

Weinland Park Collaborative

PROGRESS REPORT 2013-2015

WEINLAND PARK



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INTRODUCTION

The Weinland Park neighborhood of Columbus is being transformed. Most visible are the thousands of bulbs blooming each spring, the hundreds of homes renovated or newly constructed, and the giant billboard that greets people entering Weinland Park with an exciting new image of the neighborhood. Less visible, but equally important are opportunities that are transforming the lives of the people of Weinland Park. The neighborhood is no longer a “hot spot” for infant mortality. Every child and youth has access to summer camp or other enrichment programs. Transitional jobs programs are helping adults find and retain employment. In short, Weinland Park is living into the vision of a mixed-income neighborhood. The signs of progress are clearly there, but work remains to sustain this progress, particularly in providing housing for a broad range of incomes, improving the economic self-sufficiency of families, and engaging residents and building a sense of community among all people.



The many partners of the Weinland Park Collaborative (WPC), in close cooperation with the Weinland Park Community Civic Association (WPCCA), have invested in the neighborhood since 2010. In September 2013, the WPC published a three-year progress report that chronicled the origins of this collaboration and the initial investments. Now the WPC is releasing this new progress report that continues the narrative from 2013 through 2015.

The WPC, in consultation with the WPCCA, established seven task forces in 2011 to research and recommend strategic, transformative initiatives to improve the quality of life for residents of Weinland Park. The task forces were Resident Engagement, Public Safety, Youth Development, Education, Health, Employment and Workforce Development, and Housing and Land-Use. By 2013, the recommendations from these task forces were in the process of being implemented. These initiatives and new opportunities of the past two years are indeed transforming the neighborhood. In addition, the WPC’s partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation is creating strong, positive relationships with families in Weinland Park that help both the parents and their children to set and achieve their goals. This partnership, known as Family-Centered Community Change, also is forging a deeper, more effective collaboration among key agencies in Weinland Park.

March 2016



DEDICATION

This report is dedicated to Joyce Hughes, founding vice president of the Weinland Park Community Civic Association and its president from 2008 to 2014. She devoted an enormous amount of her time and energy to leading the civic association through a period of great change and opportunity for her neighborhood. She is an effective advocate for Weinland Park, a compassionate voice for her neighbors, and an inspiration to all who work with her.

WEINLAND PARK COLLABORATIVE

Launched formally in 2010, the WPC is a partnership involving public, non-profit, philanthropic, civic, and educational organizations and businesses working collaboratively to improve the quality of life in the Weinland Park neighborhood of Columbus.



Annie E. Casey Foundation
Cardinal Health
The Center for Family Safety and Healing
City of Columbus
Columbus City Schools
 Weinland Park Elementary School
The Columbus Foundation
Community Properties of Ohio Management Services
 CPO Impact
Directions for Youth and Families
Godman Guild Association
Habitat for Humanity MidOhio
JPMorgan Chase Foundation
Local Matters
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

NNEMAP Food Pantry
Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing
 Ohio Capital Impact Corporation
The Ohio State University
 Campus Partners
 College of Education and Human Ecology
 Knowlton School of Architecture
 Ohio State University Extension
 Office of Outreach and Engagement
 Schoenbaum Family Center
 Wexner Center for the Arts
 Wexner Medical Center
7th Avenue Community Missionary Baptist Church
United Way of Central Ohio
Wagenbrenner Development
Weinland Park Community Civic Association

VISION FOR WEINLAND PARK COLLABORATIVE

Developed in 2010

The Weinland Park Collaborative is a flexible and evolving structure for establishing and achieving common, agreed-upon goals for the revitalization of the Weinland Park neighborhood and addressing problems that pose obstacles to success. This will happen through:

1. **COLLABORATION** among funder, implementer, and resident organizations
2. **COORDINATION** of funder investments and neighborhood revitalization activities
3. **COMMUNICATION** and information-sharing among members and with neighborhood residents, elected officials, and other key stakeholders
4. **TRACKING** and documenting collaborative and neighborhood outcomes, results, and lessons learned





RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT

The WPC has worked closely with the WPCCA and other organizations to support resident engagement in the neighborhood's transformation and to create opportunities for volunteer service and recreation that build a sense of community among those who live in Weinland Park. One measure of success is that 50 to 70 people continue to attend the civic association's monthly membership meetings. In addition, the WPCCA committees meet regularly to obtain resident feedback on housing, public safety, health, business development, mobility, and other relevant topics. While meetings are necessary for planning and advocacy, resident engagement – and WPC's support – take a variety of forms:

- For a decade, the annual Weinland Park Neighborhood Festival in mid-August has brought neighbors and stakeholders together with music, food, children's activities, information tables, giveaways, and consistently good weather. In recent years, the festival, under the leadership of Diane Dixon, has attracted about 500 people. Due to a scheduling conflict in 2015, the festival moved from the city's Weinland Park to the area around Godman Guild Association. The new site worked well, but the festival will move back to the park in 2016 because it has more space.
- An annual tradition since 2011, Roots & Roofs is an event each May that combines community gardening, a neighborhood clean-up, and promotion of new housing opportunities. Spring rain fell on the event in 2014, but it didn't dampen the neighborhood enthusiasm. Roots & Roofs in 2015 had good weather and a record number of some 175 neighbors and other volunteers. Through Roots & Roofs, the annual Make A Difference Day and other community service events and with direction from Michael Wilkos, more than 12,000 flowering bulbs and plants have been placed in the ground in Weinland Park.
- 4th Street Farms is located on a formerly vacant lot along North Fourth Street between East Seventh and East Eighth avenues. This attractive neighborhood community garden provides fresh vegetables, fruits, and berries, as well as educational opportunities. Evelyn Van Til, Woody Drake and other community volunteers cultivate the garden.



- Neighborhood volunteers have transformed another vacant lot into the 5th Street Bird Sanctuary. This eclectic community garden on North Fifth Street between East Eighth and East Ninth avenues, has bird-friendly plants, flowers, trees, feeders, and houses. The bird sanctuary is dedicated to the memory of Leslie Passmore, a Weinland Park resident who died in 2014 and was the passionate founder of the sanctuary.
- WPCCA's Food and Wellness Committee, under the leadership of Julia Orban, has organized farm trips that bring together a more diverse group of neighborhood children and parents than any other activity. Two buses usually are required to transport people to a pick-your-own strawberry farm in the spring and either an apple or pumpkin farm in the fall. The committee also partners with Godman Guild and OSU Extension to offer a low-cost Zumba class each Saturday morning for neighborhood residents.
- The City of Columbus designated the Weinland Park and Milo-Grogan neighborhoods for the 2015 Neighborhood Pride program. WPCCA and the Milo-Grogan Civic Association cooperated to plan and execute the neighborhood participation. During the week of September 14-18, teams from city departments focused on the two neighborhoods and cleaned alleys and streets, tended the parks, repaired streetlights, identified code violations, and connected residents to resources. In addition, Mayor Michael Coleman announced that a vacant lot in Weinland Park would be used as a city tree nursery as part of a long-term plan to significantly expand the tree canopy in the city's neighborhoods.
- WPCCA in mid-2015 produced and distributed 150 welcome packets for new residents of the neighborhood. Each packet contained information about the civic association and neighborhood activities, as well as brochures, maps, and coupons from local businesses, city government, health clinics, and other organizations.



THE ARTS

In 2014 and 2015, art and design have played a major role in how residents defined their neighborhood and how the wider community perceived Weinland Park. Ohio State's Wexner Center for the Arts has given special attention to Weinland Park for a number of years, but the engagement grew even more significant under the leadership of Jean Pitman, educator for youth programs at the Wex.



- The origin of the *Weinland Park Story Book* is traced to 2011 when two long-time Weinland Park residents, Joyce Hughes and Diane Dixon, suggested to the Wexner Center that an arts project be initiated that would capture the voices of their neighbors. Eventually, Ms. Pitman settled on the concept of a graphic anthology that would use the art of comic books and graphic novels to illustrate the memories, anecdotes and short stories of many residents and other involved in Weinland Park. In the summer of 2013, Ms. Pitman and a team of teenage interns collected the stories. The Wexner Center then engaged graphic artists in Columbus to tell the stories in comic book panels. The 144-page *Weinland Park*



Story Book, with its dozens of vignettes, was published and released at a neighborhood celebration June 29, 2014, and widely distributed without charge to neighborhood residents.

- Towering over the entrance to Weinland Park along North Fourth Street just north of East Fifth Avenue is a large billboard which most often advertised alcohol. The images were not flattering to a neighborhood trying to change old perceptions of crime and deterioration. The WPC Communications Committee, under the leadership of Eric Troy, considered whether a public art project might create a new, more positive image for the neighborhood. Ms. Pitman suggested using the billboard, and the billboard's owner Clear Channel Communications agreed to cooperate. WPC and the Wex raised the funds to buy the billboard space for a year and develop the images. Ms. Pitman partnered with Mark Lomax, director of the R.I.S.E. Youth Club, and the club's teenagers to develop ideas for the images from their own neighborhood experiences. R.I.S.E. is a collaborative program of Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus and Godman Guild Association. They then worked with a group of Columbus artists who created a series of dynamic billboard artworks. WPCCA members and WPC reviewed the artworks and offered input. Four artworks were chosen with each on the billboard for three months. The first image was unveiled on the billboard in a public celebration on April 11, 2015.



