

**The Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project**

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## **Abstract**

This project aims to revitalize the Virginia Avenue Corridor, a former central business district located in Cumberland, Maryland. The area is characterized by blighted neighborhoods, abandoned property, criminal activity, and community disinvestment. In order to transform the community to a safe, vibrant neighborhood that provides a mix of housing, business, and employment opportunities that facilitates civic engagement and promotes community pride; the project focuses on improving the physical conditions of the community, increasing community engagement, and decreasing crime. The key outputs and activities identified for the project were the acquisition, demolition, and renovation of property; community leadership training; beautification projects; community meetings with local elected officials and representatives from the police department; and the establishment of a neighborhood crime watch. The planned activities were designed to not only achieve the project's short-term outcomes but also to complement and reinforce each other, increasing the likelihood that community change would occur. While the project is still ongoing, the progress towards the three short-term outcomes-improved community conditions, increased community engagement, and decreased crime, shows that the project is on track to achieving the intermediate and long-term outcomes. This thesis presents information on the approach employed to revitalize the former central business district, engage the community, and outlines the lessons learned.



## Community Context

### ***Community Profile***

The City of Cumberland, nestled between the Allegheny and Appalachian mountains of western Maryland, is part of a network of communities within the Appalachian Region comprised of 13 states. A total 10.15 square miles (US Census), the City of Cumberland is considered a built-out city despite thirty-nine percent (39%) of the total land area undeveloped due to severe development constraints (City of Cumberland Comprehensive Plan, 2004). The largest of seven political subdivisions in Allegany County, Maryland, Cumberland was once the second largest City in Maryland and nicknamed the “*Queen City*”. Rich in history and natural resources, Cumberland is a community struggling to recover from the loss of smoke stack industry (Western Maryland History Library, n.d.)

The loss of major manufacturing in the late 1970’s to mid-1980, devastated the predominantly blue collar community with the City of Cumberland experiencing significant job loss. With the loss of traditional manufacturing, economic development initiatives focused on attracting new service based industry. While modest employment gains were made with the construction of a state and federal prison in the 1990’s and early 2000’s (Allegany Works!, n.d.), the economic recession brought additional employment losses. From 2005 through 2010, an additional 485 jobs (a 1.3% decline) have been lost; comparatively Maryland’s job market grew by 4.7% and the national job market growth rate was 5.7% (Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, n.d.).

The loss of employment opportunities has led to population loss as people leave the community to find work to support their families. Today just fewer than 21,000 residents call the City of Cumberland home, representing a 9.2% decline in population since 1990 (U.S Census: American Community Survey, 2007-2012). The public school enrollment also underscores this



decline. From 2000-2011, Allegany County Public School enrollment has decreased by 17.3% and projections show this trend to continue (Maryland Department of Planning, n.d.).

The City of Cumberland's median household income is \$31,827 (average per capita income is \$22,099), which is significantly less than the Cumberland MSA median income of \$51,700 and the State of Maryland's median income of \$72,419 (US Census, 2010). Almost nineteen percent of all individuals and thirteen percent of all families residing in the City of Cumberland have incomes that fall at or below 100% of federal poverty (US Census, 2010). This rate increases to almost 30% for families with a female head of household (US Census, 2010).

From 1970 to 2010, the City of Cumberland and Allegany County's unemployment rates exceeded the State of Maryland and the nations by more than 2% points per year with unemployment rates hitting a high of 14.3% in 1982 compared to 8.5% for Maryland and 9.7% for the nation (MD DLLR, n.d.). Unemployment statistics for calendar year 2010, 2011, and 2012 for the Cumberland area continue to highlight this trend but also reports slight decreases in unemployment from a high of 9% in 2010 to 7.7% in 2012 (MD DLLR). Despite these decreases, the State of Maryland's unemployment rates still trended below area unemployment rates averaging 7.8% in 2010 and 6.8% in 2012 (MD DLLR).

The City of Cumberland is a relatively safe community despite residents perceptions (Brooks, Nelson, Oliver); serious crimes (defined as murder, rape, and robbery) have decreased by eight percent since hitting an overall crime high in 2009 (Cumberland Police Department Annual Report {CPD}, 2012) . Aggravated assaults, burglary, and theft are also down slightly while property crimes, drug offenses, and gang related violence remain constant (CPD, 2012).



Ninety-three percent of the City of Cumberland's 11,076 housing units were built before 1980 (US Census, 2010) and 17% are estimated to be vacant (City of Cumberland Housing Needs Survey, 2002). In 2012, Cumberland received nationwide attention for being one of the most affordable places to purchase a home for a household earning a median income of \$53,000 (National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo Housing Opportunity Index, 2012). Housing affordability is relative however; as the median income for Cumberland residents is more than twenty thousand dollars less than their counterparts in other areas of Maryland and many of the properties for sale, because of age and neglect, are in need of expensive upgrades and repairs.

### ***Community Needs Assessment***

The City of Cumberland identified the revitalization of the Virginia Avenue Corridor as a priority in its 2004 Comprehensive Plan (2004). The Faux Group, a consulting firm, was subsequently commissioned to complete a Virginia Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan in 2006. The plan identified the needed infrastructure, street and streetscape improvements and encouraged the acquisition of blighted properties for restoration or demolition (Faux Group, 2006). The street resurfacing and new sidewalks were completed in 2008 and 2009 in conjunction with construction of the new Human Resources Development Commission building, a 20,000 sq./ft LEED Gold Certified facility that serves as the administrative headquarters for the Community Action Agency and Area Agency on Aging.

The City of Cumberland's 2013 Comprehensive Plan: Neighborhood Element acknowledges efforts to reconstruct streets and improve sidewalks and encourages in-fill development, streetscape enhancements, and façade improvements (p.40-46). The neighborhood residents who participated in meetings with City staff preparing the Neighborhood Element also cited the need for demolition of dilapidated/abandoned property, improved property code



enforcement, the addition of a transit shelter and parking, enhanced street lighting, expanded police patrols, and a family friendly sit down restaurant (p.183). “Cumberland and its taxpayers lack the substantial and sustained funds necessary to completely rehabilitate and revitalize its neighborhoods while also satisfying the City’s public obligations to restore and upgrade its infrastructure and provide the high level of urban services that the public has come to expect” (Umling, 2012, p.6).

### ***Target Community***

The loss of major employment and population has left the City of Cumberland an economically depressed area characterized by its declining tax base, aging infrastructure, and deteriorating neighborhoods. This depiction of Cumberland can be clearly illustrated by the former central business district known as the Virginia Avenue Corridor, a once bustling hub of residential, commercial, and retail activity that today sits largely vacant, attracting crime.

