

# City of Providence

## Community Conversation Agenda

The City of Providence, Department of Planning and Development, Division of Community Development is asking for the community's input about priorities for housing and community development needs throughout the city. This information will be gathered and used to shape future spending and project priorities and to update the City's Consolidated Plan – which guides the city's spending on housing and community development.

- 6:30 – Check In
- 6:40 – Welcoming Remarks
- 6:50 – Program Overview
  - What is Community Development Block Grant?
  - What can CDBG be used for?
- 7:00 – What We've Heard
  - Information from Previous Meetings
  - Community Assets
  - Previous Investments
- 7:15 – Breakout Discussion
  - Are we on the right track?
  - What are we missing?
  - What should our priorities be?
  - What do you want to see in your neighborhood?
- 8:00 – Wrap Up & Review

*Please complete the following survey and return to City staff person or leave in the survey box.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

What are the most important issues of concern or priority needs in your community? **Circle Three**

Affordable Housing

Homelessness

Parks / Sports / Recreation

Senior Services

Poverty

Jobs / Economic Development

Public Housing

Public Safety

Low-Quality / Unsafe / Unhealthy Housing

Drug or Alcohol Addiction

Education

Housing and Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS

Social Services for Adults and Children

Accessibility for Those with Disabilities

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How can the City better respond to and address your community concerns?

Additional Comments:

# Community Conversation

April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**Dr. Martin Luther King School**



City of Providence

Dept. of Planning & Development

Division of Community Development

Brian Hull, Director of Community Development

# Agenda

- 6:30 – Check In
- 6:40 – Welcoming Remarks
- 6:50 – Program Overview
  - What is CDBG
  - What can CDBG be used for
- 6:55 – What We've Heard
  - Community Assets
  - Information from Previous Meetings
  - Previous Investments
- 7:00 – Breakout Discussion
- 7:45 – Wrap Up & Review