- Red Circle is a small initiative started in 2012 by residents Jill Gravatt and Lydia Yoder with supplies and support from Ms. Pitman and the Wexner Center. Held during warmer weather, Red Circle is a free monthly drop-in arts and crafts workshop in the Weinland Park shelter house for anyone who wants to join in. There is no registration, no questions asked and nothing is required. Red Circle provides art supplies, materials, encouragement and helping hands so children, parents and others can paint, make crafts or color together.
- The WPCCA Communications Committee, under the leadership of Jennifer Mankin, provided input on the billboard project, but also directed development of a graphic identity for Weinland Park. With support from a Neighborhood Partnership grant, the committee engaged a graphic designer in 2014. The graphic designer prepared two rounds of designs. WPCCA members reviewed several designs at their January 2015 and voted on a graphic identity at their February 2015 meeting.
- Residents Sean Storey and Chris Picot offered a humorous commentary on the changes in the neighborhood in mid-July 2014. Under the cover of darkness, they posted five-foot plywood letters spelling out

WEINLAND PARK on the side of the large mound of dirt on the former Columbus Coated Fabrics site. The reference to the famous Hollywood sign provoked both smiles and a measure of pride, as well as a photograph in *The Columbus Dispatch*. The letters came down a few days later, but they were preserved and displayed at the neighborhood festival in August 2014. The two men struck again a few months later when they erected a tall, attractive sign along North Fourth Street that announced, not unlike Las Vegas, “Welcome to fabulous Weinland Park.”



Chris Picot (left) and Sean Storey

THE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The Weinland Park Community Civic Association remains a firm and vitally important partner in the WPC. In 2014, WPCCA successfully went through a leadership transition, but continues to face a challenge in recruiting and nurturing new neighborhood civic leaders.

WPCCA members in April 2008 elected Joyce Hughes, one of the civic association’s founders and its initial vice president, to succeed the founding president, Robert Caldwell. In the years that followed, she affirmed her position as neighborhood matriarch as she led WPCCA through enormous growth, worked city leaders and many agencies and institutions, and consistently advocated on behalf of her neighbors. Ms. Hughes’ spirit of inclusion, cooperation and advocacy has been critical to the effectiveness of WPCCA and the partnership with WPC. She retired at the conclusion of her third two-year term in April 2014, although she agreed to chair WPCCA’s Land-Use and Business Development Committee.

Three candidates vied to succeed Ms. Hughes. WPCCA members in April 2004 elected Brandyn McElroy as president. At 26, Mr. McElroy was young and a relative newcomer to Weinland Park, but he exhibited sound executive skills and had previous leadership experience on the Southside Area Commission and the Mayor’s Coalition for a Non-Violent Columbus. Elected as vice president was Jennifer Mankin whose energy and organizational, communication and computer skills made her and Mr. McElroy a good team. Over the next 18 months, WPCCA and its committees accomplished much, but the civic association also experienced attrition among elected officers and committee chairs. Despite continued good attendance at its monthly meetings, WPCCA needs a more consistent method to recruit residents to serve as committee members, committee chairs and elected officers. Too much of the work falls on too few people. In late 2015, Mr. McElroy became a homeowner outside Weinland Park.



He plans to serve until his term expires in April 2016. A new president will inherit a vibrant civic association, but he or she will have to pay particular attention to leadership development.

TRAUMA-INFORMED COMMUNITY BUILDING

WPC's Family-Centered Community Change (FCCC) Council has focused for the past two years on more effectively engaging low-income individuals and families in Weinland Park in its two-generation work to improve educational outcomes for children and greater self-sufficiency for adults. (For more information on FCCC, see page 26.) Many persons in poverty have endured trauma due to crime, violence, isolation, a lack of resources and distressed neighborhoods. The conditions caused by trauma often result in chronic stress and get in the way of residents' ability to participate in traditional community-building approaches and activities, such as a civic association or other formal meeting processes. This trauma can be retriggered when resources come and go in neighborhoods like Weinland Park.

As a result, the FCCC Council is interested in implementing trauma-informed community building (TICB) in Weinland Park. TICB is based on a model developed by BRIDGE Housing Corporation, which builds and manages affordable housing in San Francisco. Among the TICB principles are consistency in and easy access to programming, coordination of community events, and avoidance of further trauma. A number of professional fields, including social work and teaching, are incorporating trauma-informed practice. The model developed by BRIDGE Housing, however, applies trauma-informed practice to the community development field.

The FCCC Council hosted two representatives of BRIDGE Housing in Columbus October 12-14, 2015, for a series of discussions about TICB with WPCCA leaders, WPC members, and representatives from other neighborhoods. The discussions attracted good turnouts. The WPCCA Steering Committee and FCCC Council are considering how they might cooperate to implement aspects of TICB in Weinland Park in 2016.

SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

Outreach and engagement efforts by Community Properties of Ohio Management Services (CPO) began as the Safe Neighborhood Initiative (SNI) in 2010. Started in Weinland Park and expanded to include the King Lincoln and Southside neighborhoods in 2014, SNI activities are open to all neighbors, not just CPO residents. The activities include monthly Neighborhood Network Gatherings, informal neighborhood cookouts, and Neighbor Traditions. Traditions involve at least two families coming together and planning an activity such as a holiday party in a courtyard. SNI also has included leadership opportunities for residents to gain confidence and skills to make positive changes in their lives. Over the past year, CPO's outreach and engagement activities have been linked more intentionally to other supportive services. Last year, engagement specialists began identifying priority families to make contact with at least weekly. The goal is to support these families in moving forward in stages of readiness to make positive changes. Through the SNI activities, 1,548 contacts were made with residents intended to increase their safety and involvement in the community. The majority of those contacts were with Weinland Park residents.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The reality and general perception is that public safety in the neighborhood has improved significantly over the past decade. The WPCCA Safety Committee, chaired by Ahmed Ebady, meets monthly and monitors crime and public safety trends. The committee was particularly vigilant in cooperating with the police and City Attorney's office following two shooting incidents in late 2014 and early 2015 in a rental property with suspected illegal activities. The committee met with the property managers to insist on more effective property management.

In early 2014, the Safety Committee sponsored a paper and online survey of residents regarding their perception of public safety in Weinland Park. Although not a scientific sample, the survey was completed by a diverse group of 63 residents. More than six in 10 of the residents surveyed think the levels of safety in Weinland Park have gotten better in the last two years; one-quarter think the levels have not changed much; none think the levels have gotten worse. In assessing the priority of nine public safety activities, "social services for youth in trouble and their families" received the highest priority.



NEIGHBORHOOD OPTIONS FOR YOUTH

WPC's primary initiative to address public safety over the past three years has been the Neighborhood Options for Youth (NOY) program. NOY grew from public meetings held in 2011 by WPC's Public Safety Task Force, chaired by David Campbell of CPO Management. At those meetings, residents indicated their priority was crimes committed by juveniles and young people, such as assault, theft, vandalism and graffiti. The task force subsequently convened representatives of Franklin County juvenile court, Directions for Youth and Families, Community Properties of Ohio (CPO) and Columbus Police, as well as other experts and residents. NOY emerged as an innovative a neighborhood-based approach that provides timely social services and opportunities for at-risk youth and their families combined with closer coordination among law enforcement and social service agencies to deter criminal and disruptive behavior and to encourage positive choices by youth.

With support from The Columbus Foundation, NOY was implemented in mid-2013 and will continue through the end of 2015. NOY's two major components have been:

- Increased neighborhood-based patrolling by special-duty Columbus police officers, including those specializing in thwarting gang and drug activity.
- Increased access for juveniles and their families to neighborhood-based case management and therapy provided by Directions for Youth and Families, headquartered in Weinland Park. Juveniles have been referred to services by themselves, their families, police officers, schools, and juvenile court.

CPO contracts with the Columbus Division of Police for the special-duty officers who work with NOY in Weinland Park. The officers spend 50 percent of their time as community liaisons, which entails driving to target areas, interacting with parents, and talking about NOY. The other 50 percent of their time is in "enforcement mode," which involves making arrests, patrolling "hotspots," circulating in the neighborhood, and monitoring school dismissal, sporting events, etc. Officers "flex" their shifts depending on the needs of the community and season.

NOY officers have made 2,357 “runs” from the inception of the program through July 31, 2015. “Runs” include any action taken or time spent out of the car interacting with individuals. The officers have made 133 contacts with youth, which includes education about NOY and services provided by DFYF, and 74 contacts with parents. Officers have made 50 arrests, most of whom have not been juveniles.