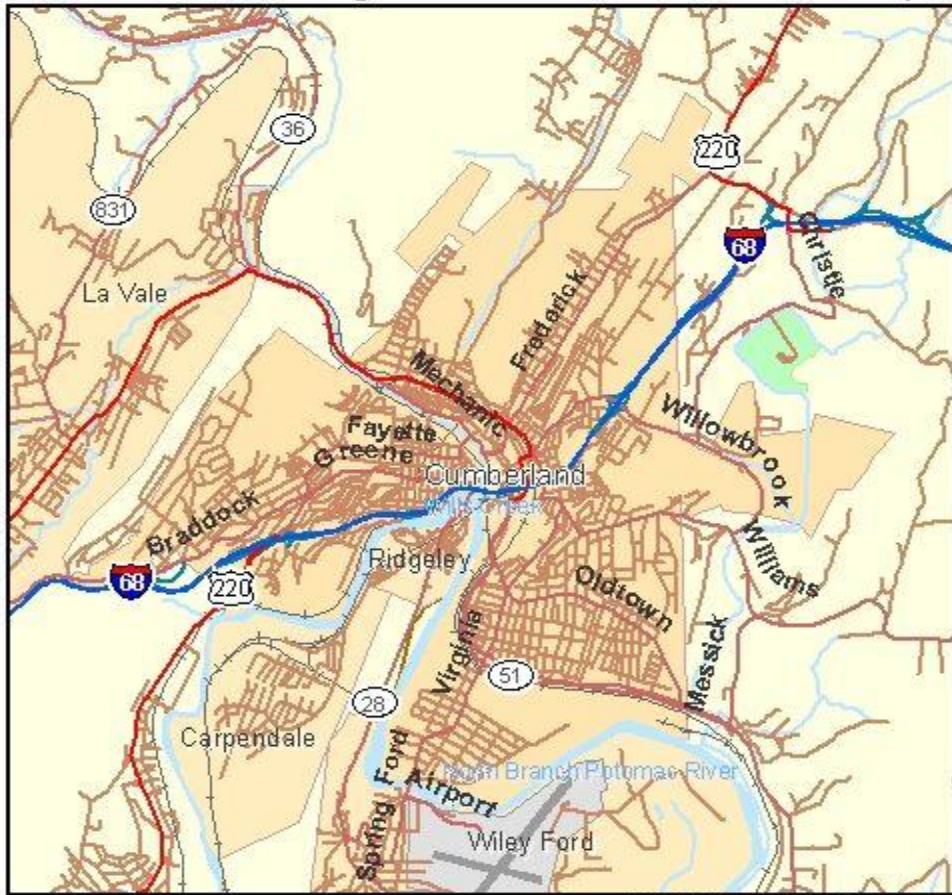
The Virginia Avenue corridor once served as the retail core of South Cumberland, a working class neighborhood that developed out of the growth of the B&O Railroad and Rolling Mill Plant (City of Cumberland Comprehensive Plan: Neighborhood Element {CoCCP: NP}, 2012). In the second largest neighborhood in the City, population declined by 14% between 1990 and 2000 (US Census, 2000), representing a higher percentage of population decline than the City of Cumberland as a whole. The largest percentage of population loss were seniors totaling 23% (age 62 and older) followed by children (ages 5-17) at 12% and working age adults (18-64) at 14%. (US Census, 2000; CoCCP: NE, 2012). The City of Cumberland estimates that vacant housing stock in this area has grown by 75% over the decade, from 166 units in 1990 to 290 units in 2000 (CoCCP: NE, 2012). Owner occupied housing decreased by 6% during this time and rental occupied housing decreased by 16% (CoCCP: NE, 2012) with the mean value of homes in the neighborhood increasing to just over \$50,000 (US Census, 2000; CoCCP: NE,



2012). The Census data shows 30% of neighborhood residents live at or below 100% of federal poverty (2010). The City of Cumberland Police have begun saturation patrols in the area in an effort to deter criminal activity (CPD, 2012).

Below is a Map of the City of Cumberland.

**This is the coverage area for the Aerial Photo Map**





## **Problem Analysis**

### ***Problem Statement***

The City of Cumberland's Virginia Avenue Central Business District has a 50% vacant, blighted property inventory that requires public and private investment to increase employment opportunities, reduce criminal activity, decrease community disinvestment and reverse the population exodus.

Throughout the United States “suburbanization has caused a relative and in many cases, the absolute decline of downtown areas” (Filion, Hoernig, Bunting, and Sands, 2004, p. 328). The construction of interstate highways and the prevalent use of personal automobiles (Robertson, 1999) led to the decentralization of cities. As residents and employment opportunities moved out of the city (Faulk, 2006; Filion, 2004), traditional retail followed (Reed, 1989). The advent of big box retailers, strip malls and indoor shopping malls, featuring large on-site parking lots, became popular (Edgar, 2008). With retail establishments and businesses locating outside of the city, residents no longer had a need to go downtown. As visitors to the downtown dwindled, remaining businesses struggled to remain open forcing many to relocate or close (Edgar, 2008; Robertson, 1999) compounding the problem. The downtown area, once the heart and soul of many communities (Robertson, 1999) is now often characterized by their vacant storefronts and poorly maintained buildings and sidewalks (Sutton, 2010).

A downtown often represents the image of a community (Edgar, 2008) and the decline of a community's downtown negatively impacts both the city and its residents. The loss of business and retail activity results in lost tax revenue for the city (Reed, 1989). The vacant, abandoned, and poorly maintained properties (Robertson, 1999) that are left behind, lead to aging and deteriorating infrastructure which in turn negatively impacts surrounding property values, further diluting the city's tax base. Vacant buildings also attract crime (Seidman, 2004) advancing the



decline of the downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. Increased crime detracts from a community's economic development and tourism efforts and results in downtown becoming a place to avoid (Edgar, 2008).

The effects of a declining downtown can be clearly depicted by Cumberland's Virginia Avenue corridor. Once the retail core of South Cumberland, property crimes, drug offenses, and gang related violence (CPD, 2012) plague the neighborhood and serve as a deterrent to business development and retail activity. The vacant, abandoned, and blighted properties facilitate criminal activity. The Virginia Avenue Corridor, once a bustling center of activity, has become the epitome of a downtown in decline, "an obsolete place with vacant storefronts, poorly maintained buildings and sidewalks, and empty streets" (Robertson 1999, 274). Absent intervention, the area will continue to experience further social and economic decline.

The proposed project is designed to redevelop and revitalize two blocks of the City of Cumberland's Virginia Avenue Corridor, utilizing public and private investment. The project will employ tools and strategies that have been successful in the redevelopment of downtowns across the nation by linking economic investment to improved community conditions.

### ***Stakeholders***

The Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC), a non-profit Community Action Agency based in Cumberland, Maryland will serve as the lead agency for the project designed to redevelop and revitalize two blocks of the City of Cumberland's Virginia Avenue Corridor. Headquartered on Virginia Avenue, HRDC's mission is "*to eliminate social and economic barriers to promote individual and community stability through services, advocacy and collaboration*". HRDC's Executive Director will serve as the project manager and will be responsible for stakeholder management, project implementation, and funding. A concern for HRDC will be funding, given the recent federal budget reductions. An additional



concern is that stakeholders will have the expectation of immediate results. Kent Robertson wrote, “the decline of small city downtowns took decades to occur, and revitalization efforts always take many years of small, steady, incremental steps” (2001, p. 20).

The following stakeholders were identified at the onset of the project:

<b>Stakeholder</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Concerns/Expectations</b>
Jay Oliver, Director of Community Development, City of Cumberland. Oversees Community Development Block Grant program and Planning, Zoning, and Historic Preservation	Local Govt.	Provide funds for acquisition of blighted properties and façade improvements. Assist with planning, zoning and historic preservation regulations.	Funding.
Teri Hast/Shawn Hershberger, City of Cumberland Economic Development	Economic Dev.	Assist with researching and evaluating appropriate financing/tax incentives; Promote available local, state, and federal tax incentives.	A concern with this group is the cost and there will be an expectation of a return on their investment.
Delores Brooks Chair, Chapel Hill West Neighborhood Betterment Group	Community Betterment Group. Rep. community members	Residents of the neighborhood are the eyes and ears of the community and their role will be to provide valuable insight and input into what is needed and what will be supported by the community, as well as recruit residents to serve on a neighborhood crime watch and beautification committees.	A concern is keeping this group committed to the project, if the impact of the project is not seen quickly.
Nick Scarpelli, Business Owner on Virginia Avenue; City Council Member	Local Government and Local Business Owner	As the second Largest and poorest neighborhood in the City of Cumberland, the Mayor and Council have a vested interest in the success of this project. Role will be to provide financial and regulatory support.	Availability of funding given federal and state budget reductions.
Mac McKinley, Chairman South Cumberland Business and Civic Association	Local Business Owner/Rep. of Local Business Owners	This group along with individual business owner’s role will be to provide valuable input and feedback and support project initiatives. This group’s participation will also help to ensure project initiatives do not	A concern expressed by this group is how this revitalization project will be any different from



		unwittingly harm existing business.	previous attempts
Charlie Hinnant, Chief of Police City of Cumberland	Local Government/ Law Enforcement	Identify and implement strategies for crime reduction	Resource Availability (manpower)
Pastor Tormad Svensson, St. John's Church	Faith Based Community	In small communities the faith based community has a means to reaching residents that may not otherwise be engaged in the local business community or involved in a community betterment organization. The role of faith based organizations will be recruitment and outreach in an effort to gain a broad based perspective that will be incorporated in the planning and implementation of the project.	N/A
Andy Vick, Executive Director Allegany Arts Council	Arts Community	Arts and culture have proven to be critical to activities designed to revitalize neighborhoods (Nowak, 2007). The role of the Executive Director of the Allegany Arts Council is to help identify how arts and cultural activities can be integrated as part of the redevelopment strategy.	Expectation will be that the artist community benefits from their involvement in the redevelopment project.