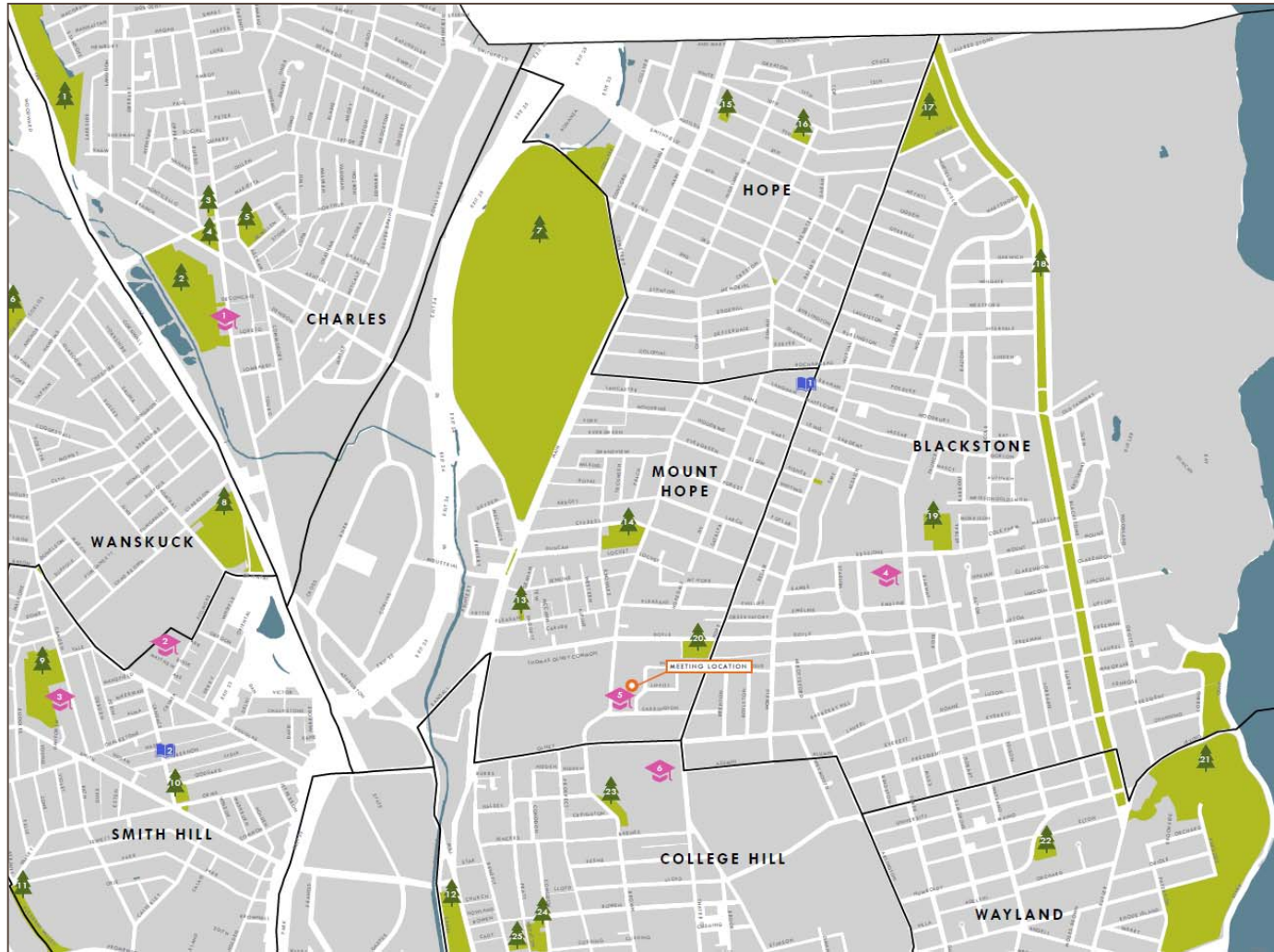
# Program Overview

- **What is Community Development Block Grant?**
  - Federal program that provides communities with annual grants to address a wide range of unique community development needs.
- **What can CDBG be used for?**
  - Affordable Housing Development, Homeownership Programs, Park Improvements, Streets & Sidewalks, Public Services, Job Training, Economic Development, Community Centers, Food Banks, Senior Services, Tree Planting, Health Centers, Technical Assistance to New and Existing Businesses, Energy Efficiency and Weatherization Programs, Lead Abatement, Historic Preservation, Crime Prevention, Neighborhood Cleanups, etc.

# Active Participation

- **Priority Needs Boards**
  - Please place your stickers on the boards throughout the room to identify your concerns
  - There are multiple locations – we will collect information for all
- **Neighborhood Maps**
  - If there are specific areas in the neighborhoods that you have concerns about, please write on the post-it notes and place them on the map
- **Community Survey**
  - On the reverse side of the agenda is a brief survey. Please complete and return to the survey box at the front of the room or hand it to a City employee.

# Community Assets



# What We've Heard

- **Housing**

- Problem with absentee landlords not maintaining residential properties and owner occupants who are unable or unwilling to maintain their homes affecting the neighborhoods through declining property values and blight
- Concerns focused on the affordability of in-fill housing
- Interest in a home repair program

- **Parks & Open Space / Healthy Neighborhoods**

- Improved lighting and improvements at Billy Taylor Park
- Interest in areas designated for community gardens, additional green space, and park stewardship programs (such as “friends of” groups)
- Need greater coordination of youth programs and public services in neighborhood
- Need more street trees and better maintenance in some areas



# What We've Heard

- **Accessibility, Mobility, and Infrastructure**
  - More access points to the North Burial Ground
  - Need better pedestrian connections across North Main Street, particularly to link pedestrians to the bus stops on the west side of the street.
  - Residents would like a comprehensive and safe sidewalk network so people can more easily walk through the neighborhoods and children have safe routes to school
  - Need for better bicycle and pedestrian connections across Branch Avenue and Smithfield Avenue from North Main Street
  - Stormwater drainage problems exist at several locations, most notably the “Third Street Lake” at Third Street and North Main
  - Need to preserve and improve the neighborhood schools