NOY officers also have provided support to landlords in Weinland Park, similar to CPO’s Eliminate the Elements™ program. The NOY officers collaborate with property owners to address criminal and disruptive behaviors on and around their properties. Three area landlords participated in half-day training on defensible space and strict lease enforcement and received a free legal review of their leases.

Directions for Youth and Families (DFYF), with its headquarters on Indianola Avenue in Weinland Park, provides community-based services that minimize barriers to treatment by working with youth and their families in their homes, schools and community settings. DFYF views youth within the context of the family to get the whole picture of issues, stresses and assets in the youth’s life. Family involvement throughout the process is paramount, and family counseling is encouraged. From spring 2013 through July 31, 2015, DFYF engaged 27 youth through NOY. Of the 23 who have completed DFYF’s services, 20 have had successful “terminations” and 3 have been unsuccessful, resulting in an 85% success rate.

DFYF conducts a baseline survey with youth at the beginning of treatment and a follow-up survey at the conclusion of treatment or six months after the baseline survey. Some 22 youth have participated in the baseline and follow-up surveys. Among the survey results are:

- A great majority of youth (77%) showed significant behavioral improvement or positive school functioning at follow-up.
- One youth has committed a misdemeanor since the baseline survey (none have committed a felony); two youth admit association with a gang. No youth have been incarcerated or stopped while carrying a weapon.
- All but two youth continue to reside in the same zip codes (19 of the 22 reside in 43201).
- Of the parents, 54% were very involved or had moderate involvement in their children’s treatment.
- Eight youth have a mother who was incarcerated at sometime in the past; 15 have a father who was incarcerated at sometime in the past.

While NOY has had a positive impact on the youth involved, the number of young people arrested for crimes in Weinland Park is not as significant as in some other neighborhoods, such as the Near East Side. For example, Franklin County juvenile court only referred one youth from Weinland Park to NOY. This may reflect the general improvement in public safety in Weinland Park over the past few years.

Funding for NOY in Weinland Park will run through June 2016. CPO is continuing discussions with the juvenile court, Columbus Police, and social service agencies about implementing NOY’s model of close coordination between law enforcement and social services in other neighborhoods with higher arrest rates for juvenile offenders.

HEALTH

The Weinland Park Collaborative has defined its work related to health as encompassing not only access to medical care, but an emphasis on wellness and well-being. Among the initiatives of the past two years are:

- Support continued for weekly Zumba sessions and for backyard gardens and community gardens, such as 4th Street Farms and Godman Guild's garden, that provide opportunities for exercise and access to fresh, healthy food.
- Ohio State's College of Nursing continued to recruit and train persons for state certification as community health workers who will interact with people in their communities to help them take responsibility for their health care, access services, and manage chronic conditions.
- Lower Lights Christian Health Center opened on East Fifth Avenue in 2015 to serve residents as a primary health care provider. Lower Lights is a federally designated community health center.
- Godman Guild Association in 2015 launched a new social enterprise, Blue Bowtie Food Services, to provide healthy food choices at lunch for staff and visitors to its building and to offer catering services to the wider community. Equally important, Blue Bowtie coordinates with Godman Guild's other programs in food service certification, training and transitional employment in the food industry. In a related move, Godman Guild in 2014 acquired its own food vending machines and now offers healthier snacks.
- Beginning in fall of 2015, the Schoenbaum Family Center has provided free health and wellness clinics to students enrolled in its A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning, as well as Weinland Park families with young children. Each week, the center offers three sessions each of individual speech and language therapy, and family therapy, in addition to annual dental and vision screenings. Services are performed by Ohio State graduate students who are closely supervised by trained faculty members.
- Julia Orban of WPCCA and Steve Sterrett of WPC convened meetings in October and December 2015 of representatives of health providers and neighborhood residents. The purposes of the meetings were to encourage the clinics to share information about their services with each other so they can make appropriate referrals and encourage cooperation in ways to better serve residents; identify gaps in health services; and permit residents and agency staff members to share information about the neighborhood and about residents so that trust can be built among residents with the clinics and the clinics can better meet neighbors' needs. They are planning a tour for neighborhood civic leaders of health clinics and related facilities in and adjacent to Weinland Park for late January or February 2016.



MOMS2B PROGRAM

Among the best news of 2015 is that Weinland Park is no longer a “hot spot” for infant mortality. The primary reason is the Moms2B program that was piloted in Weinland Park beginning in 2010.

The Centers for Disease Control define infant mortality as the death of a living baby before his or her first birthday. Ohio ranks second to last among the states in the rate of infant mortality, and central Ohio’s infant mortality rate is higher than the Ohio average. Patricia Gabbe, pediatrician, clinical researcher and professor, and Twinkle French Schottke, infant medical health specialist and program director, founded Moms2B to combat infant mortality. Moms2B began as a research-driven, ten-week nutrition course held at Grace Baptist Church in Weinland Park. In the past five years, the program has expanded into a community-wide comprehensive prenatal and first-year-of-life program, offered weekly at four locations. Supporting Moms2B are The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and other community social service organizations, as well as volunteers and individual and corporate donors.



Moms2B targets central Ohio zip codes with the highest infant mortality rates. The program provides weekly education and support sessions to high-risk pregnant women to promote healthier lifestyle choices and link them with social support resources. The goal is for all participants to deliver healthy, full-term infants who live to celebrate their first birthday. Moms2B invites the new mothers to remain in the program until they are one-year postpartum.

Moms2B educates through a multi-disciplinary team approach. Healthcare professionals – including doctors, nurses, social workers, dietitians, lactation counselors, and healthcare students – discuss maternal and infant health topics. Each program session is delivered in a supportive environment, encouraging and empowering the women to take ownership of their choices, often leading to new-found independence after the baby’s delivery and beyond. Moms2B also provides a healthy, hot meal with every session to supplement the diets of participants, as 85% report experiencing food shortages at home within the past year. On-site childcare is offered to permit the women to engage and interact with the educators and their fellow participants. The key to the program’s success is both providing access to high-quality health care and building positive relationships among the educators and the pregnant women that promote trust, compassion and empowerment.



Since its inception, Moms2B has had more than 500 pregnant women attend at least one session. In 2014, 210 women enrolled in Moms2B delivered babies. Of the women enrolled in Moms2B, only 10% of babies born were of low birth weight – 20% fewer than expected. Reducing prematurity or low birth weight represents a significant savings for the health care system.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Weinland Park has a large cohort of young families, particularly those living in the more than 230 apartments managed by Community Properties of Ohio. Following CPO's housing renovations of the last decade and the neighborhood improvements of the last five years, these families are choosing to stay in Weinland Park. The neighborhood is likely to see a significant increase in the number of teenagers in the next few years. Responding to the needs of these young families, WPC supports, through its partner agencies, an array of programs. Since 2012, every child and young person who chooses to do so can participate in a summer enrichment activity without regard to income. These activities include:

- Godman Guild Association's Summer Youth Empowerment Program, an experiential outdoor summer day camp at Camp Mary Orton, serves 175 children annually. For more than a century, central Ohio children and their families have gone to Campus Mary Orton. The current day camp incorporates the social development of a typical summer camp experience with an academic focus on reading, science and math to ensure that campers, ages 5 to 13, do not regress academically during the summer.
- Godman Guild's KEYS program that provides a paid, summer work internship for young people, ages 14 to 24. The participants receive work readiness training and are placed in internships with area employers for six to eight weeks. In 2015, KEYS placed 247 young persons, including 18 from Weinland Park, in internships. They worked a collective 26,000 hours and received a total of \$263,000 in compensation.
- The Children's Defense Fund University District Freedom School, hosted by Summit United Methodist Church, is an eight-week, full-day summer literacy and self-empowerment program for children in kindergarten through high school. The program emphasizes reading, social skills, recreation and a healthy lunch for 110 young people each summer.



WPC supports the Weinland Park Wildcats youth football and cheerleading program. In 2014 and 2015, the Wildcats recruited boys, ages 5 to 13, for football teams based on their ages and weights and girls, ages 5 to 13, for the cheerleading squad. The children do not pay to participate, and the Wildcats provide uniforms and equipment without charge. Most significantly, the Wildcats are organized and led by parents and other neighborhood volunteers. LaWon Sellers heads the program, and Tamiea Sellers coaches the cheerleading squad. In 2015, some 80 children participated on the football teams and cheerleading squad.



R.I.S.E.

The WPC Youth Development Task Force investigated and articulated the need for a positive after-school program that would engage middle and high school youth in Weinland Park. In response, Boys & Girls Clubs of Columbus and Godman Guild in January 2014 launched R.I.S.E. (Resilience, Integrity, Strength, Excellence), an after-school drop-in program for youth, ages 12 to 18, in Weinland Park. Under the direction of Mark Lomax of Boys & Girls Clubs, R.I.S.E. combines fun and engaging programming with attention to academic success, good citizenship, and healthy lifestyles. The program operates from one of Godman Guild's modular buildings renovated to serve teenagers.

