Kentuckiana Builds* program, which teaches students the skills needed to thrive in the Louisville area's building and infrastructure boom. *Kentuckiana Builds* is a partnership between the Kentucky Education and Workforce Development Cabinet, KentuckianaWorks and the Louisville Urban League, Inc.
- Louisville Urban League, Inc. has partnered with TARC to offer a Class B CDL training program, which will allow graduates to become full-time coach operators.

OneWest 18th Street Incubator

OneWest recently purchased a vacant single-family home at 516 S 18th Street in Russell and will pursue rezoning the space for commercial use as a small business incubator.

Flux Carnegie library rehab underway

Rehab of vacant Carnegie Library at 1718 W Jefferson Street into community space in Russell to be used for social, cultural, and civic events.

Opportunity Zone

Opportunity Zones are designated Census Tracts that offer tax incentives to spur economic development. Russell's first Opportunity Zone project kicked off in October 2018 when real estate development firm The Marian Group relocated Blacksmith Iron Works to a 20,000 square foot facility in the neighborhood.

Quinn Chapel Stabilization Grant

Louisville Metro Government has been awarded a \$450,000 grant by the U.S. Department of the Interior and the National Park Service to stabilize the former Quinn Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church at 912 W Chestnut Street. LMHA has committed \$300,000 of Choice Neighborhoods Critical Community Improvement funds, and LMG's Office of Redevelopment Strategies has added \$150,000 to the stabilization effort bringing the total investment to \$900,000.

Louisville Central Community Center Business Plaza

Louisville Central Community Center will be creating a Business Plaza and Incubator in their Old Walnut campus which will provide rental space for small businesses that address the needs identified during the community engagement phase of the VRTP planning process.

Molo Village/The Village at West Jefferson

The Village at West Jefferson, led by Molo Village CDC, is a 30,000 SF commercial investment planned for the vacant lot adjacent to the St. Peter's United Church of Christ. The project will bring commercial and supportive services to Beecher Terrace residents and the East Russell area. Molo Village CDC has successfully recruited tenants, who have committed to leasing space through Letters of Intent, that directly address the needs identified in the Vision Russell Transformation Plan including a restaurant, coffee shop, health care and supportive services providers.

Priority D: Increase the availability of high-quality, mixed-income housing.

Goals:

- ***Beecher Terrace replacement is located in vibrant, sustainable, mixed-income communities that serves as catalysts for new investment.***

- ***Russell offers a variety of high-quality, affordable, and market-rate homeownership and rental housing opportunities.***

Creation of new rental and homeownership opportunities helps people find new housing to become and remain long-term Russell residents, which is a key component to neighborhood stabilization and revitalization.

Recent Outcomes and Initiatives Related to Priority D:

Beecher Terrace Replacement Phase I Groundbreaking

Phase I groundbreaking for 117 affordable housing units on the former Beecher Terrace site for residents aged 55+ to begin in early 2019, with construction to be completed in mid-2020. Phase II (108 units) and Phase III (94 units) are in development. Timelines for remaining phases are currently being adjusted to reflect initial delays.

HPI Development

The Housing Partnership Inc. has acquired the long vacant warehouse at 1405 W Broadway for a mixed-use development that will include housing, office space, and other commercial uses.

YMCA Transitional Housing Renovation

The Chestnut Street YMCA completed a \$477,000 renovation on its 41-unit permanent supported housing program in January 2018, with funding provided by the Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The program is the only such program in the city that provides housing for men moving towards self-sufficiency.

Henry Greene Apartments Renovation

Multi-family housing developer Allied Argenta plans a \$17.5 million renovation of 124 affordable single family units, which will include landscaping, walkways, and other amenities. This project will also create seven fully-ADA accessible units.

City View Park Apartments Rehab

Telesis Corp. was awarded \$1 million from the Louisville Affordable Housing Trust Fund for renovation to 503 units in the City View Park Apartments.

REBOUND Developments in Russell

Through their "Adopt-A-Block" program, REBOUND has adopted two blocks of vacant properties on Dr. W. J. Hodge Street, consisting of eleven single-family homes. All homes will be made available for homeownership opportunities to LMI income families. Phase I is currently underway with rehabilitation on four homes, and new construction starting on two homes this summer. REBOUND is in the process of acquiring six single-family vacant properties in Russell near the Louisville Urban League's Sports & Learning Complex site as part of its "Single-Family Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP)." These homes will be made available for homeownership to LMI families.

Russell Homeownership Incentive Program

Louisville Metro Government is incentivizing homeownership in Russell by offering funding for qualified improvements and repairs up to \$24,999 to new homeowners in the neighborhood.