Additional stakeholders from the local business community were sought to provide a broader base of representation from private sector as well as a private developer with commercial development experience to provide expertise and guidance.

A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) Analysis was conducted to help stakeholders identify ways to maximize our strengths, minimize weaknesses and threats and uncover opportunities as we moved forward with the project. Included below are the results:



<p><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Agency is well known and has a solid reputation in the community. It is also large, diverse and well established.</li> <li>• Resources available for the project include: experienced staff and strong, diversified funding base with agency reserves;</li> <li>• Agency and staff are familiar and known to the community and key stakeholders;</li> <li>• Agency staff and Board of Directors have committed (time and resources) to the project;</li> <li>• Project has been identified as a community need and is supported by local elected officials;</li> <li>• Project will utilize several proven strategies and will be collaborative.</li> <li>• ARC funds have already been committed and one building has been purchased to date.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agency has limited commercial redevelopment experience;</li> <li>• As proposed, this project will be carried out by existing staff which may distract from other responsibilities;</li> <li>• Grant funds obtained will require strict adherence to timelines and competitive bid process;</li> <li>• Community is skeptical about how this project will be different from others that have failed, which could result in a lack of commitment to the project;</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The State of Maryland has grant funding for adaptive re-use of gray field buildings;</li> <li>• The City of Cumberland is an Entitlement Area and local CDBG funds are available to support this project.</li> <li>• Partnership with the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association could lead to additional business/private sector support;</li> <li>• With Weatherization funds being so limited, HRDC's existing crews may be able to complete some of the necessary demolition or construction work;</li> <li>• The project, if successful, will provide HRDC solid experience in this field, and may lead to a new project;</li> <li>• The project as structured allows for small successes that can build on one another;</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal and State budget cuts;</li> <li>• Community perception of the area is negative ;</li> <li>• Local economy may limit market demand for redeveloped properties;</li> <li>• Some community members are apathetic about the project making it difficult to generate excitement/optimism around the project;</li> <li>• If grants are not obtained, the project could be a financial drain on the agency;</li> <li>• Missteps at any point in planning and implementation of the project may become insurmountable.</li> </ul>

### ***Project Goals in CED Terms***

The Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project aims to improve community conditions, increase community engagement, and decrease crime. In CED terms, the project will address Community through the redevelopment of three properties and beautification activities that improve the appearance of the community while also building social capital. Training will build community capacity and help develop needed infrastructure through bonding and bridging social capital to stabilize the community. In economic terms, the project provides funds to acquire



three (3) properties, rehabilitate two (2) properties, and demolish one property. Funding for beautification projects and training will also be provided to improve community conditions, build resident's capacity, and decrease crime. The projects initial financial investment will result in increased property values and help spur new business development. In development terms, the project will redevelop two properties and demolish one property resulting in construction and landscaping jobs.



## **Literature Review**

A wealth of literature on the revitalization and redevelopment of downtowns exist, (Hoogendoorn , Visser, Lenka, Marais , Van Rooyen , and Venter, 2008) with much of the available literature focusing on policies, projects, and a prescriptive approach to the revitalization process (Faulk, 2006). While the majority of the revitalization efforts analyzed in professional literature focus on large cities; (Faulk, 2006; Robertson, 1999; Hoogendoorn et al, 2008; Mallach & Schilling, 2010) many of these same strategies are employed in small towns (Robertson, 1999). Literature produced by the National Main Street Center (Robertson, 1999; What Works, 2001; Lawhead, 1995) and case studies of small town redevelopment (Morgan & Lambe, 2008; Faulk ,2006; Robertson, 1999; Gitrell, 1990) also explore strategies and tools focusing on revitalization of small city's downtowns.

Over the last four decades, city leaders have used a multitude of strategies to bring people and businesses back to the downtown (West & Orr, 2003). A popular strategy includes the physical redevelopment of the downtown either through demolition (Filion et al, 2004) renovation, adaptive re-use or historic preservation (Faulk, 2006; Robertson, 1999). Communities experiencing success from physical redevelopment efforts include Staunton, Virginia and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Staunton, similar in size to Cumberland, MD was struggling to attract employment opportunities and maintain population. City leaders prioritized the rehabilitation and re-use of existing infrastructure and buildings as a means to revitalize the central business district. This effort resulted in the redevelopment of several key properties (Staunton, n.d). The Franklin Avenue area of Minneapolis employed targeted blight removal to remove blighted, abandoned property in an effort to reduce criminal activity (Corridor Revitalization, n.d) and attract business.



Incentives including Tax Incremental Finance Districts (TIF), Business Improvement Districts (BIDS) and property tax abatement programs (Faulk, 2006) are another popular revitalization strategy. The Payne Avenue, St. Paul Main Street program provides incentives and subsidies to make projects feasible (Seidman, 2004). The conversion of a strip club to a local chain restaurant is an example (Seidman, 2004) of how incentives can be utilized to promote investment. Auburn, New York, Bangor, Maine, and Carson City, Nevada are additional examples of towns and smaller cities that utilize incentives to foster revitalization (Robertson, 1999).

Another strategy includes the redevelopment or construction of large anchor projects that will bring people downtown. Examples of anchor projects include convention centers, indoor shopping centers and sports complexes (Robertson, 1999). The City of Florence, South Carolina (Edgar, 2008) constructed a performing arts center that features a 500-seat outdoor amphitheater and indoor theatre. They also partnered with a local university to offer fine arts classes out of the facility. This anchor project is attracting people downtown and has served as the catalyst for the arts and cultural district (Edgar, 2008).

Beautification strategies which include streetscape improvements are also employed to make the area more aesthetically pleasing (Edgar, 2008). The City of Hartsville, South Carolina opened up green space, creating a more pedestrian friendly environment. Plans are in place to redesign the main road and build sidewalks on both sides of the street (Edgar, 2008). The Town of Summerville, South Carolina focused their streetscape improvements on new signage, planters, lighting and trees to enhance the area (Edgar, 2008). Ongoing beautification activities foster civic ownership and can prevent trash, graffiti, and poorly maintained public spaces from creating and perpetuating a negative image (Seidman, 2004).



Façade improvement incentives in the form of grants, tax incentives, and matching grants for property owners also contribute to enhancing the physical characteristics of the downtown. The City of Bennettsville, South Carolina has provided grants to help rehabilitate ninety-eight building facades (Edgar, 2008). Most of the buildings in downtown Bennettsville are more than 100 years old and the facades improvements restored the buildings Victorian architecture (Edgar, 2008). The City of Marion, South Carolina recognizes the need for façade improvements and works with business owners through a matching grant program (Edgar, 2008).

Another strategy is for communities to capitalize on existing assets (Robertson, 1999). Examples include developing a riverfront and streams (Landers, 2008) creating access to hiking and biking trails, and festival and events spotlighting a unique community feature like Arts Walks (Rosenberg, 2005) and festivals (Edgar, 2008). While Baltimore, Maryland's Inner Harbor (Frieden & Sagalyn, 1990) is a successful example of a community capitalizing on its natural assets to develop the downtown as a destination, Bangor, Maine has capitalized on the Kenduskeag River and developed its waterfront (Robertson, p.2006). The City of Laurens, South Carolina utilizes its historic square to host festivals that attract thousands of visitors each year (Edgar, 2008).