During 2015, R.I.S.E. saw growth both in membership and the number of opportunities available to members. The program also experienced challenges related to staffing due to the part-time nature of the work. By years end, R.I.S.E. exceeded its mandate to engage 100 Weinland Park youth as members, and 90 percent of eligible members were able to take advantage of the Godman Guild's summer youth employment program. R.I.S.E. youth also celebrated the successful unveiling of the Weinland Park Billboard Project.

As a result of the contact with professionals in the arts industry, including Jean Pitman of the Wexner Center, Weinland Park resident Zyshonne Davis, age 15, has been selected to have his artwork showcased in the Vine Street parking garage as part of a public art project. As part of the project, Zyshonne was paid and had an opportunity to meet with David Cooke at the Design Collective and James Rees of Reese Brothers Productions, curators of the public art project. Zyshonne has since expressed interest in pursuing a career in design after his behind-the-scenes look at that side of the creative economy. R.I.S.E. is also very proud of Rihanna Taylor who graduated from Whetstone High School and now attends Otterbein College. R.I.S.E. is in the process of hiring new staff with the hopes of continued success in the work of empowering Weinland Park youth to be caring and productive citizens.

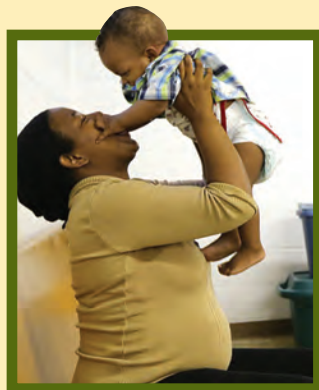
EDUCATION

Since 2013, Columbus City Schools, the federal government, and a number of neighborhood partners have made important investments in Weinland Park's pre-school and elementary school education. Although it's too early to have significant data delineating improved academic outcomes, the data is being collected. The partners believe the new strategies and resources will lead to greater academic success for the children.

EARLY HEAD START PARTNERSHIP GRANT

In December 2014, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded \$16.5 million over a five-year grant period to The Ohio State University to establish an Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership Program. This comprehensive program provides 160 early education slots for infants and toddlers in a number of Columbus neighborhoods, including Weinland Park. Ohio State's Schoenbaum Family Center, based in Weinland Park, is leading the partnership. The goal over the next five years is to give approximately 800 children, from infancy to age three, a healthy and enriching start in life. Eligible families with CPO and Moms2B are given priority for enrollment. The grant is part of the federal government's effort to expand the reach of Early Head Start programming by 25 percent nationwide.

According to Jane Wiechel, director for community programs at the Schoenbaum Family Center and principal investigator for the grant, the program is using research-based practices, identifying resources, and collaborating with other community organizations to improve the well-being of infants and toddlers in targeted neighborhoods where the poverty rate is above the norm. In addition to providing high-quality early education for infants and toddlers, the partnership wants to move families toward greater self-sufficiency. Comprehensive services include mental health screenings and counseling, well child checks and immunizations, nutrition education, early diagnosis of developmental delays, adult education and job training, affordable and safe housing, and efforts to support family stability. Family support services are provided by a team of four Family Advocates based at CPO.



Another component of the partnership is professional development, coaching, and mentoring to improve the quality of early learning experiences to promote kindergarten readiness. The Ohio State University Early Head Start Partnerships include 11 licensed childcare centers and six licensed family childcare providers.

Among the community agencies participating in the partnership are Action for Children, Caring Communities: Birth to 3, Children's Hunger Alliance, Columbus Public Health, Community Properties of Ohio, Franklin County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Franklin County Department of Job and Family Services, Nationwide Children's Hospital, Franklin County Families and Children First/Help Me Grow, St. Vincent Family Center, and Ohio State's College of Education and Human Ecology, Center for Education, Training and Employment, and Moms2B.



SCHOENBAUM FAMILY CENTER

The Schoenbaum Family Center's A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning applied for and received additional funding through the City of Columbus' Early Start program for the 2015-16 school year. Only highly rated programs in Ohio's quality rating system, Step Up to Quality, were eligible to apply for this funding. Through this program, Early Start Columbus is focused on providing quality education for four-year-old children residing in the City of Columbus. The initiative provides quality preschool education to working families of low income, with no prerequisites regarding the parents' own work or school status. This is in contrast to historic forms of early education funding which is only made available to families who can document

their own working status. As such, the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning was able to make 30 prekindergarten slots available to four-year-old children, with special priority given to Weinland Park residents. Families were able to enroll over the summer and begin attending in mid-August. The program funding will run through August 2016. As a result, the Schoenbaum Family Center will ensure that families will have access to continual, high-quality educational programming for their children until they transition into kindergarten.

The Schoenbaum Family Center recently began a program to further support Weinland Park families with children age five and under in reading and engaging young children with books. Every Thursday at 10:30 a.m. a community story time is offered in the center's library, located just inside the building's front doors. Families with young children are invited to come and share a story, obtain literacy materials, and enjoy books with songs, dancing, puppets, and felt boards. Nearby childcare programs, home care providers and local families have been enjoying the weekly story times since early in the fall.

The SPARK (Supportive Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids) program is in its third year as a citywide kindergarten-readiness program providing in-home visits with a Parent Partner, free books, assessments, individualized lesson plans and support to parents and caregivers of three- and four-year-olds. Weinland Park's Parent Partner, Holly Lawrence, has served more than 100 families and collaborates with Weinland Park Elementary School and the Schoenbaum Family Center to give young children the best chance at success in school. SPARK aims to equip parents and caregivers with the knowledge and resources to support their child's learning in preparation for and transition to kindergarten. A parent's engagement in a child's early development is key to his or her future success in school. Results from the Get Ready To Read test, which assesses reading readiness skills such as print awareness, phonological awareness and letter recognition, for the 2014-2015 cohort showed more than a 50% increase from pre- to post-test scores. SPARK currently enrolls 35 Weinland Park families for the 2015-2016 school year.

WEINLAND PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

For many years, Weinland Park Elementary School (WPES) students performed poorly on state proficiency tests and a high percentage of students came from families in poverty. Because of Columbus City Schools' open enrollment policy, only about half the students in the WPES attendance area chose to attend WPES. The new elementary school building opened in 2007, representing a commitment by Columbus City Schools to the neighborhood. The school operated on a year-round calendar in hopes that would improve academic outcomes. Neighborhood improvements in recent years encouraged families to stay in Weinland Park, which in turn helped

to lower the school's mobility rate. The climate in the school and the relationship with the neighborhood were good. Average daily attendance rose. Unfortunately, the students' scores on the state proficiency tests remained stubbornly low.

Rhonda Peoples came to WPES as principal in the 2013-14 school year with a data-driven approach to student achievement coupled with a commitment to innovation and best-practices. She also affirmed the partnerships with the adjacent Schoenbaum Family Center, the neighborhood, and the Weinland Park Collaborative. She made relatively few changes in that first year as she familiarized herself with the existing programs, resources, staff and students.

In preparation for the 2014-15 school year, Principal Peoples worked closely with the schools' central administration to refocus WPES and to significantly improve its academic outcomes. WPES implemented a school reform strategy advocated by the Ohio Department of Education that required both existing and new teachers to apply for their positions. Among the initiatives put in place:

- Return to a traditional school calendar. The year-round calendar was not having the intended academic success, and it posed difficulties for families with students enrolled in more than one school. The traditional school calendar combined with academic improvements could make WPES a more attractive choice for families in the neighborhood.
- Partnered with Learning Circles to develop a data-driven culture to improve student learning.
- Instituted a research-based school-wide management system to track the progress of individual students so teachers can respond in more timely and appropriate ways to gaps in learning and achievement.
- Recruited highly-effective elementary school teachers from among the existing staff and from across the district.
- Developed a partnership with Ohio State's College of Education and Human Ecology to pair teacher candidates pursuing a master's degree with highly effective, experience teachers to team-teach in a certain number of classrooms. This partnership extends the school district's Project ASPIRE into the elementary school.

While WPES has long had partnerships with community agencies, Principal Peoples and her staff have reaffirmed some collaborative programs and engaged with new programs to support the school's goals. Among the initiatives are:

- Building the involvement of parents and the family with WPES. The Weinland Park Elementary School / Schoenbaum Family Center Parent Advisory Committee, formed in October 2014, sponsors regular "Parent to Parent Main Events" that focus on family living and child development skills, such as effective discipline. Communities in Schools focuses on removing non-academic barriers and drop-out prevention by working closely with families, often in crisis situations, to meet their physical needs, including food and shelter, and to connect them to community resources. WPES partners with the Mid-Ohio Food Bank to be a monthly site for the distribution of fresh produce and other food. In addition, Local Matters conducts a monthly cooking demonstration for WPES families.



