

ENGLEWOOD: Making a Difference



Englewood



Workgroups comprising more than 650 people and a Planning Taskforce of 20 representatives worked to develop a quality-of-life plan capable of meeting both the challenges and opportunities in the Englewood community.

2005 Planning Taskforce

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
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| Emily Dunn | Nolan Shaw |
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Teamwork Englewood

Teamwork Englewood was formed as a vehicle for comprehensive community development in 2003 through the joint efforts of St. Bernard Hospital, Greater Englewood Parish United Methodist Church and Pullman Bank (now Park Bank). Its first task was to organize the community planning process that is a requirement of LISC/Chicago's New Communities Program.

The organization got off to a slow start because it lacked a broad base of support and many community stakeholders did not clearly understand its purpose. In 2004, after expanding its board of directors and hiring two new staff members, Teamwork Englewood re-started the planning process and has since established itself as a leadership organization. It has:

- Organized dozens of meetings to support the community quality-of-life planning process, attracting participation of more than 600 individuals.
- Convened Englewood social service providers to determine what services are available and find ways to improve service delivery.
- Responded to requests by the Pastors of Englewood, 7th District Police and the Chicago CAPS office to convene residents to discuss allegations of police

corruption related to drug trafficking. The February 2005 meeting resulted in a list of issues that will be addressed jointly by residents and Chicago Police.

- Facilitated public meetings after the announcement by Chicago Public Schools (CPS) that Englewood High School would stop accepting freshmen in 2005, then reopen as a new school. Teamwork Englewood disseminated recommendations from that meeting and later facilitated a meeting with CPS Superintendent Arne Duncan.

Teamwork Englewood's goal is to continue its role as convener and facilitator, bringing together existing and new organizations to implement this quality-of-life plan. Rather than implementing projects on its own, Teamwork Englewood expects the bulk of its effort to be focused on helping other groups work together, catalyze change, find resources and attract new energy to the community.

A Welcoming Place Where People Work Together



We envision a community that nurtures its young people and seeks wisdom from its elders.

We envision an Englewood where every resident, business owner, community and institutional leader is “making a difference.” The Englewood of 2010 will be a welcoming place where people from diverse economic backgrounds live, play and work together. It will be a community that nurtures its young people, seeks wisdom from its elders and provides an opportunity for lifelong learning and positive civic engagement.