While revitalization strategies differ from community to community, success most often comes from identifying and implementing a strategy that will meet the needs of the targeted community (Palma, 2001; Lawhead, 1995). Given the current conditions of the Virginia Avenue Corridor and research on successful revitalization efforts in similar communities, a three pronged approach targeted at improving the physical condition of the neighborhood, increasing community engagement, and decreasing crime will be utilized.



## **Project Design/Logic Model**

The redevelopment and revitalization of the Virginia Avenue Corridor in Cumberland, Maryland is urgently needed. The area, characterized by vacant, blighted properties and its criminal element, specifically gang and drug related activities, has resulted in community disinvestment and out migration. The initial community decline could be attributed to suburbanization, the advent of strip shopping centers and malls, and the growing reliance on personal automobiles. The problems, however, have been compounded as business and employment opportunities have left the City, buildings have aged, and the community has been left to deteriorate.

Communities do not decline overnight; rather the deterioration is gradual and incremental, similar to revitalization. The long-term outcome developed for the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project is a safe, vibrant community that provides a mix of housing, business, and employment opportunities that facilitates civic engagement and promotes community pride. The project's intermediate outcome is to reduce the vacant, blighted property inventory in City of Cumberland's Central Business District by 50%. The short-term outcomes developed for this project are designed to improve the physical conditions of the neighborhood, increase community engagement, and decrease crime.

Individually the short-term outcomes are designed to reinforce and build off of each other through a comprehensive, coordinated approach to revitalization. The achievement of the three short-term outcomes will also serve as building blocks for future redevelopment and community revitalization efforts of the Virginia Avenue Corridor. Improved physical conditions will be achieved through targeted acquisition and demolition of blighted property. The efforts will initially focus on the 200 block of Virginia Avenue and the 300 block of Seymour Street, due to



the number of concentrated vacant and blighted properties. By targeting resources in these two blocks, the visual impact will be evident and the removal of vacant and blighted properties will serve as a deterrent to criminal activities.

Increased community engagement will be achieved through resident and business owner participation in community planning meetings, beautification projects, and the establishment of a neighborhood crime watch. Engaging the community members in activities ranging from community clean-ups, planting flowers in newly created green space, crime prevention, and the planning of an upcoming community event, will help build social capital. Social capital is essential to building a stronger community.

Decrease in crime will be achieved through the removal of abandoned and blighted property that is the center of criminal activity, engaged community members that are involved in community betterment initiatives that include a neighborhood crime watch and through increased police presence via vehicle and foot patrols. By cleaning up the area, having vigilant residents and visible law enforcement criminal activity should decrease.

The success of the short-term outcomes will be measured by:

- 1) The number and percentage of vacant and blighted properties eliminated;
- 2) The number of community members actively engaged in community activities designed to redevelop and revitalize the community through participation in planned events as evidenced by sign-in sheets; and
- 3) The decrease in the number and percentage of police incidents in the 200 block of Virginia Avenue and 300 block of Seymour Street.



### The Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project Logic Model

<b>Long-term Outcome</b>	A safe, vibrant community that provides a mix of housing, business, and employment opportunities that facilitates civic engagement and promotes community pride.		
<b>Intermediate Outcome</b>	The City of Cumberland's Virginia Avenue Corridor's Central Business District's vacant, blighted property inventory will be reduced by 50%.		
<b>Short-term Outcome</b>	Improved physical conditions- <i>Visible abandoned and blighted properties and garbage will be reduced by 10%</i>	Increased community engagement- <i>Community member participation will increase by 20%</i>	Decreased criminal activity- <i>Crime in the community will decrease by 15%</i>
<b>Inputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for acquisition of properties</li> <li>Funding for property rehab and demolition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training</li> <li>Project supplies</li> <li>Funding</li> <li>Identification of resources</li> <li>Space</li> <li>Materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training</li> <li>Space</li> <li>Materials</li> </ul>
<b>Outputs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire 3 properties</li> <li>Demolish 1 property</li> <li>Rehabilitate 2 properties</li> <li>Complete 3 community beautification projects</li> <li>Engage a minimum of 25 stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide leadership training for 25 community members</li> <li>Distributed a report on current community initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate and execute a MOU for increased police presence in the Virginia Avenue Corridor.</li> <li>Establish a neighborhood crime watch.</li> </ul>
<b>Activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage community stakeholders in planning meetings;</li> <li>Identify and compile a list of blighted and/or vacant properties;</li> <li>Rate and Rank blighted and/or vacant properties according to condition for targeted acquisition and blight reduction</li> <li>Identify funding to acquire properties</li> <li>Identify funding to demolish blighted properties</li> <li>Acquire identified properties</li> <li>Demolish identified properties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify community members and stakeholders by attending community meetings and working through faith based institutions</li> <li>Host a community "meet and greet" to meet community members and learn about community issues and concerns.</li> <li>Create an inventory of current community initiatives.</li> <li>Facilitate series of community meetings /visioning sessions.</li> <li>Provide leadership training for community residents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with representatives from the City of Cumberland Police Department;</li> <li>Organize a meeting between community members and the City of Cumberland Police Department;</li> <li>Provide community members with resources on creating and implementing a neighborhood crime watch.</li> <li>Develop a Memorandum of Agreement for neighborhood crime watch participants.</li> </ul>



Activities to achieve the three short-term outcomes can be divided into two components:

Project Planning and Project Implementation. Activities under project planning include identification of resources (physical, financial, and human) and stakeholder engagement.

Activities that fall under implementation include: compilation of a property inventory and the rating and ranking of properties; the acquisition of identified properties and subsequent rehabilitation and/or demolition of properties; the identification of beautification projects and resources needed to carry-out the projects; the facilitation of informational meetings and community visioning meetings; the identification and compilation information on community initiatives; the recruitment of community members; and the hosting and facilitation of community training sessions, and meetings with law enforcement.

The outputs (measureable results) for the Virginia Avenue Redevelopment Program are:

- 1) Acquire three properties;
- 2) Demolish one property;
- 3) Rehabilitate two properties;
- 4) Engage a minimum of twenty-five (25) stakeholders in the project;
- 5) Complete three community beautification projects;
- 6) Provide leadership training to a minimum of twenty-five (25) community members;
- 7) Distribute a report on current community initiatives;
- 8) Establish a neighborhood crime watch; and
- 9) Initiate and execute a Memorandum of Understanding for increased police patrols in the Virginia Avenue corridor.

The nineteen month timeframe (January 14, 2013 through September 30, 2014) provides adequate time for both planning and implementation and incorporates project monitoring to evaluate the efficacy of the project design and activities.

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## Methodology and Implementation Plan

### ***Participants***

Proposed participants include twenty-five (25) community members who live or work in the Virginia Avenue Corridor. Participants will be home owners, renters, business owners, and employees and merchants of area businesses. Participants will be recruited from the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association, the Chapel Hill West Community Betterment Committee, and area churches. Additional participants will be recruited through advertisements in the Cumberland Times News, the community's only newspaper, non-profit newsletters, and social media.

### ***Community role***

Community members and local business owners will mobilize a diverse group of community stakeholders to participate, design, and implement a plan to help revitalize the Virginia Avenue Corridor. Community members will identify and prioritize community needs, identify project goals and objectives, solicit feedback on proposed plans, and identify needed training and community resources. Community members will develop a timeline for proposed projects and design outputs and activities to achieve identified goals and objectives.