- Counseling for children and their families. Community for New Directions works with children to promote leadership development, coursework, and conflict resolution. Most problems with children are social-emotional issues, such as anger management. For children with more serious discipline problems, WPES refers children to Buckeye Ranch and to Directions for Youth and Families. Buckeye Ranch counselors provide crisis intervention, family counseling, and parenting skills. Directions for Youth and Families counselors meet with the child, parents, teachers, and others involved with the child and use a new trauma-informed approach to addressing behaviors. The good news is that WPES doesn't have a waiting line for intervention. WPES also has a grief group for children led by a licensed bereavement professional.
- Interventions to improve learning. WPES has an intervention assistance team that analyzes the child's barriers to learning and offers additional support to the child and the parent. Sometimes the child may grow in his or her social-emotional skills, even if they don't grow as much in their academic skills. An example of support is Project More which uses a dozen volunteers and Godman Guild staff members to provide intensive tutoring in reading one-on-one to third grade students who lag in their reading skills. In addition, Veritas Community Church members tutor children on word fluency and reading and offer activities that get students excited about reading.
- Extracurricular activities to engage children. WPES is one of four elementary schools in Columbus that partners with the Ohio State University chapter of College Mentors for Kids. The mentoring program, which involves Ohio State students, provides a university bus each Wednesday to bring 50 WPES students from first through fourth grades to the university campus. The students have visited a residence hall, planetarium, OSU Marching Band, and more. WPES offers Girls on the Run, a program promoting self-esteem and exercise. The Girl Scouts Heartland Council and the Boys Scouts Capital City District have supported, respectively, a Girl Scout troop and a Cub Scout pack at WPES.
- Extended day for young children. With support from a federal grant, WPES has an extended-day program for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students who are identified as needing additional academic support.
- In-school and after-school academic support. Godman Guild's A.C.E.S. program is a partnership with WPES that provides staff support in the classroom and after-school programming aligned with classroom instruction. A.C.E.S. focuses on reading, language arts, science, technology, math, and social skills for 90 children in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. Godman Guild has partnered with Learn4Life on a dashboard tool to measure progress, including the success of children who live in Weinland Park. A.C.E.S. staff members also have access through Learning Circles to each child's school records so they can respond effectively to the child's learning needs. Returning students and students identified by teachers receive priority placement in A.C.E.S. Enrollment fills quickly.



A.C.E.S. in 2014 recognized Tameia Sellers, DeShaunte Upchurch, and LaWon Sellers with outstanding community leader awards for their support of the school children.

Having current data to evaluate the impact of these important initiatives on academic outcomes is a point of frustration in the fall of 2015. The State of Ohio's proficiency testing is in transition and is moving to one vendor that will provide all content area assessments. New statewide proficiency tests will establish new baseline data for students and will not be easily comparable to previous tests. In order to understand student improvement, Columbus City Schools is looking at multiple data sets and not simply the state's proficiency test. Principal Peoples notes that her teachers use frequent assessments to measure each student's progress and to identify gaps in learning. These assessments indicate academic improvements. Principal Peoples is staying abreast of the state's changes in proficiency testing and is keeping her staff and community partners informed as information is released on federal and state laws regarding proficiency testing.

In the fall of 2015, enrollment at WPES was up and continues to increase. More affluent families are choosing to enroll their children in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, which brings diversity to the building. These classrooms now have a waiting list. In addition, WPES made gains in the average daily attendance rate and brought it to 92.05%, which was the second highest rate among priority schools in the district. New strategies to improve attendance included scheduling music and more popular classes in the morning and creating a "walking school bus" to get students to the building on time.

DEVELOPING EARLY LITERACY SKILLS

Community Properties of Ohio launched its CPO Building Blocks program in fall 2014. CPO manages about 1,000 apartments citywide for low-income families who have more than 600 pre-school children. The approximately 300 CPO apartments in Weinland Park house more than 200 pre-school children. In cooperation with Columbus Metropolitan Library and with support from an AmeriCorps grant, CPO recruits and trains 16 "peer leaders" each year, most of whom are CPO residents themselves. The peer leaders go into CPO residents' homes to read to young children (0-5 years of age) and to show parents tips for getting the most out of reading with their children. The program has engaged about 180 children in several neighborhoods, including Weinland Park, although only about one-third of the families have remained consistently engaged after enrollment. The families receive free books monthly and other participation incentives. The program also is designed to be a job-readiness initiative for the AmeriCorps members themselves, many of whom have little work experience. One team of six AmeriCorps members is housed at the CPO Supportive Services satellite office at Godman Guild Association.

ADULT EDUCATION

Godman Guild Association has offered adult education classes since 1995 with the goal of improving an individual's financial stability by increasing literacy and employment skills. The classes include earning a GED, passing the Ohio Graduation Tests, getting ready for college, obtaining employment, or earning a career credential. The adult education program is offered at no cost and is designed to be self-paced and tailored to meet the needs of the individual. Students also receive life skills training to help them balance work and family while pursuing their education. Free babysitting services for children ages 6 weeks to 12 years are available during most class times through the WeePLAY program.

The adult education classes enroll persons from across Franklin County. During the 2014-15 school year, 15 persons from Weinland Park were enrolled. They tended to be younger than Godman Guild's average adult education student, but they attended more hours than the average. They were more likely to be registered to vote and have a library card, but less likely to have reliable transportation.



EMPLOYMENT

Godman Guild Association and Community Properties of Ohio (CPO) have been the WPC members with the greatest focus on workforce development and employment in Weinland Park. Each organization serves a broader population than Weinland Park, but each has a commitment to this neighborhood. To improve coordination of their mutual work in the neighborhood, CPO in 2015 leased workspace in the Godman Guild building for several CPO staff members.

GODMAN GUILD ASSOCIATION

To better meet the needs of its clients, Godman Guild in 2014 thoroughly reviewed its workforce development and employment programs. Kaiser Jones, newly hired economic development director, in January 2015 launched the redesigned economic empowerment classes and employment services. The total program includes:

- An economic empowerment class that is the gateway to all of Godman Guild’s other economic development services. The one-week class (five four-hour class days) is offered each month. The class covers workplace expectations, interviewing skills, conflict resolution, financial literacy, team-building, and other topics. The class permits clients to better understand their job interests and the skills required, as well as helping Godman Guild staff direct the clients to appropriate training and services.
- Intensive one-on-one job placement services, including job searches, career planning, personal marketing material development, job interview coaching, and case management.
- Follow-up and job retention services, including career coaching, barrier reduction, and services to support each client’s employment retention plan. This follow-up occurs at least monthly via telephone, email, and in-person meetings.

Meanwhile, Godman Guild has continued to offer its training for certifications in food service and retail sales. The Summer Youth Employment Program is described in this report’s “youth development” section. Godman Guild’s new social enterprise, Blue Bowtie Food Services, is described in the “health” section.

cpoWORKS

Community Properties of Ohio Management Services (CPO) manages in Columbus nearly 1,000 units of low-income, government-subsidized housing that comprised the old Broad Street



portfolio of properties. This includes about 300 housing units in Weinland Park. The heads of household in a large majority of these units are young, single women with children. Many leaseholders have limited employment experience or cycle through low-wage jobs. CPO's mission is three-fold: 1) provide quality affordable housing; 2) link residents to resources to stabilize their housing; and 3) support residents in moving beyond poverty where possible. The latter two goals are achieved primarily through CPO's non-profit affiliate CPO Impact.

Several years ago, CPO Impact established cpoWORKS to provide general coaching support for CPO residents and similar community members who are pursuing employment goals or obtaining their GED or post-secondary education. With support from the JPMorgan Chase Foundation and United Way of Central Ohio, cpoWORKS has offered primarily one-on-one training and support in career exploration, job searching, employment readiness, barrier reduction, and maintaining employment. In 2015, cpoWORKS served 92 total participants, including 35 in Weinland Park. The number of participants in Weinland Park increased dramatically in 2015 due to the opening of the CPO satellite office at Godman Guild Association in late 2014. In 2015, about one-third of cpoWORKS participants with employment goals obtained or retained employment. However, cpoWORKS is evolving into a long-term coaching model focused on improving self-sufficiency over multiple years, rather than necessarily getting a job in the short-term. Many cpoWORKS participants do not move directly to regular employment because they participate in one or more transitional jobs programs funded through different sources, including AmeriCorps (see the description of CPO Building Blocks in the "Education" section of this report) and Pathways to Work.

PATHWAYS TO WORK

Godman Guild and CPO in mid-2015 jointly launched Pathways to Work (PTW), a transitional employment program supported by a grant from the City of Columbus. PTW permits adults to gain basic employment skills essential to success in permanent, full-time work, while earning an hourly wage as part of the program. These transitional jobs typically last three to six months. PTW involves small work crews, accompanied by a crew supervisor, who travel to local work sites and perform contracted jobs, including, but not limited to, assembly,



salvage, janitorial, and food service work. Work crew supervisors provide immediate, direct feedback to work crew members about basic employment skills such as timeliness, attitude, and appearance. Participants may be temporarily "benched" for violating basic expectations, but they have the opportunity to earn their way back to the paying work crew. PTW participants receive professional development, help with job placement, and individual supports to deal with barriers, such as childcare, transportation, and time management during the transitional job and as they move to regular employment.