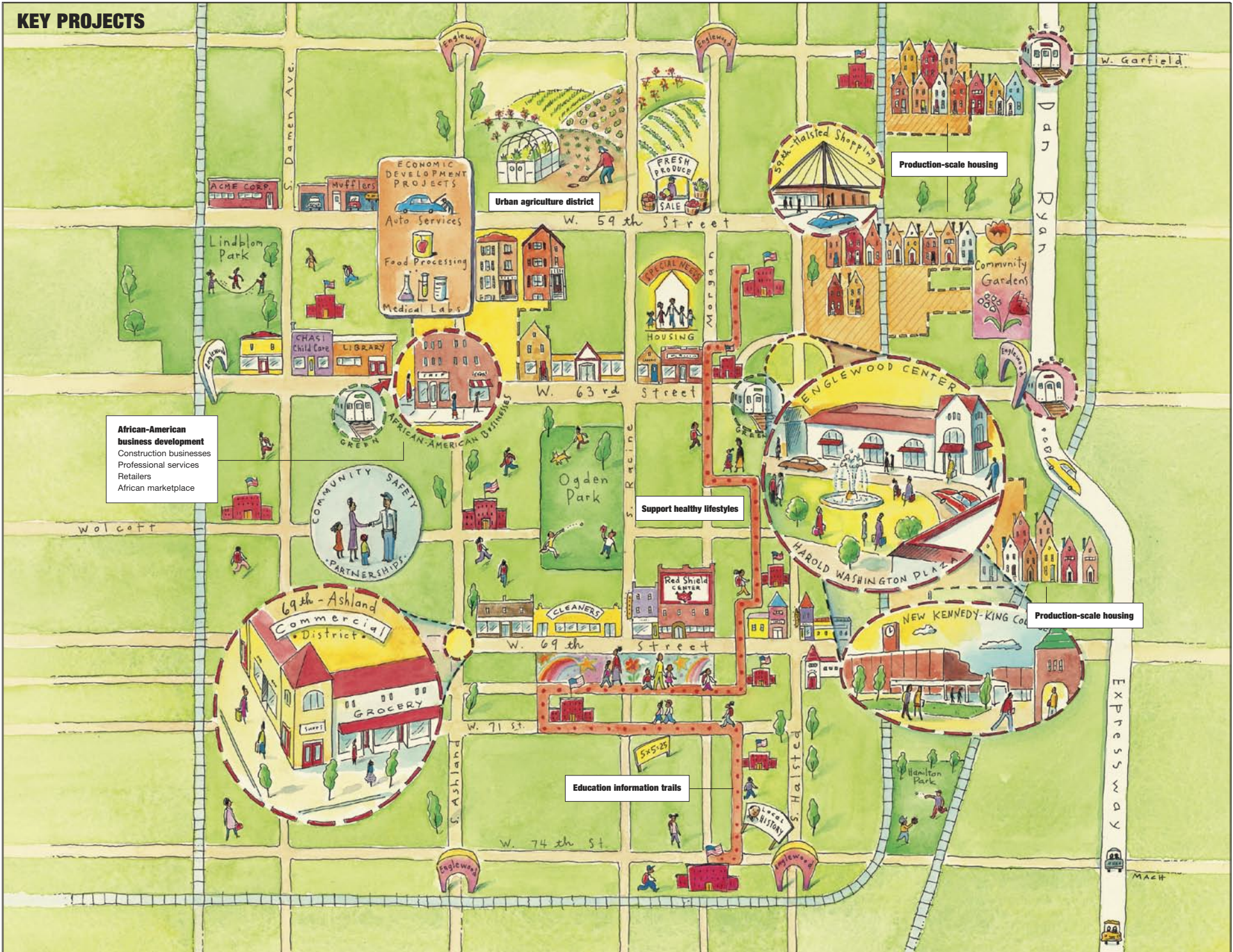
We will create this community of opportunity by building on the past and taking advantage of today’s resources and innovations.

Housing New housing for a range of income levels will begin to fill the empty spots of our neighborhood, blending with upgraded and revitalized housing.

Economic Development Retail stores will provide more choices for our residents, and new industries and service firms will create jobs and living-wage paychecks.

Community Life A web of networks, cultural activities, health and social services and recreation programs will make Englewood a place where people get to know one another and, together, build a stronger neighborhood.

KEY PROJECTS



African-American business development
 Construction businesses
 Professional services
 Retailers
 African marketplace

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS
 Auto Services
 Food Processing
 Medical Labs

Urban agriculture district

Production-scale housing

Support healthy lifestyles

COMMUNITY SAFETY
 PARTNERSHIPS

69th - Ashland Commercial District
 GROCERY

Education information trails

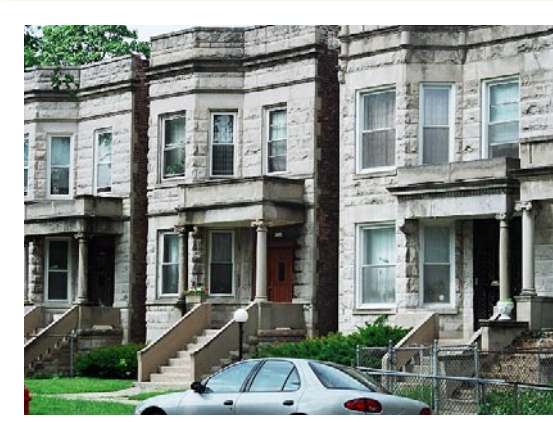
ENGLEWOOD CENTER
 HAROLD WASHINGTON PLAZA

Production-scale housing

NEW KENNEDY-KING CENTER

MACH

Coming Together to “Make a Difference”



Among the community's many assets are these historic greystone homes.

