



Visioning Our Future: Looking Ahead to 2015

Appendix Document

January 18, 2012

Appendix: (we have tried to represent the notes as much to the exact detail of how they looked on the pages. In each group, we have used a different character to represent a point of interest that was noted by the group. Some are checks, others are stars, etc. If you have further questions, feel free to contact us at 404.736.6602 or info@clarkstondevelopmentfoundation.org)

YELLOW - Stronger relationships with the schools and new superintendent

Group 6: Schools

- 1) What do you see in your experience in schools
 - Potential for positive change w/ new Supt. Dr. Atkinson
 - Possibility of a Charter School (increased sense of ownership by City/+Citizens)
 - Lack of staff/school teacher professional development on Diversity/PTS training (Blockage at district level) CASIE ASSN.
 - Leadership (school) turnover
 - Reduce mobility of students
 - Difficulty of placement of students by age.
 - 2) What can you and community do to help resolve issues.
 - Advocacy w/ School Board Reps.
 - Reach out to diverse stakeholders, (teacher, staff, students) for ideas to be safely delivered
 - Search out for best practices
 - Advocate for Birth to Post Secondary expectation for high quality learning (not K – 12 in isolation)
 - Mutual respect between Teacher and Student – perhaps student led
- RELATIONSHIP = INCREASED INVESTMENT

Group 9: Schools

- 1) Lack of understanding
(Intercultural dialogue would be a good solution to that problem.)
- 2) Bullying (Gang Activity)
 - * Solution: Conflict resolution
- 3) Lack of After-School Programs (High School)
- 4) Cultural clash between Parents / Students
- 5) Commitment with Principals working with after-school programs
- 6) Positive Interaction with Assistant Principal. New student was placed with experienced teacher by request.
- 7) Saturday School offers family services. School for the Deaf.
- 8) Parents who have recently arrived in country have difficulty communicating with school staff.
- 9) Parents feel intimidated to reach out to students' teachers.
- 10) In many countries it may be an insult to question an instructor. Teachers are put on a pedestal in many cultures.
- 11) Schools that realize the importance of cultural diversity and the importance of communicating and training for parents new to the country.


What can you do to make a difference?


- 1) Recruit more positive male role models.
- 2) Provide parent forum / workshops on (language barriers / communicating with students teachers.)
- 3) * Task Force could be established. Principals, other stakeholders in community to identify issues in the refugee community.
- 4) * Parents need to know what's available in terms of programs that offer assistance.
- 5) * Teen Programs which offer single gender (girls) programs allow teens to develop self-esteem. They become more confident in their abilities.
- 6) Mentors are provided to guide students make the transition to a new community.
- 7) * Use parents who were teachers in their native country to help educate parents.
- 8) * Having after-school programs for students in Grade 8 or above.
- 9) Having the students in the High School commit to participating in the Academic After School Program.


Group 12: Schools

What do you see?

- Varied experiences in different schools
- Language differences
- More support for parents to be teachers

-  Different needs at each school


-  Better communication from agencies w/ administration – makes partnerships more comfortable + productive




-  How much understanding does the Principal have of their Students' backgrounds?


- From the school board perspective, it's about the laws against giving out info about children

Ideas for improvement

- Better conversation and more open dialogue
- Tutors must feel empowered to contact teachers

-  More avenues to build trust between children & teachers – balancing cultural differences

-    Parents should feel empowered
 - organize parents
 - bring parents to Board of Education meeting
- Cultural support groups – Bhutanese, Somali, etc – can organize parents

-  Community organizations feel they are burdening teachers – maybe have an allocated time in the day for discussion concerning students so teachers do not feel burdened

GREEN - Creating a Clean Clarkston

Group 5: Clean

CCC attracts volunteers.

City has recycling program.

Trash is found around dumpsters instead of inside them.

Plantings add beauty & clear the air.

Community members engage in clean-up efforts at creeks & parks.

(next page)

Habitat for Humanity house-build to mobilize community



Planting trees & others along R.R. tracks to beautify



Neighborhood clean-ups to unify the community

Sustained, ongoing community-cleaning

More litter cans, including in residential areas – uniformity of cans with branding

Cleanliness competitions, among blocks, neighborhoods, apt. complexes

(next page)

Street-sweeping, garbage / litter pick-up through local government (court-ordered)

Contacting health dept. or city sanitation regarding garbage collection / accumulation around dumpsters at apt. complexes



Incorporating “clean community” concepts in youth education ---- “Don’t litter”

Informing new refugee arrivals about their abilities to register concerns (e.g., environmental health) with authorities ---- also, Creating mechanisms for residents to provide comments / concerns

(next page)

Communities, businesses, etc. could adopt streets, with signs that show it



Groups to facilitate apt. residents’ expressing concerns to managers ---- including interpretation
Repair & maintain roads & lots within apt. complexes

Group 8: Clean Community

What have you seen?

- Cleanliness – grounds for playing, exercise
- Security issues ➔ need to educate about neighborhood watch + safety
- “us taking care of our community”
 - Managing trash – recycling, dumpster issues, trash collects on streets + in parks
 - 🍏 Need for * education about littering
 - 🍏 Need for more options to dispose of trash
 - 🍏 “illegal” use of dumpsters ➔ who is responsible?
 - * who is responsible for providing what services (ie. trash cans)?
- Greenery that obstructs visibility while driving
- Too much pavement, need for “updated” building fronts
- Quality of water + soil
- Standards for apartments (interiors + exteriors)

Cont.: <u>What is working?</u>	<u>Interventions</u>
- Residents walk	- County-wide partnerships
- gardening	- playground upgrade
- oil recycling	* education around recycling + hygiene
- environmental clean ups (parks)	- responsibility for own education
- participation in community clean ups	- adopt-a-block
- CCC	- Make use of online forums for neighborhoods
	- Engage community leaders in programs + education