HOUSING AND LAND USE

Since the inception of the Weinland Park Collaborative in 2010, the most visible improvements in Weinland Park have been the renovated and newly constructed homes, nearly all completed with public or philanthropic subsidies. The milestone reached in 2015, however, is the sales of market-rate homes. A healthy housing market is being restored in Weinland Park. People are choosing to live in the neighborhood – the most important testimony to its revitalization.

This turn-around goes back more than a decade. With preparatory work led by Campus Partners, Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing (OCCH) in 2003 acquired 1,300 units of distressed government-subsidized housing in seven Columbus neighborhoods, including Weinland Park. OCCH created CPO to manage the housing. Over the next six years, CPO oversaw a massive housing renovation project, including the investment of \$30 million in its 300 apartments in Weinland Park. CPO also managed the properties well and instituted public safety programs, reducing crime on and around CPO properties by more than 80 percent. The investment in the last decade laid the foundation for Weinland Park's revitalization in this decade and also prompted the evolution of a mixed-income neighborhood.

As Columbus emerged from the burst housing bubble in the late 2000s, the WPC and its partners acquired a number of foreclosed and vacant properties in Weinland Park. The strategy was to invest public and philanthropic dollars in renovation and new construction of affordable housing. This investment, combined with initiatives to improve public safety, education, employment, and resident engagement, would attract people to Weinland Park. As a result from 2010 to 2013, WPC and its partners made a number of housing investments:

- 14 single-family homes renovated with federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds allocated by the City of Columbus and sold for affordable home ownership.
- 7 single-family homes constructed by Habitat for Humanity MidOhio.
- 6 single-family homes constructed with NSP funds and sold for affordable homeownership.
- 40 single-family rent-to-own homes financed with low-income housing tax credits and with affordable rents.
- 67 houses with exterior repairs completed (so far through 2015) with grants to existing income-eligible homeowners.



In mid-2013, Wagenbrenner Development began the renovation of 23 buildings with a total of 90 market-rate apartments along East 11th Avenue in the city's New Indianola Historic District. The buildings represent one of the nation's best examples of an intact "streetcar suburb" from the early 20th century. The complicated financing of

the project, known as Grant Commons, included state and federal historic tax credits and a program-related investment from The Columbus Foundation. Wagenbrenner planned to promote Grant Commons to young professionals, but no one was certain whether the demand was there. As the renovation was completed in mid-2014, the apartments leased quickly. Fewer than 10 of the units were occupied by college students. That response to Grant Commons was a sign that the interest in Weinland Park was growing.



Wagenbrenner turned its attention to the construction of new market-rate houses on 42 lots platted along the west side of North Grant Avenue on the old Columbus Coated Fabrics site, now known as Grant Park. In late 2014, Wagenbrenner built a model home and two other single-family houses on North Grant at East Sixth Avenue. Despite limited promotion, interest in the new houses exploded. As of December 2015, 37 houses were under contract. With the strong market demand, Wagenbrenner moved ahead with plans for approximately 200 market-rate apartments, 120 for-sale condominiums and a one-acre park on the remainder of Grant Park. The University Area Commission endorsed the plans in December 2015.

On the western side of Weinland Park, Edwards Communities in June 2015 demolished existing buildings and began construction of 250 apartments targeted to young professionals on the south of Gateway site along



East Eight and Ninth avenues to the east of Pearl Street. The development is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2016. In addition, Community Housing Network is constructing a new building for its residents at the corner of East Ninth Avenue and Section Alley to replace its facility on High Street between Eighth and Ninth. The building will have 60 one-bedroom apartments for formerly homeless and disabled persons. In 2016, Edwards Communities is scheduled to begin construction of a building along High Street between Eighth and Ninth with 275 apartments targeted to the college student market. The building, which may be completed in 2017, will have approximately 22,000 square feet of

first-floor retail space and apartments on the upper floors.

With support from The Ohio State University, The Columbus Foundation, and OCCH, Campus Partners in June 2014 purchased and closed two carry-outs with troubled histories along North Fourth Street: Kelly's at East 11th Avenue and D&J at East Eighth Avenue. Campus Partners plans to renovate the Kelly's property and lease it for a commercial use compatible with the neighborhood. Campus Partners has turned the D&J property over to CPO. Representatives of CPO have met with neighbors about potential programming in that building. CPO is committed to repurpose the property to respond to the needs of the neighborhood.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The City of Columbus is continuing to make major infrastructure improvements to support the revitalization of Weinland Park. From 2010 through early 2013, the city invested more than \$8.1 million on the Columbus Coated Fabrics site, now known as Grant Park, to replace sanitary sewers, install water lines, reconstruct North Grant Avenue, resurface North Sixth Street, and add new sidewalks, street lighting and landscaping. Since then, work has been almost non-stop:

- In accordance with Weinland Park’s mobility plan in 2013 and 2014, the city added sidewalks on both sides of East Sixth Avenue east of North Fifth Street, added curb extensions on Indianola Avenue at three intersections, and constructed a traffic circle on Indianola at East Sixth Avenue.
- In 2014, the city constructed a new waterline on East 11th Avenue and reconstructed two alleys immediately north and south of East 11th.
- In late 2015, the city completed the resurfacing and restriping of East Fifth Avenue between North Fourth Street and Grant Avenue, replaced sidewalks and curbs, and added new street lighting and street trees.
- Underway now and scheduled to be completed in 2016 are major improvements to East 11th Avenue between North Pearl Street and North Grant Avenue. The project includes reconstruction of existing sidewalks and curbs on both sides of East 11th, resurfacing of the street, addition of curb extensions, upgraded traffic signals with mast arm poles, and new street lights and street trees.

NEXT STEPS IN HOUSING



The Columbus Foundation in 2013 commissioned the Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC) to study the impact of the strategies and investments in housing in Weinland Park. GOPC is a nonprofit, non-partisan organization based in Columbus and operating statewide that researches policies and practices to maintain the economic vitality of urban neighborhoods and metropolitan regions and preserves Ohio’s open space and farmland. GOPC’s report, “Achieving Healthy Neighborhoods: Evaluating the Impact of Housing Investments in Weinland Park,” was released in early 2014.

The report defines “a healthy neighborhood as a ‘neighborhood of choice’ where people with a wide range of incomes choose to live and invest their financial and social resources, resulting in a sustainable, viable market with appropriate market interventions.” The report selects key indicators to identify healthy neighborhoods in Columbus to which Weinland Park might aspire and to measure the level of stability achieved by Weinland Park. Based on data from 2012 and earlier, the report offers three findings:

- Weinland Park is exhibiting increased stability and housing values are becoming more evenly distributed, which is likely to lead to a more economically diverse community over time.
- Weinland Park does not yet constitute a sustainable, healthy neighborhood; however, unique neighborhood factors complicate the analysis. The number of college students and prevalence of subsidized housing are among the factors that make exact comparisons to healthy neighborhoods difficult. The report suggests Weinland Park’s level of health is greater than the data reflects and its positive trajectory will continue.
- Weinland Park is not exhibiting signs of gentrification and inherent factors are likely to prevent gentrification over time.



GOOGLE STREET VIEW TELLS THE STORY



North Fifth Street—2007



North Fifth Street—2014



East Sixth Avenue at North Fifth Street—2007



East Sixth Avenue at North Fifth Street—2014



East Sixth Avenue at North Sixth Street—2007



East Sixth Avenue at North Sixth Street—2014



East Seventh Avenue at North Sixth Street—2007



East Seventh Avenue at North Sixth Street—2014

The range of housing and rental options in Weinland Park lays the groundwork for an economically diverse community, rather than a predominantly high-income community,” the report says. Among the report’s recommendations are:

- To maintain a positive trajectory, the WPC should continue to facilitate investments and programs.
- Strengthen Weinland Park’s public image and the neighborhood’s curb appeal.
- Monitor the balance between affordable and market-rate housing.
- Increase the homeownership rate.
- Encourage landlords and property managers to improve and maintain their properties.
- Decrease the vacancy rate.

The GOPC report was widely shared with the WPC members and the Weinland Park Community Civic Association, particularly through its Housing Committee. As the increased market demand for housing in Weinland Park became visible in 2014, folks in the WPC and WPCCA began discussing the need for “mid-range housing.” Although not clearly defined, mid-range housing generally means housing opportunities for neighborhood residents whose incomes are too high to qualify for government-subsidized Section 8 housing (as managed by CPO) and not high enough to pay market-rate rents or to qualify for a mortgage. Rising rents in Weinland Park not only reflected the increased desirability to live in the neighborhood but also the upward pressure on rents throughout Columbus and across most of the nation.

Throughout most of 2015, the WPCCA Housing Committee discussed potential housing goals and indicators for the neighborhood that, in turn, could guide WPC’s future housing investments. The WPC still has a portfolio of six vacant duplexes and 12 vacant lots. At the end of 2015, The Columbus Foundation re-engaged GOPC to provide research and staff support to the WPCCA Housing Committee and WPC’s Housing and Land-Use Task Force over the next year to clarify and reach consensus on the neighborhood’s housing goals and what the next investments in housing should be.