Stakeholder	Affiliation	Level of Involvement	Stakeholder Involvement
Jay Oliver	City of Cumberland Dep't. of Community Development	High	Serve as liaison to the City of Cumberland. Provide area specific data. Support project through available CDBG funding. Assist stakeholders in obtaining needed planning and zoning support and permits. Provide assistance through Code Enforcement.
Nick Scarpelli	Business Owner/City of	Moderate	Serve as liaison to Mayor and City Council. Mobilize



	Cumberland Councilman		business leaders. Provide and solicit feedback on business needs.
Delores Brooks	Chapel Hills West Community Betterment Group	High	Community member will provide leadership in the recruitment and mobilization of community members. Will provide input on community and training needs.
Charlie Hinnant	City of Cumberland Police Department	High	Police Chief will provide area crime statistics, allocate resources for increased police presence, and coordinate training for community members.
Mac McKinley	South Cumberland Business and Civic Association	High	Community member will provide leadership in the recruitment and mobilization of business owners and employees. Will provide input on community and training needs. Provide and solicit feedback on business needs.
Pastor Tormod Svennson	St. John's Lutheran Church	High	Community member will provide leadership in the recruitment and mobilization of community members. Will provide input on community and training needs. Will also offer meeting space for the community.
Shawn Hershberger/ Teri Hast	City of Cumberland, Economic Development	Moderate	Will provide information on property inventory including but not limited vacant, abandoned properties, foreclosures, code enforcement issues, and tax sales. Will provide information and guidance on various tax incentive strategies utilized for revitalization.



Jo Lynn Sullivan	Business Owner	Moderate	Business owner will provide leadership in recruitment and mobilization of business owners and employees. Will provide input on community and training needs. Provide and solicit feedback on business needs.
Courtney Thomas-Winterberg	HRDC, Inc.	High	Mobilize stakeholders; Coordinate, facilitates, and document community meetings; Plan and coordinate stakeholder and community training; Document and staff of community betterment activities; Identify funding opportunities. Identify and coordinate staff supports. Will also offer meeting space for the community.
Andy Vick	Allegany County Arts Council	Moderate	Provide training and input for community beautification projects. Identify individuals from the art community that can help advance the project.

Reducing blight, property vacancies, and crime while building social ties between community members will take time and financial resources. The revitalization of the Virginia Avenue Corridor has been needed for over a decade and stakeholders, community members, and funders want to see progress. It will be imperative to plan, design, and implement projects and activities that will begin to transform the community. The short-term outcomes developed for this project are designed to improve the physical conditions of the neighborhood, increase community engagement, and decrease crime. Individually the short-term outcomes were designed to reinforce and build off of each other through a comprehensive, coordinated approach



to revitalization. The achievement of the project's short term outcomes will keep stakeholders engaged and also serve as the catalyst for future revitalization efforts of the Virginia Avenue Corridor.

### ***Host organization***

The host organization for the project is the Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC), a non-profit Community Action Agency and designated Area Agency on Aging. Established in 1965, the over-arching mission of the agency is to “strive to eliminate social and economic barriers that de-stabilize communities and to promote individual and community stability through services, advocacy and collaboration.” HRDC is the sponsoring agency for community programs geared primarily towards empowering low-income individuals, seniors and families. Programs include: affordable housing, meals and activity centers for seniors; day care programs for disabled adults; support services and advocacy for seniors; energy conservation and home repair programs; job training; Earned Income Tax Credit Assistance; Head Start; Early Head Start; Energy Assistance; Homeless and Emergency Shelter; Emergency Food; Work Experience for TANF Recipients; Foreclosure Counseling; Section 8 Housing Voucher Choice, Group Workcamps, and the Retired Senior Volunteer Program.

In total, the HRDC has 150 employees who operate 30 programs funded by 32 federal, state and local grants and donations. The agency operates from 16 scattered sites throughout Allegany County. In Fiscal Year 2013, HRDC services touched 24,054 individuals or one out of every three Allegany County residents. As the host agency, HRDC will serve as the fiscal and administrative agent for the project and provide in-kind staffing, training, and meeting space.

The Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC) will work in partnership with the City of Cumberland's Department of Community Development on



this project. The City's Department of Community Development seeks to actively enhance and maintain housing opportunities in the city and promotes quality neighborhoods and a strong economic base for the City and its residents. To that end, the Department of Community Development will help facilitate all required project reviews, assist with ensuring all zoning and building code compliance issues are addressed in a timely and efficient manner, help engage neighborhood advisory groups, support funding applications, and provide funding through the City of Cumberland's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).

HRDC's Executive Director, Courtney Thomas-Winterberg, will serve as the project lead and will be responsible for:

- Mobilizing stakeholders;
- Coordination, facilitation, and documentation of community meetings;
- Planning and coordination of identified stakeholder and community training;
- Documentation and staffing of community betterment activities;
- Identification of funding opportunities;
- Identification and coordination of staff supports.

### ***Project Roles and Staffing***

Courtney Thomas-Winterberg, HRDC's Executive Director with over ten years of experience in project, fiscal, and construction management will provide staff and administrative support for the community-driven project. Key responsibilities include:

- Lead Community organizer and facilitator for the project;
- Provide leadership and organizational development;
- Provide community education;
- Coordinate community outreach; and
- Project management.

Faron Garver, HRDC's fiscal director with over twenty years of non-profit fiscal management will serve as the project's fiscal agent. In this capacity he will be responsible for budget development, monitoring, and reporting.



### ***Project Implementation Gantt chart***

The project is broken down into three phases. Phase one includes stakeholder engagement, community analysis, and resource identification. Phase two is the Community Engagement phase which includes community organizing, community building, and the development of a community revitalization strategy. Phase three is the project implementation phase which includes project activities, project funding and sustainability, and project evaluation. The following Gantt Chart shows the project activities and the timeline.



## Virginia Avenue Corridor Revitalization



Task Name	Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4			Q1		
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
1	Need help? Learn how to use this template.														
2															
3	[-] Stakeholder Engagement														
4	Identify Stakeholders														
5	Meet with Stakeholders														
6	Identify Gaps in Stakeholders														
7	[-] Community Analysis														
8	Gather data on community demographics														
9	Gather data on crime in community														
10	Gather data on properties in the community														
11	[-] Resource Identification														
12	Identify Captial Resources														
13	Identify Physical Resources														
14	[+] Identify Human Resources														
17	Community Organization/Community Building														
18	Community Meetings														
19	Community Trainings														
20	Community Revitalization Plan														
21	Develop common vision														
22	Develop goals and objectives														
23	Identify Activities														
24	Project Funding/Sustainability														
25	Apply for ARC Funds														
26	Apply for Neighborhood Conservation Funds														
27	Apply for Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Funds														
28	Applu for Community Legacy Funds														
29	Project Implementation														
30	Project Evaluation														



## ***Budget***

The Virginia Avenue Corridor Revitalization project (January 14, 2013 through September 30, 2014) is estimated to cost just under \$500,000 for the first phase of the project, targeting two city blocks. Revenue identified for the project is a compilation of federal, state, local, and private funds.

To date, revenue has been identified from the Neighborhood Conservation Initiative (state), Appalachian Regional Commission (federal), State of Maryland Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth funds (state), the City of Cumberland (local), and Allegany County (local) government, and the Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (private).

The acquisition and rehabilitation of blighted, vacant property is estimated to cost \$450,000 and represents the largest expense for this project. Additional expenses in the form of salary and fringe total \$29,288. Salary costs are associated with 20% of the Executive Director's time and 5% of the Fiscal Director's time, with fringe benefits being calculated at 7.75% of the salary costs. Cost associated with salary and fringe will be provided by the host organization as an in-kind contribution to the project. The remaining expenses associated with this project include training, outreach, ongoing operational expenses, and travel which is calculated at the IRS approved mileage reimbursement rate of \$0.565/mile. Revenue for the remaining expenses will be covered through administrative support, allowable by grant funds, in-kind support by the host organization, the City of Cumberland, Allegany County government and stakeholders.

A pro forma budget is attached as **Appendix A**.

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## **Monitoring**

Monitoring is essential to the success of The Virginia Avenue Revitalization project. Physical improvements alone cannot revitalize a community, rather physical improvements provide the building blocks for other community initiatives that can be leveraged to build a community's enthusiasm and motivation, which are critical to the success of a revitalization project. On-going monitoring provides a mechanism for continuous feedback that can be used to communicate efforts and successes to stakeholders, the importance of the project to the community and funders, proactively address project challenges or shortcomings, and provide direction.