Our neighborhood is ready for a new period of prosperity and hope. We've lived through many years as a poor and downtrodden South Side neighborhood, where community improvement efforts haven't always produced results. We believe that era is over and that we, the residents and leaders of Englewood, are prepared to make a difference in the quality of life in our neighborhood.

For the past 18 months a remarkable journey of renewal has begun in Englewood through the planning process that resulted in this document. More than 650 of us have gathered together at dozens of different meetings and events to learn about each other, discuss improvement strategies and frame out a plan for implementation.

Our community is wealthy in many ways, from its long history of leadership and activism to its abundance of small-business owners, churches, social service agencies, energetic youth and wise elders.

We are at an important point in history as well, with hundreds of millions of dollars worth of new projects coming out of the ground, from new retail stores and housing to the Kennedy King College campus, which can help us establish a new and different “Englewood Center” at the historic intersection of 63rd and Halsted.

We envision a long road ahead—a period of growth that will require much more than the five-year outlook of this plan—because the challenges we face are as big as our opportunities.

We recognize that everything is interlinked. The performance of our schools must be improved, and to do that we must provide support to families, teachers and particularly our youth, who may live in homeless shelters or are being raised by their grandparents. We can accomplish that goal if we are healthy, and for that we plan a walking club, safer streets and wider availability of fresh produce. We envision new retail outlets, from a farmers' market and grocery store to an African-American marketplace, stores that provide not only needed goods but local jobs. We will pursue economic development on multiple fronts, from business development to attraction of fast-growing industries, from job training for formerly incarcerated individuals to food processing facilities tied to our urban agriculture project.

Our plan is ambitious, yes, but we have been working for 18 months to put in place the networks and relationships necessary for implementation. Today, in Englewood, we are ready.

STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS

STRATEGY 1 Attract new industries and service firms that create living-wage jobs while preparing residents for regional employment opportunities.

- 1.1** Prepare and place residents in health care and medical services jobs and assess the feasibility of developing a medical laboratory testing facility in Englewood.
- 1.2** Optimize local construction employment on public and private development projects.
- 1.3** Expand automotive services training for Englewood residents and establish an automotive services franchise to provide jobs for program graduates.
- 1.4** Develop an urban agriculture district to provide business, job training and employment opportunities while improving the availability of fresh produce.

STRATEGY 2 Renew Englewood's identity by reclaiming empty spaces and enlivening the community through cultural activities, gardens, new parks and public gathering spaces.

- 2.1** Promote coordinated development of “Englewood Center” as our neighborhood’s downtown, including a new Harold Washington Plaza that includes housing, retail businesses and community gathering spaces.
- 2.2** Reclaim vacant lots for special events and other community uses including green spaces, exhibits and performances.
- 2.3** Create and implement guidelines for redevelopment of vacant land for housing, commercial uses and other purposes.
- 2.4** Utilize public art and signage to promote Englewood’s renewed identity.

STRATEGY 3 Rebuild a vibrant and diverse retail and business community at key locations throughout the neighborhood.

- 3.1** Create a business council that organizes and advocates for local businesses, helps strengthen personal-service and business-to-business companies and promotes partnerships.
- 3.2** Expand the small base of African-American-owned businesses and foster growth by providing technical assistance and linkages to business development incentives.
- 3.3** Within targeted neighborhood shopping districts, attract quality retail businesses and help existing business owners acquire space necessary to meet local needs.
- 3.4** Promote transit-oriented development near the Green Line terminal at Ashland.

STRATEGY 4 Jump-start the housing market to create a balanced, mixed-income community while providing support services to local families and individuals.

- 4.1** Create a rental property “owners network” and a “family services network” that link quality, affordable rental housing and family support services.
- 4.2** Help working renters to become homeowners through services that help establish a path to ownership.
- 4.3** Develop or expand housing and support-service programs tailored to the needs of specific populations.
- 4.4** Establish a housing resource center to provide technical and financial assistance to homeowners, home buyers and renters.

STRATEGY 5 Promote healthy lifestyles that include physical fitness, good nutrition and better use of health-care resources.