18th Street Corridor Redevelopment

The aim of the 18th Street Corridor Redevelopment project is to implement block by block improvements to the 18th street Corridor and nearby blocks. This includes façade improvements to owner-occupied

homes and rental units, vacant lot acquisitions, and rehabilitation / repurposing of vacant properties for commercial use. Louisville Metro Government's "Louisville Forward" office will lead the implementation of this activity. The outcomes associated with the 18th Street Corridor Redevelopment project are to increase home values, attract new residents to home ownership opportunities and improved rental units, and spur economic growth through creation of usable commercial space along this key neighborhood corridor.

Priority E: Improve community connectivity.

Goals:

- *Russell residents are engaged in community and civic life, and connected to resources.*
- *Residents have safe and convenient multi-modal transportation options to access services, amenities, and jobs.*

Russell residents are now more connected to each other, the rest of the city, and the world thanks to strong community organizations and partners, transportation improvements, and activities that help bridge the digital divide.

Recent Outcomes and Initiatives Related to Priority E:

Russell Neighborhood Association

Russell residents formed a new neighborhood association to strengthen the community and get to know their neighbors. The Russell Neighborhood Association will provide a collective voice for the neighborhood, and empower residents with the tools needed to create positive change in Russell at the grassroots level.

18th Street Realignment Complete

Realignment of intersection of 18th Street and Broadway was completed and opened to all modes of travel on January 14th, 2019. New Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stops for Dixie Highway TIGER project to be in operation by December, 2019. These improvements will increase safety, mobility, livability, and reliable access to jobs along a 14-mile corridor to the Gene Snyder Freeway linking the Russell neighborhood to downtown Louisville and to jobs, services, and amenities to the south.

SmART Stops

Five artistic bus shelters are being placed throughout the Russell neighborhood providing public artwork, shelter for transit riders and improved neighborhood safety with additional lighting and other smart features that will be included. Local architectural groups designed SmART Stop shelters with community input to enhance existing high-traffic TARC bus stops in the Russell neighborhood. All SmART Stop Shelters will be ready to use by Summer 2019.

Bike Infrastructure

Louisville Metro Public Works has installed two-way buffered bike lanes on W Jefferson Street from 13th Street to 32nd Street, and buffered bike lanes on 12th and 13th Streets from Congress Street to W Kentucky Street.

Ninth Street Improvements

Louisville Metro Government completed improvements on the 9th Street Corridor that included

improved crosswalks, a new plaza with benches in the median showcasing an existing public art piece, and adaption of signals to allow more time for pedestrians to cross. The project was funded by an AARP Community Challenge grant.

PNC Gigabit Center

The PNC Gigabit Center, located in the Louisville Central Community Center Old Walnut Campus, offers residents access to ultra-fast internet with laptops available to help further digital inclusion for residents of Russell and the city at large.

Other Significant Projects

Russell: A Place of Promise

Louisville Metro Government, Cities United and The William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust have partnered to launch ***Russell: A Place of Promise***, an initiative co-created with and accountable to Russell residents and stakeholders, and designed to be a national model for equitable community development in African-American communities. The initiative will connect Russell residents and businesses that have been the backbone of the neighborhood with opportunities to build long-term individual and community wealth so that planned and underway new investment creating a renaissance in Russell does not result in their displacement. This initiative aims to create affordable housing, new jobs, business opportunities, new community gathering spots, opportunities for mobility, wealth creation, and whole-community health.

African American Archives at the Western Library

Louisville Metro Government and LMHA will work with The Western Library African American Archives to facilitate improvements to their collection. The goal of this project will be to support the Western Archives efforts to digitize their collections through the purchase of equipment.

Beecher Terrace Documentary

Louisville Metro Housing Authority is working with local film maker Lavel D. White of Blu Boi Entertainment to produce a documentary on the Beecher Terrace Housing Community. The documentary will focus on the history of the development and the stories of the many people who have called Beecher Terrace home.

Louisville Story Program – “The Cornerstones of Russell”

The Louisville Story Program (LSP) will create a substantial book tentatively titled “The Cornerstones of Russell”. The book will be developed in conjunction with Russell residents over a 38-month period that documents the rich layers of history in the neighborhood, and will have a strong and demonstrated connection to Beecher Terrace community.

Russell Vision Development Center

The buildout of the former DAV thrift store into a community gathering and event space called the Russell Vision Development Center is still nearing completion. The Center is located at 2202 W. Jefferson Street, and is expected to open in February 2019. Louisville Metro Government’s acquisition funding, totaling \$275,000, will be taken out within five years, and its redevelopment funding, in the amount of \$186,000, will remain in the project as a grant.