### ***Monitoring indicators***

- Decrease in vacant, blighted properties
- Decrease in criminal activity
- Increase in social interaction among community members (participation in neighborhood activities, community trainings and planning meetings)
- Change in attitude about the community (community pride, maintenance of common areas, upkeep of property, participation in community projects, planning meetings, and training)
- Increase in community financial investment (property sales, investment by existing owners, increase in property values, new businesses); and
- Increase/Change in community participation (community-wide projects, trainings, neighborhood crime watch).

### ***Methods, tools, forms***

Monitoring for the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project will take place throughout the project and will utilize the Monitoring Report Matrix developed to break down the Gantt Chart activities in detail, and the Program Budget to monitor implementation and achievement of inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes in context of the project's timeline and budget. Sign-in sheets, meeting agendas, meeting minutes and surveys, and property and crime statistics will also be collected throughout the project.



### ***Team/tasks***

Faron Garver will be responsible for tracking and reporting budgetary expenditures. Jay Oliver and Teri Hast will be responsible for documenting activities through photos. Courtney Thomas-Winterberg will be responsible for collecting sign-in sheets, meeting agendas, meeting minutes, and surveys. Thomas-Winterberg will also compile all information and documentation and summarize activities to complete the monthly Monitoring Report Matrix which will be presented to stakeholders by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month.

### ***Monitoring schedule***

Monitoring will take place monthly and details of activities, accomplishments, challenges, and delays will be summarized and reported monthly utilizing the Monitoring Report Matrix. The Monitoring Report Matrix will be completed and presented to stakeholders by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the following month to enhance project communication, keep stakeholders engaged, and address issues and needed changes in a timely, efficient manner.

Monitoring Reports for the months of May thru August 2013 are attached as **Appendix B.**



## **Evaluation**

The Virginia Avenue Revitalization project will span multiple years. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the project's effectiveness in achieving its short-term outcomes. The data obtained from the evaluation will help stakeholders illustrate how the project has impacted the community and identify areas where strategies and interventions have fallen short. This will allow stakeholders the opportunity to revisit and revise their approach.

### ***Evaluation Variables and Indicators***

The efficacy of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project will be assessed through a Participatory evaluation. The participatory evaluation model provides stakeholders the opportunity to reflect on the project, the project's progress to date, and provide input into how the project is evaluated (Capeling-Alakija, Lopes, Benboual, and Diallo, 1997). Project stakeholders voluntarily agreed to participate in the Virginia Avenue Revitalization project. Stakeholders are comprised of community residents, business owners, city staff and local officials, and the arts and faith based community. The diverse group of stakeholders has varying skills and experience. Stakeholder involvement in the evaluation phase will serve to empower the project's participants, increase participants' skills, knowledge, and confidence, and in turn contribute to increasing the stakeholder's capacity to effect change in their community (Rabinowitz, n.d). Further the participatory evaluation approach, through data collection, reflection, and assessment provides stakeholders the opportunity to facilitate change based on lessons learned (Rabinowitz, n.d).

The participatory evaluation approach was chosen for the evaluation of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization project because the project is stakeholder driven and the approach enhances stakeholder engagement by building community capacity to design, implement, and



evaluate projects. The project is also in its implementation stage and the participatory evaluation approach will inform development and sequencing of project strategies.

To determine the effectiveness of the project's strategies the evaluation will answer the following key questions with particular emphasis on question number one:

- 1) What impact has the project had on the community?
- 2) How well is the project working?
- 3) To what extent are the project's successes or failures a result of factors other than the project's strategy?

Given the project's goals and the funding that has been targeted to the project, it is reasonable and appropriate to ask whether the project's activities have had their intended impact on the community. Funders will want to know how their financial investment has positively changed the community. Stakeholders will want to know if their time and efforts have made a difference. Without knowing whether the project activities are having their intended impact, it will be difficult to make the case for additional funding and it will be difficult to keep stakeholders engaged. Sustainable funding and stakeholder engagement are critical to the long-term success of the revitalization project.

### **Data Gathering Methods, Tools, Forms**

For each of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project's identified short-term outcomes, the following outcome questions and measurement variables been formulated to derive change.

<b><i>Short-term Outcome: Improved physical conditions-Visible abandoned and blighted properties and garbage will be reduced by 10%</i></b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Measurement Variable</b>	<b>Data Gathering Method</b>
Has there been a change in the number of blighted, abandoned properties in the neighborhood?	The number and percentage of vacant, blighted properties prior to project implementation compared to the number and percentage of vacant, blighted properties at the project's 1 year anniversary.	Property Inventory Reports, Observations



Has there been a change in the physical condition of the neighborhood's open space areas ( <i>i.e. parklet and vacant lots are not littered with garbage, grass is cut, etc.</i> )?	The physical condition of open space areas pre-project compared to the physical conditions of open space areas at the project's 1 year anniversary.	Interviews, Observations, Survey
Has there been a change in the physical condition of occupied property in the neighborhood ( <i>i.e. are residential and commercial property occupants cutting their grass, maintaining their sidewalks, etc.</i> )?	The physical condition of occupied property pre-project compared to the physical condition of occupied properties at the project's 1 year anniversary.	Interviews, Observations, Survey, Focus group
<b><i>Short-term Outcome: Increased community engagement-Community member participation will increase by 20%</i></b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Measurement Variable</b>	<b>Data Gathering Method</b>
How has community meetings and leadership training empowered residents to become more involved in the community?	The number and percentage of participants' whose knowledge, skills, and confidence increased.	Pre and Post-tests, Interviews, Training evaluations
Has the community resource guide increased residents' awareness of available programs and resources?	The number and percentage of community members' whose awareness of available programs and resources has increased.	Survey, Interviews, Focus group
Have the community betterment projects increased community member engagement?	The number and percentage of community members who are actively involved in the planning, implementation, execution, and evaluation of community betterment projects.	Attendance Records
<b><i>Short-term Outcome: Decreased crime- Crime in the community will decrease by 15%</i></b>		
<b>Question</b>	<b>Measurement Variable</b>	<b>Data Gathering Method</b>
Has criminal activity in the neighborhood changed?	The level of criminal activity in the neighborhood prior to the start of the project compared to the level of criminal activity in the neighborhood at 3,6, 9, and 12 months.	Crime Reports
Has police presence in the neighborhood changed?	The frequency of police patrols prior to the start of the project compared to the frequency of	Observation Police patrol data



	police patrols in the neighborhood at 3,6,9, and 12 months.	
Has community members awareness levels and knowledge increased as the result of meeting with the police and crime watch trainings?	The number and percentage of community residents that participated in meetings and trainings and demonstrated increased awareness and knowledge.	Attendance Records,  Pre and post-tests,  Participant evaluations

Specifically the evaluation will focus on the degree of change that has occurred by examining the effectiveness of the project's activities in achieving the project's short-term outcomes by focusing on measurement variables that are reliable, valid, and sensitive (Iyer, n.d). The degree of change that occurs is the net or program effect (Iyer, n.d). By focusing the evaluation on the degree of change that occurs as the result of the program, valuable insight on the progress of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization project and the effectiveness of the project's activities in meetings its short-term, intermediate, and long-term objectives will be ascertained.

### ***Data Analysis***

Courtney Thomas-Winterberg, supported by staff from the Allegany County Human Resources Development Commission, Inc. (HRDC), will ensure all data collected is accurate and provided to the evaluation team in a timely manner to allow for monthly review and analysis. Following review and analysis, a monthly evaluation report will be prepared and disseminated to stakeholders and funders.

### ***Evaluation Team/Tasks***

Courtney Thomas-Winterberg will be responsible for organizing stakeholders and identifying and addressing stakeholder training needs. The evaluation team (project stakeholders) will obtain data through distribution and collection of surveys, conducting one-on-one interviews, conducting observations, and reviewing training evaluations and property data and crime reports. Jay Oliver, City of Cumberland will conduct focus groups, interview



stakeholders, and review data. Interns from Frostburg State University will compile the data, utilizing excel spreadsheets. Courtney Thomas-Winterberg will review the data for accuracy and present data to stakeholders for review and analysis on a monthly basis. Courtney Thomas-Winterberg will prepare monthly evaluation reports for stakeholders and funders.