Long-time resident Pearl Penn in front of her house renovated through the Weinland Park Home Repair Program.

FAMILY-CENTERED COMMUNITY CHANGE

Community Properties of Ohio's extensive renovation and effective management of some 300 government-subsidized apartments in Weinland Park was a key component of bringing greater stability to those low-income families and to the broader neighborhood. As Weinland Park improves and attracts residents with a wider range of incomes, it is likely to remain a mixed-income community due to the presence of the CPO units. From its inception, WPC has looked for ways of using the stable housing provided by CPO as a platform to assist those families (and others like them) in improving their lives.

In late 2012, the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) selected WPC as one of three community-based, collaborative partnerships (the others being in Buffalo and San Antonio) that it would join. AECF is based in Baltimore and works across the country with a focus on improving opportunities for children at risk of poor educational, economic, social and health outcomes. With support from AECF and other WPC partners, WPC is implementing a two-generation approach, titled Family-Centered Community Change (FCCC), to working with families in poverty in Weinland Park. Following a planning and pilot period, AECF intends to commit \$750,000 to \$1 million a year to implementing the two-generation approach in Weinland Park. The two-generation approach involves engagement simultaneously with young children (birth to age 10), their parents, and the family to improve educational outcomes for the children and economic self-sufficiency for the parents. AECF also provides valuable technical assistance from the foundation's staff and a learning network with the collaborative partnerships in Buffalo and San Antonio.

At the beginning, WPC considered involvement by a number of agencies in the development of FCCC. By mid-2013, however, four "anchor" organizations in Weinland Park emerged with the responsibility of planning and implementing FCCC because each is connected to critical aspects of family life. The four organizations are: The Ohio State University through its Schoenbaum Family Center (early childhood development), Columbus



City Schools through Weinland Park Elementary School (education), Community Properties of Ohio (housing and social services), and Godman Guild (social services). Central to FCCC in Weinland Park is a deeper collaboration among the anchor organizations to provide "seamless" service to the families, implement best practices, and share data.

The four anchor organizations completed a visioning process in September 2013 and formed the FCCC Council in October 2013. The council meets monthly to guide the work and to promote communication and cooperation. A key component of the council is the consistent involvement of each organization's senior leadership. In addition, Alex Barkley was hired through CPO as FCCC

coordinator. Over the next several months, the FCCC Council developed Next Doors, an innovative approach to providing intensive support for FCCC families that began piloting in mid-2014. Tanja Jones was hired as the Next Doors community support coordinator to work closely with the families. The approach is described in more detail in two reports: "Columbus Next Doors Pilot Case Study" (March 2015) by the Urban Institute and "Next Doors Pilot Program: Formative Evaluation Report" (October 2015) by Mihaiela Gugiu of Ohio State.

Next Doors is designed to work with parents and children in making positive changes in their lives through continuous mentorship, coaching and support. In the pilot phase, Next Doors set a goal of enrolling 20 families

the first year, which was achieved. So far, all of the adults enrolled are women. Next Doors uses an intensive coaching model, but with an important twist. Rather than simply connecting parents and children to existing social services, the Next Doors community support coordinator (CSC) first develops a trusting relationship with the family, helps the parents define their own specific goals for themselves and their children, and offers support in a variety of ways to achieve the goals. In general, the families emphasized goals of employment for adults and education for the children. For example, a parent might set a goal of maintaining employment for six months or volunteering in the school to help her child learn. In addition, each of the women in Next Doors has access to a financial coach through Apprisen.



Among the findings from the pilot year of Next Doors:

- Ms. Jones spends a significant amount of time with each family prior to enrollment because the relationship with her in her role as CSC is critical to maintaining enrollment.
- Next Doors enrolled an initial seven families relatively quickly. Enrollment slowed, but then picked up as Next Doors members encouraged friends and neighbors to join.
- Successful enrollment requires a person's readiness to make changes in her or his life and the person's acceptance that change will take time and hard work. From other best-practice approaches, family self-sufficiency can take several years to achieve.
- Next Doors members see the CSC as the essential component of the program. They rely on Ms. Jones as a coach to help them achieve their goals and for emotional support as they need it.
- When a person decides to make changes and begins to achieve her goals, the person may lose some of the informal support from extended family and friends. As a result, many persons in Next Doors experienced life crises, which required a significant amount of time from the CSC.

In general, FCCC cohort families are not adequately served by traditional education and employment services. In addition to having known barriers to adult education and employment, such as lack of childcare, transportation, poor work history, etc., they also are less likely to participate in services or succeed because of a history of trauma, inequity, and exclusion. Trauma-informed community building and services, coupled with personalized relationship-building and coaching are important to increase engagement and success. The FCCC initiative has developed a theory of change model to guide efforts to more effectively serve the families.

Looking ahead, the FCCC Council is hiring a second CSC as Next Doors expands its enrollment in 2016. In addition, multiple strategies are being pursued to share data across anchor organizations about all Weinland Park families who are in the FCCC cohort and to track their progress.

CONCLUSION

In its first three years from 2010 to 2013, the Weinland Park Collaborative developed a close working relationship with the Weinland Park Community Civic Association and supported a variety of community-building initiatives. WPC's partners focused on acquiring and renovating or removing vacant and foreclosed properties and constructing new affordable single-family homes for lease-to-purchase and for rent. The city made major investments in the neighborhood infrastructure. Through its task forces, the WPC and neighborhood civic leaders developed a series of initiatives around public safety, elementary education, health, employment, and youth development that were implemented between 2013 and 2015.

Since 2013, the new and renovated housing and infrastructure improvements – and the growing local economy – stabilized Weinland Park's real estate market and sparked interest among both rental property owners and potential homeowners. By early 2015, Wagenbrenner Development was building and selling market-rate single-family homes in Weinland Park. Wagenbrenner and other private developers have plans to construct more than 1,000 units of rental and owner-occupied housing in the next five years. These plans could bring some 2,000 new residents to Weinland Park – the first population increase in the neighborhood in nearly 70 years.

Looking ahead, the WPC likely will give particular attention to four broad areas: resident engagement and community-building, housing, family well-being, and evaluation.

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING

The key to the long-term success of Weinland Park is that residents assume ownership of the changes in the neighborhood and are empowered to take greater responsibility for the neighborhood's vitality as the WPC and its partners step back. Residents need resources to do that, and the WPC will continue to provide that support. The WPCCA will remain the primary voice of the neighborhood. Both WPCCA and WPC, however, are committed to supporting resident engagement and community-building through a variety of initiatives – social, recreational, educational – not simply committee meetings and service projects. Central to these initiatives will be applying principles of trauma-informed community-building.



Integral to Weinland Park's appeal is its vision to evolve as a mixed-income neighborhood. The rental units owned and managed by CPO assure that low-income families will be a significant part of Weinland Park for decades to come even as the new housing attracts more middle-income people. The eastern half of Weinland Park has an important legacy as one of the few African-American neighborhoods in Columbus outside of the Near East Side. Weinland Park is living into diversity, and we are all eager to learn what that means. Perhaps, one goal is that poor families can live in decent housing in a safer, more attractive neighborhood, while middle-income families can benefit from the amenities of the city and the variety of its people.

While people may live side-by-side that doesn't necessarily ensure that they interact with each other and develop relationships as neighbors. For many of us, crossing barriers of income, education, race, ethnicity, religion and gender to meet our neighbors can be difficult or, at least, uncomfortable. One of the challenges of community-building in Weinland Park over the next few years will be to create safe places where each of us can leave our status behind and meet our neighbors without caring whether he or she is a renter or a homeowner or has earned a GED or a Ph.D.



HOUSING

The development of a healthier real estate market in Weinland Park happened more quickly than anyone anticipated. As property values have risen and new market-rate housing opportunities have grown in the last two years, some low-income renters, who don't reside in project-based Section 8 housing, may leave the neighborhood as rents rise in the neighborhood and across the region. A related concern is that CPO residents who improve their economic self-sufficiency should find other affordable housing options in Weinland Park. As noted in this report's section on "housing," the Greater Ohio Policy Center will work with the WPCCA Housing Committee and the WPC Housing and Land-Use Task Force in 2016

to understand the current housing market and appropriate interventions that would encourage housing options across the range of incomes.

FAMILY WELL-BEING

As noted in this report, in the past two years significant investments have been made to build the capacity and resources of Weinland Park Elementary School and other WPC partners who focus on workforce development, health, youth development, and public safety. These investments are critical to the well-being of individuals and families in Weinland Park and should be continued as long as they are needed.

The Family-Centered Community Change initiative and the partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation bring a special dimension to this focus on family well-being. FCCC will be expanding its Next Doors pilot in 2016. Next Doors is exciting because the staff members are building human relationships with the families enrolled and are empowering the parents and the families to set and achieve their own goals. FCCC is pioneering a deeper collaboration among the four anchor organizations to achieve seamless and more effective service to the families. FCCC also is committed to assessment and evaluation to better understand the complexity of human behavior, social services, and family-centered change. What is being learned from Next Doors will influence greatly how the WPC and its partners approach working in low-income communities in the years to come.