- 5.1** Establish Englewood walking clubs to promote good health while increasing a sense of community and improved safety.
- 5.2** Attract a full-service produce store, produce market or grocer with a large produce selection.
- 5.3** Expand availability of healthy food options at small grocery stores.
- 5.4** Establish a farmers' market and local produce stands that offer fresh fruits and vegetables.
- 5.5** Use signage, community events and health fairs to promote health resources and programs, with a particular focus on immunization and infant mortality.

STRATEGY 6 Improve safety and security throughout the community.

- 6.1** Provide opportunities to steer youth away from gangs and into long-term employment.
- 6.2** Improve community/police relations in ways that help to eliminate police corruption.
- 6.3** Re-establish an Englewood gang-intervention task force that is guided by proven "best practices."
- 6.4** Increase the capacity of block organizations to organize clean-up and beautification projects and increase public involvement on safety issues.

STRATEGY 7 Bring new resources to schools to expand health and social services that help improve academic performance.

- 7.1** Strengthen a network of community-service providers to ensure positive changes at local schools that will benefit students.
- 7.2** Develop mental health clinics and family counseling services at elementary and middle schools and make more use of student teachers and mental-health and social-work graduate students.
- 7.3** Create partnerships between struggling schools and high-achievement schools and strengthen faith-based partnerships to establish teen mentoring programs.

STRATEGY 8 Create diverse opportunities for recreation, lifelong learning and civic engagement.

- 8.1** Establish an Englewood Facilities Capital Campaign to improve existing facilities serving youth and young adults.
- 8.2** Establish a Community Development Sustainability Fund to develop long-term resources for youth, green space and community performance initiatives.
- 8.3** Increase usage of park facilities by elders and youth through expanded programming and a community-and faith-based transportation network.
- 8.4** Establish a Council of Elders to provide an oral history of significant community events and to foster inter-generational communication with youth.
- 8.5** Create education and information trails near schools and "living museums" in public lobbies.
- 8.6** Increase access to community technology centers and other educational media, such as radio and cable TV, to provide opportunities for home study and financial education.

STRATEGY 9 Initiate services to special-needs populations to address critical issues.

- 9.1** Establish a re-entry services network for formerly incarcerated individuals and their families.
- 9.2** Assist wards of the state who are "aging out" to prepare for independent living.
- 9.3** Provide a continuum of support for male and female single heads of households
- 9.4** Help "grand families" address challenges of raising new families.

STRATEGY 10 Create a community network to spread information, resources and expertise within Englewood and beyond.

- 10.1** Establish an Englewood information network to gather and disseminate information about local resources.
- 10.2** Convene a Community Services Network to share information, promote local resources and coordinate service delivery.
- 10.3** Establish a "Neighbor to Neighbor" program that provides information to new residents on services, area resources and local businesses.

New Communities Program

NCP is a long-term initiative of Local Initiatives Support Corporation/Chicago to support comprehensive community development in Chicago neighborhoods. It seeks to rejuvenate challenged communities, bolster those in danger of losing ground and preserve the diversity of areas in the path of gentrification. Each effort is led by a neighborhood-based lead agency that coordinates programs among other local organizations and citywide support groups.

The program gives each of the lead agencies several resources: two full-time staff positions (an NCP director and organizer), technical support for planning and documenting the planning process, a pool of loan and grant funds distributed on a competitive basis for project seed money, and opportunities for learning from both peers and subject-area experts.

All NCP neighborhoods spend their first year undertaking a structured community planning process that leads to the quality-of-life plan, then move on to implementation. They are encouraged to be “doing while planning,” undertaking short-term “Early Action Projects” such as launching a youth program, opening an employment center, creating public art or sponsoring local health fairs.

NCP is designed to strengthen communities from within – through planning, organizing and human development. The comprehensive approach is designed to help broaden opportunities for local residents through better education, broader housing choices, safer streets, stronger personal finances and new economic opportunities. The strengthened community is better equipped to take advantage of larger market forces, attract new investment and enhance the overall quality of life.

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