### ***Evaluation Schedule***

The evaluation of the project's short-term outcomes began in August 2013 and will continue through July 2014. Data is being collected on an ongoing basis and is presented to the evaluation team monthly for review and analysis. A monthly evaluation report is compiled and presented to project stakeholders and project funders. Short-term outcomes related to increased community engagement and decreased crime will be evaluated at 3, 6, 9, and 12 months. Short-term outcomes related to improved property conditions will be evaluated at 12 months. The evaluation of the project's intermediate and long-term outcomes will be ongoing with a final evaluation of the project's outcomes at five years.



## **Sustainability**

The sustainability of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project is dependent on the following interconnected financial, political, and social circumstances that could impact the project's long-term viability:

### ***Sustainability Elements***

**Financial:** Revitalization projects require significant financial support. Federal, state, and local government funds totaling just under a half million dollars have been received for Phase I of the project, which targets two city blocks. Obtaining additional funding from existing sources and/or the identification of new funding sources will be vital to the long-term sustainability of the project. The current government funding environment is uncertain due to congress's inability to pass a federal budget, funding cuts that resulted from sequestration, and shifting funding priorities. Foundation funding and corporate giving is highly competitive. Given the current funding environment and the increased emphasis on evaluation, the ability to demonstrate the impact of the project's strategies in improving the community's physical condition, increasing community engagement, and decreasing crime will be vital to obtaining ongoing financial support for the project. The ability to demonstrate impact will also be critical to attracting prospective investors and new businesses to the community, both of which would help to diversify the project's funding base. Leveraging and researching all potential funding sources including grants, economic development funds and tools, as well as private and corporate investment will be critical to the success of the project.

**Political:** The Virginia Avenue Revitalization project was designed to improve the distressed, former central business district. The project is important to short and long-term economic growth in the City of Cumberland and neighborhood stabilization. Currently local elected



officials are supportive of the project and have contributed local funding as well as staff resources to the project. In addition, the mayor has been an active participant and a City Councilman is a project stakeholder. Expanding the lens to look at the political landscape at the state and national level, shifting political agendas and the push to reduce spending and control the national debt could impact project sustainability. While changes to the political landscape are mostly out of our control, they could result in the loss of project support. It will be critical for stakeholders and community members to advocate for continued project support to ensure the project's long-term sustainability.

**Social:** Community member engagement is needed for project sustainability. Current community members fall into two distinct categories, longtime residents and business owners who have witnessed the decline of their community over the last several decades or low-income renters who have a limited connection to the community and their neighbors. Longtime residents and business owners are skeptical, as previous revitalization efforts have not materialized. Newer residents to the community are not invested and often are struggling to meet their basic needs, leaving little time and energy to invest in community revitalization efforts. A successful revitalization project must balance the needs of both longtime residents and newer residents. This requires planning and clear communication between project stakeholders, business owners, and community members to ensure the project is meeting the needs and desires of the entire community. If residents are not connected to the project and cannot see how the success of the project will benefit them and improve their quality of life, they will not be inclined to participate physically, financially, or politically in the revitalization efforts which is key to project sustainability.

### ***Sustainability Plan***



### ***Framework, Rationale, and Vision***

The project's sustainability framework centers on three separate but reinforcing strategies designed to 1) increase the impact of the project, 2) increase the community's capacity to replicate the project beyond the targeted area, and 3) provide the community with the skills and knowledge to sustain positive change. By focusing simultaneously on improving the community's physical conditions, increasing community engagement, and decreasing crime, the project is more likely to result in positive and lasting community change. The rationale is that if the revitalization strategies are successful and demonstrate positive community change, the project is well positioned to obtain additional funding and can capitalize on its successes to keep local politicians and community members engaged. All of which increases the likelihood that the project will expand beyond the two targeted city blocks. The vision for the project is that by 2020, the Virginia Avenue Corridor which totals ten city blocks is *"a safe, vibrant community that provides a mix of housing, business, and employment opportunities that facilitates civic engagement and promotes community pride"*.

### ***Key Impacts***

The Virginia Avenue Revitalization project has the ability to transform the community and improve the quality of life for neighborhood residents. Key impacts include: economic growth, increased property values, the introduction of new neighborhood amenities, reduced crime, empowered residents, and the establishment of a true community where neighbors interact with and look out for one another. The key impacts would benefit residents, business owners, and the City of Cumberland as a whole. The financial, political, and social sustainability elements identified also have the ability hinder moving the project's sustainability framework and vision forward. The inability to identify new or ongoing funding would limit the number of



blighted, abandoned properties that could be acquired for renovation or demolition. Political support is important to the project both from a funding and operational standpoint. The loss of political support would reduce the project's financial and staffing resources and could make navigating the permitting and zoning process more cumbersome. Community support in the planning, implementation, and execution of a revitalization project is imperative. Absent community support and involvement, the impact of revitalization efforts will be difficult, if not impossible, to be sustained.

### ***Action Plan***

To mitigate the financial, political and social elements that could negatively impact the project's ability to move forward the following action steps have been identified:

- 1) ***Diversify funding-*** Phase I of the project is completely dependent on government funding. To ensure ongoing project sustainability, funding from foundations and corporations that support community revitalization efforts will be pursued. Meetings with local financial institution leaders, that have a Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) requirement, will also be established. The creation of special taxing districts (TIFs and BIDs) to provide ongoing support will also be explored. It will be necessary to leverage available funds and research additional funding opportunities, which includes private and corporate investment, to ensure project sustainability.
- 2) ***Increase Awareness-*** To keep the project in the community forefront, public relations and marketing efforts will be expanded to ensure local elected officials, community members, and potential funders are aware of project activities, opportunities to get involved, and the project's successes to date.
- 3) ***Expand and Increase Training Opportunities-*** Community engagement is critical to long-term sustainability. Engaging community members through ongoing training, that



community members have identified as a need and is offered at times that are convenient, will increase the community's capacity to carry-out, replicate, and sustain community revitalization efforts.

The Revitalization of the Virginia Avenue Corridor is in its initial stage, the project's ability to demonstrate positive community change will be necessary to achieve the long-term vision for the community.



## Results

The results of the short-term outcomes have helped guide the implementation of Phase I of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project. While some of the activities designed to support the planned outputs have yet to be completed and several outputs have not yet been achieved, the project is making steady progress which is illustrated by the results achieved to date. Listed below is each short-term outcome, the planned activities and outputs and actual activities completed and outputs achieved, the positive and negative things that helped or hindered the achievement of activities and outputs, an assessment of whether activities and outputs have led to or will lead to the attainment of the short-term outcomes, and lessons learned.

<b>Short-term Outcome #1: <i>Improved physical conditions</i></b>		
<b>Planned Activities and Outputs</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Acquisition of Properties	3	2
Demolition of Property	1	1
Rehabilitation of Properties	2	1
Completion of Beautification Projects	3	2
Engagement of Stakeholders	25	29

***Positive things that helped the project-*** Local elected officials have been very supportive of the project through active participation, staffing resources, and funding to carry-out project activities. The support of local elected officials has helped move the project forward with needed funding and resources. The permit process was streamlined and costly permit fees have been waived, allowing more funding to be used towards physical improvements in the neighborhood.

***Hindrances to the outcome-*** It was difficult to engage community members. Further having community members arrive at consensus on which properties identified as blighted and/or vacant were candidates for rehab versus demolition proved to be time consuming and emotionally charged. The time it took to engage community members and have them arrive at consensus delayed the acquisition of property and scheduling of beautification projects.



***Assessment of whether activities and outputs have led or will lead to the attainment of the***

***short-term outcomes-*** The acquisition of property for the purpose of rehab or demolition to remove blighted, abandoned buildings and community beautification projects which focus on cleaning up and maintaining open spaces will lead to the attainment of the STO to improve the physical conditions of the neighborhood. Funding for Phase I of the project would only support the acquisition of three properties, additional funds to acquire more property for rehab or demolition or funding to complete additional beautification projects or enhance facades of occupied properties would have provided additional community resources and resulted in greater physical change in the community.