# What We've Heard

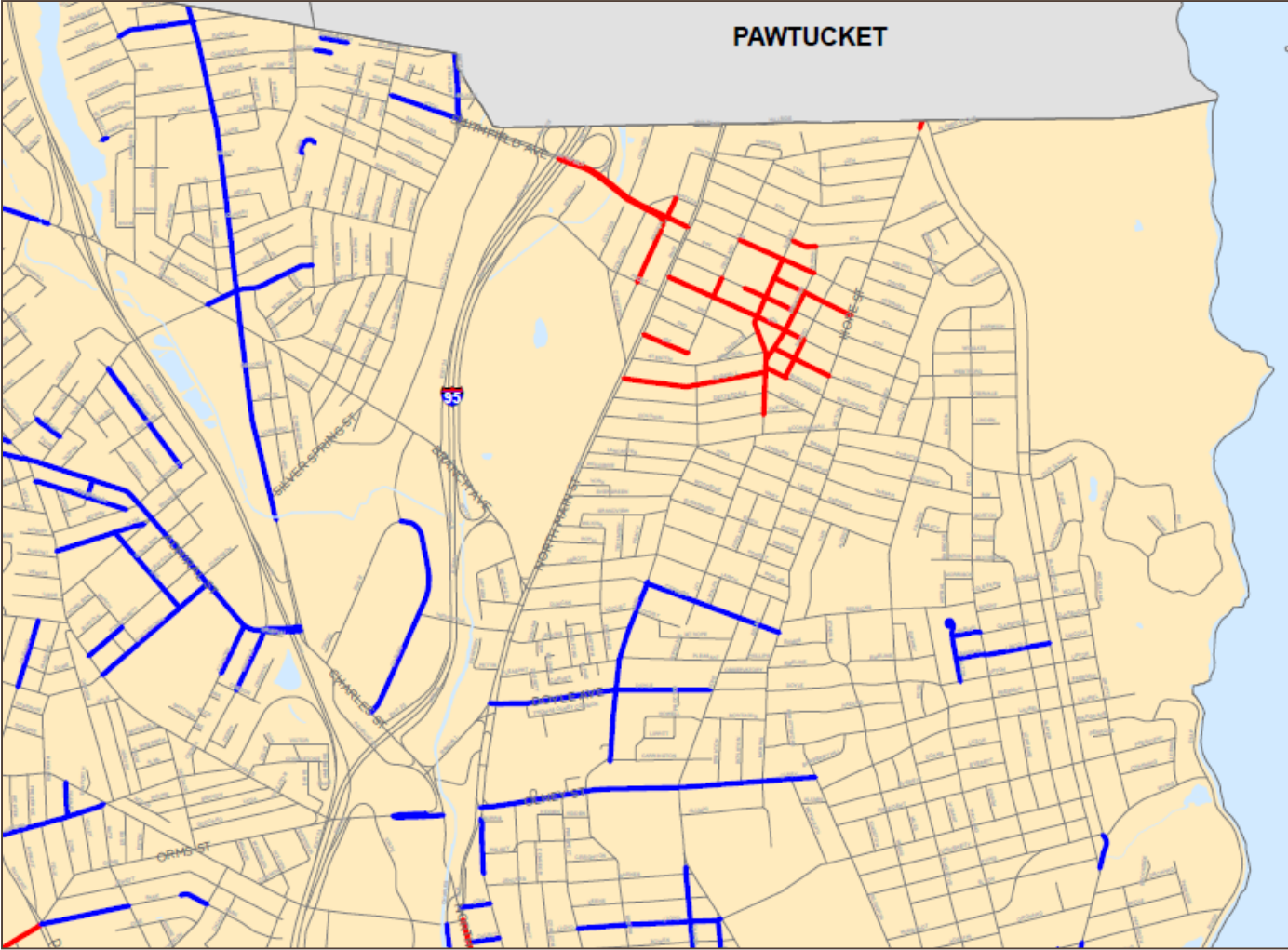
- **Public Safety**

- Improve community safety through increased police presence in the neighborhoods
- Lighting improvements were suggested at several locations to deter illicit activities such as drug dealing
- Enforcement of existing laws as an issue that needs to be addressed

# Investments Made



# Road Improvements



# Breakout Discussion

- Are we on the right track?
- What are we missing?
- What should our priorities be?
- What do you want to see in your neighborhood?
  - Services for Adults and/or Children
  - Parks, Recreation, Sports, Community Centers
  - Affordable Housing, Blight Removal, Code Enforcement
  - Commercial District Improvements, Economic Development
  - Streets, Sidewalks, Bike Lanes, Crosswalks