EVALUATION

The attention that FCCC pays to assessment and evaluation encourages the WPC to revisit a systematic evaluation of its work in Weinland Park. Over the next year, the Greater Ohio Policy Center will bring more clarity to the impact of the WPC's housing investments. Some of the tools being developed by FCCC may be useful for evaluating the changes in the broader neighborhood. The WPC also may consider repeating the comprehensive neighborhood survey conducted in 2010. WPC's partners do feel an obligation to better understand what has been accomplished in Weinland Park and to share the lessons with other neighborhoods.

APPENDIX A: FINANCIAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY (2013-2015)

This summary includes investments made from mid-2013 through the end of 2015. The Weinland Park Collaborative does not make decisions about grants to support specific projects, but its deliberations do inform the independent decisions made by the collaborative's funding partners. Due to the WPC's decentralized approach, this summary is not a complete listing of the philanthropic and public investments, but it indicates the scope of the financial commitment to Weinland Park. In addition, this summary doesn't reflect the many hours of civic engagement and volunteer service given by hundreds of residents and community volunteers. Nor does it include the significant investment by individuals, families, and businesses in the housing stock of Weinland Park. The civic involvement and private investment complement the contributions of the WPC partners and are critical to the long-term success of the neighborhood.

PHILANTHROPIC INVESTMENT

Annie E. Casey Foundation **\$ 580,000**

The foundation has supported the WPC's planning for the Family-Centered Community Change initiative, the FCCC Council's implementation of the Next Doors pilot involving 20 families from Weinland Park, and preparation for significantly expanding Next Doors based on the year-long pilot.

Campus Partners **\$ 1,855,000**

Campus Partners focused its investments in support of the Weinland Park Exterior Home Repair Program, the renovation and sale for homeownership of three houses, and the purchase of two problem carry-outs that will be repurposed to meet neighborhood goals.

Cardinal Health **\$ 140,000**

Cardinal Health has supported programming directed to Weinland Park families through grants to Godman Guild Association for a variety of activities; to Local Matters for educational activities for children; to Wexner Center for the Arts for the billboard project and Weinland Park Story Book; to the Schoenbaum Family Center, Columbus Public Health, and Children's Hunger Alliance.

The Columbus Foundation **\$ 2,773,182**

The foundation's numerous grants for work in Weinland Park have been directed primarily to youth development, public safety, housing renovation, research and coordination. Among the activities supported were Godman Guild's summer day camp, Freedom Schools, R.I.S.E. Youth Club, Neighborhood Options for Youth, Greater Ohio Policy Center's housing report, Family-Centered Community Change, and capacity-building for Godman Guild.

Community Properties of Ohio Management Services

CPO Impact **\$ 206,745**

CPO has contributed to the funding for the Family-Centered Community Change initiative, preparation for employment through cpoWORKS, and neighborhood safety through Eliminate the Elements™.

JPMorgan Chase Foundation **\$ 1,457,500**

Among the grants targeted to Weinland Park, the foundation has supported employment and training through Pathways to Work and cpoWORKS, health through Moms2B, and housing through property rehabilitation. The foundation has enriched the opportunities at Weinland Park Elementary School through support for youth development activities involving Godman Guild Association and its A.C.E.S. program, City Year Columbus, Columbus Museum of Art, Communities in Schools of Central Ohio, COSI, Girl Scouts, and the King Arts Complex.

Ohio Capital Corporation for Housing

Ohio Capital Impact Corporation **\$ 1,339,523**

OCCH's affiliate, Ohio Capital Impact Corporation, supported a variety of services, including early childhood development, job readiness programs, and scholarships for attendance at universities, for GED completion, and for children to attend summer camp. OCCH invested in public safety initiatives, community improvements, and supportive services. The progress in Weinland Park over the past half dozen years was made possible in significant measure by the investment of nearly \$40 million by OCCH in renovating nearly 300 units of government-subsidized housing in Weinland Park between 2004 and 2009.

The Ohio State University **\$ 2,028,500**

Many university's offices, colleges and departments have contributed to the work in Weinland Park. Among those are the College of Education and Human Ecology provided high-quality early education at the A. Sophie Rogers School for Early Learning and has supported the neighborhood through family programming, such as SPARK, and use of the Schoenbaum Family Center for civic meetings. Ohio

State University Extension-University District, with its office in the Schoenbaum Family Center, offers programs on home-buyer education, money management, computer literacy, building assets for fathers, small business development and much more. The Wexner Center for the Arts provided leadership for the Weinland Park Story Book, billboard project, and Red Circle.

United Way of Central Ohio **\$ 1,730,700**

United Way funds a large variety of agencies that support education, youth development, employment, and community-building. Among the services in Weinland Park funded by United Way are Godman Guild's workforce development, T.E.E.N., and A.C.E.S. programs; CPO's Safe Neighborhoods program; cpoWORKS; Neighborhood Partnership grants; Directions for Youth & Families' outreach counseling; Habitat for Humanity's home repair program; tool library; youth mentoring by Big Brothers Big Sisters; and Columbus Kids: Ready, Set, Learn.

Total Philanthropic Investment 2008-2013 **\$ 12,111,150**

PUBLIC INVESTMENT

City of Columbus **\$ 4,294,107**

In the period of 2013 through 2015, the city has continued to make major investments in the neighborhood infrastructure, including street and sidewalk improvements along East 11th Avenue and East Fifth Avenue, and to allocate federal funds for construction of new affordable single-family homes. During the period of 2010 through 2012, the city's early investments in housing renovation and construction, infrastructure, and safety cameras totaled more than \$19 million and laid the groundwork for the neighborhood's revitalization.

Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation (Franklin County land bank) **\$ 135,422**

COCIC supported the renovation of housing for sale as affordable homeownership.

Total Public Investment **\$ 4,429,529**

Total Weinland Park Collaborative Investment (2013-2015) **\$ 16,540,679**

APPENDIX B: FINANCIAL INVESTMENT SUMMARY (2008-2013)

This summary includes investments made from 2008 through mid-2013. Early investments, particularly from the City of Columbus and State of Ohio, were important to later investments from philanthropic and private sources.

PHILANTHROPIC INVESTMENT

Annie E. Casey Foundation \$ 150,000

The foundation provided a readiness grant to begin implementation of a Family-Centered Community Change model in Weinland Park.

Campus Partners \$ 1,235,000

Campus Partners supported the purchase and renovation of vacant and foreclosed homes, establishment of the Weinland Park Home Repair Program, and architectural and engineering work related to the acquisition and eventual renovation of rental properties along East 11th Avenue.

Cardinal Health \$ 147,500

Cardinal Health supported wellness programs serving Weinland Park provided by Local Matters, Action for Children, Columbus Public Health, Nationwide Children's Hospital, and Learn for Life. Support also included Godman Guild's strategic planning, programs and food district planning.

The Columbus Foundation \$ 5,541,008

The foundation made numerous grants targeted to Weinland Park. The primary areas of focus were education, employment, research, and coordination. Support included the purchase and renovation of vacant and foreclosed homes, Weinland Park Home Repair Program, Neighborhood Options for Youth, R.I.S.E. Youth Club, Weinland Park Wildcats, and summer programs for youth.

JPMorgan Chase Foundation \$ 4,300,000

Among the foundation's grants targeted to Weinland Park were support for the purchase and renovation of vacant and foreclosed homes, the Weinland Park Home Repair Program, construction training program, and numerous enrichment programs at Weinland Park Elementary School, including Girl Scouts, COSI, and Ballet Met.

The Ohio State University \$ 500,000

Many university's offices, colleges and departments contributed to the work in Weinland Park. Among those were Ohio State University Extension which invested staffing and a large variety of programming in Weinland Park for more than a decade.

United Way of Central Ohio \$ 3,376,839

United Way selected Weinland Park as one of five Columbus neighborhoods in which it focused time and resources to achieve goals to reduce the number of vacant and abandoned houses and to reduce crime. United Way invested in agencies and organizations targeting Weinland Park with a particular focus on housing, public safety, and education. Among the many initiatives supported were Neighborhood Partnership grants, two community organizers, tool library, GED classes, and A.C.E.S.

Total Philanthropic Investment 2008-2013 \$ 15,250,347

PUBLIC INVESTMENT

City of Columbus \$ 19,243,783

The city made major investments in the neighborhood infrastructure, including street and sidewalk improvements and water and sewer lines, installed 10 neighborhood safety cameras, supported neighborhood safety initiatives, and allocated federal funds for housing renovation and new construction.

State of Ohio \$ 15,000,000

The state awarded two grants of \$3 million each from the Clean Ohio Revitalization Fund to the City of Columbus for clean up of the Columbus Coated Fabrics and 3M sites. The state also allocated \$9 million in Low-Income Housing Tax Credits to The NRP Group to construct 40 lease-to-purchase single-family houses in Weinland Park.

Total Public Investment \$ 34,243,783

Total Weinland Park Collaborative Investment (2008-2013) \$ 49,494,130