Group 11: Clean Community

What we see + experience

- Clean + improve Friendship Park
- Littering – need litter education campaign (reach young people)
(**suggestion:** do through IRC)
- Pet waste management
- Vandalizing vacant properties
- Sanitation education (Keep Dekalb Beautiful)
- Safe routes to school
- Cockroaches in apartments
+ bed bugs
- Fix up store fronts (downtown)
 - ↳ Parking lots
- Fix up churches
- Signs on business windows that need removal

What we see / experience (cont'd)

- Few public trash cans
- Confusion: Who is responsible for trash pick-up?
- Hard to see people within issues
- “love + drugs” happening on elementary school grounds

Ways forward

- Littering education in schools
- Public health initiatives for bug infestations in apartments
- Contest among businesses for prettiest store fronts
- Identify Clarkston Business Association as avenue for community cleanliness
(**problem:** different nationalities have different business alliances)
- Edible forest along PDL (collaborate with Trees Atlanta) (would increase property value)
- * Sense of ownership is needed in the community (by people, schools, churches, bus.)
- * Identify community leaders in different constituencies / national groups to understand how to educate them on sanitation
- Institute sanitation education at refugee resettlement orientation
- Identify religious leaders as avenues for sanitation education
- * Emphasize / reward positive things (i.e., through competition)
- City must make commitment to sanitation – must

Ways forward (cont'd)

- * Competition: Which apt. complex can keep grounds the cleanest?
- Hire locals to maintain grounds / cut grass (market to donors)
- ↳ Incentives for cleaning community
- Educate through local media (i.e., Somali Radio)
 - ↳ PSAs, ads for competition

- Know names of people responsible for sanitation

BLUE - Ensure apartments are well managed for the benefit of the residents

Group 7: Apartments

What do you see / experience in apartments that is important to you?

- Security
- Maintenance – Renovations
 - 🍏 Slow response – even for critical repairs – eg crack in front door on cold months
 - 🍏 smoke detector
- People from outside community coming in – no fence
- Night security concerns (police on duty)
- Community education – when to call police

Places for kids to play

- Drivers coming around corners / bumps = danger
- Kids + new drivers concern to other drivers
- Landlord / manager only fix when inspection coming up – else neglected
- Safety concerns after dark
- Using road / drive for sports – no place for play
- Safety concern over animals – rats!
- Expense
 - 🍏 For rent continuation
 - 🍏 Different rent for same apartment
- Community spaces – room for ESL / after school / other class

How can we ensure apartments are managed for benefit of residents?

- Residents step up
 - Cut cost
 - do repairs for reduced rent
- Incentive for management?
 - ↖ How?
- Educating community
 - how to stand up for selves
 - what is healthy standard of living
- Community members may not know neighbors have same concerns – eg ovens that don't work
- Train both residents and managers
 - 🍏 Different levels
 - 🍏 Incl. resettlement
 - 🍏 Also how to report things that are wrong

↓
Resources – where to appeal

Resource
Point person
ADVOCAC
Y

- 🍏 What are terms of lease? Residents need help negotiating in difficult situations – but can't make sense of paperwork

Group 10: Apartments

- Brendan Hills
 - apt fires
 - low-level maintenance
 - (lack of) security / crime issue
- + PROGRAMMING within complexes
- Sense of disempowerment
- Safety after dark
- Lack of / poor MGMT / oversight

? Where to go?

- Communication between County & Community

Issues in Apts

Need for more robust security

Problems within Host community

Under stimulated / unaccompanied youth

Supportive programs lacking resources

Street / traffic safety

RESPONSES / RESOLUTIONS?

- Address root problems, not symptoms
- Strengthen communication B/t residents + governing bodies
- ★ ➤ KABOOM! Projects + similar reconstruction
- Empower residents to use
 - ★ power of county code / section 8 enforcements Address
 - Know your rights Trainings?
- ★ ➤ Build relationships w/ lawyers / legal personnel
- ★ ➤ Resident Council
 - 1 -2 Reps / Apt complex
- Create / distribute event calendar w/ City Council, Apt. Mgmt meetings
- Locate / Identify venues for performing arts / cultural meet ups

Group 13: Apartments

1) What do you see + experience?

- Negative physical appearance + code issues
- Need signage with numbers for owners
- List exists of owners (Jan)
needs updating
- Owners need to be held accountable
Many do not live here – property managers are accessible
- Interior code compliance issues
- Rodent + pest infestations
- Residents need to know their rights + what they can do
 - ↳ classes education to encourage sense of ownership
- Need to address for everyone = refugee + non-refugee
- City can institute new code compliance (similar to Dekalb)
Some apts may be abandoned due to cost

2)

- What responsibility do the service providers have when they place someone?
There are policies, but service providers may not all follow or may have pressure on numbers
- RFS trying to bring property managers + service providers together to form agreements
16 managers came to a meeting – with pressure.
- Refugee population more transient.
Need to be sure all residents involved.
- Where are resettlement agencies?
Is there enough support for the families about their housing?
Maybe they need more volunteers?

3) Ideas

- Code compliance (see earlier notes)
- Empower residents with info.
- Identify a leadership team in each complex and educate them. Need translators ★ neighbors help neighbors
- Encourage each complex to have monthly meetings
- Need info sharing on customs
- Need more engagement by resettlement agencies. They need to recruit more volunteers to help them.
They need to work with the property managers.
- ★ Apt newsletter – RFS leaders will translate – post them or door to door collaborate w/ AHA
- Educate owners on subsidy sources for repairs + improvements
- Encourage property managers to allow resource centers on site bulletin boards
- Officials, managers, community working together