# Wrap Up

- **Breakout Discussion**
  - Feedback from Facilitated Conversations

# Wrap Up

- **Consolidated Plan**

- Guidance document for CDBG funds
- Community Meetings – March & April
- The information will help inform the Consolidated Plan
- Public to review Consolidated Plan and offer comments
- Provide us with your contact information so we can contact you to review the Consolidated Plan
- Final draft will be completed in May

**<http://www.providenceri.com/planning/consolidated-plan>**

# Meeting Schedule

Date	Time	Location
Tues. March 3	6:30pm	Webster Avenue School 191 Webster Avenue
Wed. March 4	6:30pm	Fox Point Boys & Girls Club 90 Ives Street
Tues. March 10	6:30pm	West Broadway Neighborhood Association 1560 Westminster Street
Wed. March 18	6:30pm	SWAP 500 Broad Street
Tues. March 24	6:30pm	Washington Park Community Center 42 Jillson Street
Mon. March 30	6:30pm	Capitol Ridge 700 Smith Street
Mon. April 6	6:30pm	DaVinci Center 470 Charles Street
Thurs. April 9	6:30pm	Dr. Martin Luther King School 35 Camp Street





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Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

### Community Conversation #8 ( April 9, 2015)

#### *MLK School*

#### **DISCUSSION NOTES**

- Residents believe that more policing is not the solution and that there is a disconnect between police officers and the community. Many claim that the police force is not trying to build relationships with community members.
- Many feel that police officers should be better trained on how to approach youth
- More funding is needed for sidewalks construction and improvements on the Southside near Amos House, specifically on Somerset St
- Residents believe that more funding is needed for after school and job training programs
- There is a need for neighborhood wide clean up
- Many residents believe that there is a great economic and racial divide between the neighborhoods and that the neighborhood signs should be removed as they are only contributing to the problem
- Residents suggested that the City's weatherization program employ local community members
- Many believe that the City's economic development strategy is off track
- Food security should be a City priority and efforts should focus on growing more food. More farming would also provide more employment opportunities for residents.
- More funding is needed for green infrastructure and stormwater initiatives
- Many residents believe that capacity building is needed for youth programs
- There is a great need for more funding for senior services and youth after school programs
- Additional funding is needed for better promotion of higher education and small businesses
- Residents requested better enforcement of weatherization contractors' credentials (not all are fully licensed and insured)
- Many residents believe that there has been too much focus on planning, and not enough on focus on implementation. As a result, the same issues keep arising in the neighborhood.
- The City needs to focus on developing creative partnerships to enhance community health and development
- Lead toxicity continues to be a big issue
- Residents feel that LED bulbs should be used for street lights
- Residents suggested creating a youth training program in landscaping similar to the one on the south side w/ Groundworks
- Residents believe that there needs to be better coordination among school and community organizations
- Existing city services need to be better advertised in the community
- Residents believe that First Source regulations need to be better enforced by the city in order for the high unemployment and homeless rates to decline



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- Residents suggested the possibility of developing a program to employ the homeless population through building rehabilitation projects
- Residents believe that funding needs to be better allocated proportionally to communities in need
- Housing discrimination for those with criminal records is a big issue in the community
- More funding is needed for programs to address gun violence prevention



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



**PARKS + PLAYGROUNDS**

- 1 Canada Pond Management Area
- 2 Prete-Metcalf Field
- 3 St. Ann's Plaza
- 4 Hopkins Square
- 5 Ascham St. Park
- 6 Corliss Park
- 7 North Burial Ground
- 8 Hopkins Park
- 9 Father Lennon Park
- 10 Candace St. Playground
- 11 Pleasant Valley Parkway
- 12 Roger Williams Memorial Park
- 13 Pleasant St. Park
- 14 Billy Taylor Park
- 15 Ninth St. Park
- 16 Summit Ave. Park
- 17 Lippitt Memorial Park
- 18 Blackstone Boulevard Park
- 19 Sessions St. Park
- 20 Vincent Brown Recreation
- 21 Blackstone Park
- 22 Gladys Potter Park
- 23 Brown St. Playground
- 24 Prospect Terrace
- 25 M.E. Sharpe Memorial Park



**SCHOOLS**

- 1 Esek Hopkins Middle School
- 2 Times 2 Academy
- 3 Harry Kizirian Elementary School
- 4 Nathan Bishop Middle School
- 5 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School
- 6 Hope High School



**LIBRARIES**

- 1 Rochambeau Branch
- 2 Smith Hill Branch



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Community Conversation #8(April 9, 2015)

*MLK School*

### **SURVEY RESULTS**

***What are the most important issues of concern or priority needs in your community?***

VOTES

ISSUE

	<i>Accessibility for Those with Disabilities</i>
5	<i>Affordable Housing</i>
	<i>Drug or Alcohol Addiction</i>
5	<i>Education</i>
4	<i>Homelessness</i>
	<i>Housing and Services for Persons with HIV/AIDS</i>
7	<i>Jobs / Economic Development</i>
1	<i>Parks / Sports / Recreation</i>
2	<i>Poverty</i>
3	<i>Public Housing</i>
1	<i>Public Safety</i>
2	<i>Low-Quality / Unsafe / Unhealthy Housing</i>
1	<i>Senior Services</i>
3	<i>Social Services for Adults and Children</i>
<i>Other:</i>	<i>Infrastructure, Gun violence, after school programs, reentry housing when family are denied housing when she or her get out of prison, pedestrian crossing at Hope &amp; N. Main, sidewalk condition, climate change, energy efficiency, change to LED bulbs in street. lights, resident low income housing, lead paint, turn vacant land into gardens (at least a couple in South Providence)- neighbors could/might work together on a project, Racial and economic division, public schools.</i>

***How can the City better respond to and address your community concerns?***

- Tool library- power washers, etc.
- Remove street signs that designate neighborhood divide- i.e. Blackstone, Mt. Hope, and Summit
- Listen and respond. Kevin Jackson does not listen or respond - difficult to reach- Dare I say? – he’s close to useless!!



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- I believe that the City has been making initial investments that need to be continued and followed through to the next phase
- Stormwater alleviation-landscaping as job training for youth as has been done in Reservoir Triangle, South Providence, West End in conjunction with Groundworks.
- Grow more food, understand that we are in a low growth environment and need to ecological reality and economic justice.
- Do not let millionaires buffalo us for tax breaks
- By holding more forums like this and by listening to the people who are directly impacted by these issues. Let's work towards solutions!
- The abandoned houses in the city and the high unemployment need to brought together to solve both problems
- Fix the streets in the Main Square
- Have a safety place for our young people can be not on the street (recreation)
- By reaching out to the community and hosting many meetings to people live here
- More comprehensive dialogue and interaction
- Funding for youth and economic development initiatives
- Meaningful programming to promote neighborhood-wide for community development at large comprehensive with impact

### ***Additional Comments:***

- Thank you for including us in these conversations
- Make clear it is a mixed economy not a capitalist. No capitalist would accept a public subsidy.
- Thank you for this discussion
- I like to talk with someone about this feel free to call me anytime thank you
- Volunteer ambulance sense to promote: job training, disaster preparedness, community service, economic and community development, increased self-esteem, assistance for seniors, relief for overburdened City EMS, health and safety promotions, huge return on investment. Would like to discuss with city agencies
- We need to improve our environmental service as well as jobs and training programs
- Need better clean up grow storm drain
- Stop environmental racism in South Providence now!
- Housing is a human right!
- Jobs with justice!
- Referrals for health and education
- Coordination of agencies for education/mentoring, outside the neighborhood trips, activities, college/career preparation
- Weatherization program with hiring of neighborhood folk



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- NBC repair of road at top of Hope/Blackstone
- Speed of cars on Tenth St. is awful- really need speed bumps- might reduce amount of traffic - many children and elderly
- Lippitt Park needs a make-over
- Lots of talk about preparing kids for college, however, not everyone wants to go to college, but they do need a trade – and we need plumbers, electricians, roofers, etc.