***Lessons Learned-*** It is difficult to adhere to a timeline when there are elements of a project that are out of your direct control. Community members did not approach the acquisition of properties in their neighborhood in the same practical and pragmatic manner that a business or organization would because the buildings were representative of people's past and are tied to memories of the community in its heyday. This lack of objectivity made the decision to demolish the one property very difficult and emotional for some community members.

<b>Short-term Outcome #2: <i>Increased community engagement</i></b>		
<b>Planned Activities and Outputs</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Create and publish an inventory of community initiatives	1	1
Provide Leadership Training for community members	25	22

***Positive things that helped the project-*** The community members that were engaged in the early stages of the project are still actively engaged and committed to the project. Several of these community members have been instrumental in engaging their neighbors in the project.

***Hindrances to the outcome-***Unanticipated challenges in engaging community members led to the delay in starting community meetings/visioning sessions and as a result the project timeline



had to be extended. The challenge of engaging community members forced project stakeholders to either move forward with community training and beautification projects without the targeted number of community participants or delay the project. While not ideal, moving forward with committed community members ultimately increased awareness of the project and led to the identification of additional community members.

***Assessment of whether activities and outputs have led or will lead to the attainment of the short-term outcomes-*** The activities designed to get project stakeholders out in the community and talk to people, learn about the community's needs from residents, and listen to their concerns did result in achieving the STO- engaging community members. The feedback from the community also reinforced the importance of the project. Researching current community initiatives and compiling a community resource guide created an additional resource for community members seeking assistance.

***Lessons Learned:*** From the project's onset there was a concern about how to effectively engage community members. Despite this concern, the time allotted to this critical component of the project was underestimated. The original timeline to identify twenty-five community members was April 2013 but the target was not reached until July 2013, forcing project leaders to change the sequence of project activities. While the project is now back on track, underestimating the time needed to engage community members could have been detrimental to project success. It is important to identify potential challenges and obstacles to achieving project target and be realistic about what can be achieved in a given timeframe.

<b>Short-term Outcome #3: <i>Decreased crime</i></b>		
<b>Planned Activities and Outputs</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Achieved</b>
Initiate and execute a Memorandum of Agreement for increased police presence in the Virginia Avenue Corridor	1	0
Establish a Neighborhood Crime Watch	1	0



While none of the outputs for this measure have been achieved to date the following Activities completed include: meetings with representatives from the City of Cumberland Police Department, organizing meetings between community members and the City of Cumberland Police Department, and scheduling training for community members interested in establishing and participating in a neighborhood crime watch.

***Positive things that helped the project-*** The meetings between representatives from the City of Cumberland Police Department and community members have been very productive. Local elected officials were invited to the second meeting so that residents could voice their concerns and ask about possible resources that could be directed to the community. Community members have been very receptive to establishing a neighborhood crime watch and are anxious to participate in the upcoming training.

***Hindrances to the outcome-*** Engaging the City of Cumberland Police Department in meetings with the community was relatively easy however; getting them to enter into an MOU to increase police patrols has been met with some resistance. While the City of Cumberland's Police Chief has publicly stated he will increase foot patrols and police patrols in the neighborhood, he does not want sign a written agreement. Members of the police department have also expressed concerns about establishing a neighborhood crime watch citing concerns that residents will act on their own versus contacting police. Much of this concern surfaced at the height of the publicity surrounding the outcome of the George Zimmerman trial.

***Assessment of whether activities and outputs have led or will lead to the attainment of the short-term outcomes-*** Open, respectful dialogue between the community members and the local police department and elected officials is an important first step in building trust and improving communication. Training community members to be aware of their surroundings and to



consistently report suspicious behavior or activity to the police will lead to the STO- decreased crime.

***Lessons Learned:*** While the City of Cumberland Police Department and community members agree that crime in the Virginia Avenue Neighborhood needs to be addressed, the approach and resources that should be devoted to crime reduction differ. Community members have voiced their frustration that the meetings have not resulted in needed changes. Clear communication, from the beginning of the project, about the types of resources the police department could make available to the community to reduce crime would have resulted in more realistic expectations for community members.



## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The first phase of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project is still in its implementation stages and progressing toward achieving its short-term outcomes. Planned property acquisition, rehabilitation, and community training will not be completed until July 2014.

### ***Prospects of Attaining Intermediate and Long-term Outcomes***

Successful community revitalization projects can span years. The physical transformation of a community does not occur over night and can be very costly. Additional project funding will be needed to help the community continue its physical transformation. In addition to funding, successful revitalization projects are dependent on community engagement. Community members need to be actively engaged in the planning, implementation, execution and evaluation of the project. The residents' commitment to revitalizing their community and advocating for the project will be critical to moving the project forward and securing needed funds. Community members will need to actively promote the project, keep elected officials engaged, and seek out additional funding opportunities. Given these factors, the attainment of the Virginia Avenue Revitalization project's intermediate and long-term objectives will be dependent on both the level of community commitment to the project and available financial resources.

By focusing simultaneously on improving the physical conditions of the community, increasing community engagement, and decreasing crime, the Virginia Avenue Revitalization project was designed to take a multi-pronged approach to improve two targeted city blocks. Planned activities were designed to not only achieve the project's short-term outcomes but to also compliment and reinforce each other, increasing the likelihood that community change would occur. Six months into the project, two of three planned properties have been acquired, one property is currently being rehabbed, and one property has been demolished. Twenty-nine



community members have been engaged, with twenty-two participating in leadership training. Two of three planned community beautification projects have been completed and neighborhood crime watch training begins in December 2013. Based on the project activities completed to date and progress made, it is anticipated that the three short-term outcomes identified for the Virginia Avenue Revitalization project will be achieved and a path to achieving the project's intermediate and long-term outcomes has been established.

The residents of the Virginia Avenue corridor have been actively engaged in the planning, implementation, execution, and on-going project evaluation, increasing community capacity. Current project data indicates that 89% of community members that have participated in leadership training increased their knowledge and 100% rated the training as valuable. Community members, once tentative, are demonstrating increased confidence vocalizing their concerns to local elected officials, requesting additional police resources, and actively taking the lead in planning the third beautification project. By providing free leadership training and an opportunity for community members to apply their skills and knowledge through hands on experience, community members have gained valuable knowledge and built confidence. The small successes that stemmed from completing project activities underscored the residents' efforts and have helped keep community members motivated. The achievement of the project's short-term outcomes will further empower community members and serve as the impetus to move the project forward resulting in the attainment of the project's intermediate and long-term outcomes.

### ***Personal Thoughts***

The Virginia Avenue Revitalization Project, while small in scope given its target area, required considerable planning, coordination, and flexibility in its implementation and execution. The project leader was fortunate to have committed stakeholders and community support



throughout the process and has been energized and encouraged by the small changes that have occurred.

Project leadership is challenging and the Project Leader's knowledge, skills, and passion for the project has grown and developed throughout this process. The Project Leader has learned the importance of keeping stakeholders focused and keeping the project's goal at the forefront. Clear, consistent communication aids in this task and plays an important role in the success of a project. Regular reporting, while time consuming, has kept stakeholders informed and created a level of accountability. Tracking project outputs and activities, through regular monitoring alerted the Project Leader and stakeholders to potential issues and challenges and provided an opportunity to re-tool. Completing the monitoring reports in two week intervals, while not practical for all projects highlighted all of the work that has gone into the project and the small successes that could be easily overlooked. Evaluation, while necessary to determine the effectiveness of a project's activities in meeting its established goals is complicated and needs to be well thought out and incorporated into a project at all stages. Routine reporting, monitoring, and evaluation are tools that keep the goal of a project at the forefront, aid in communication, identify areas of need, and provide needed data to strengthen the project—they are key components of a successful CED project.

CED practitioners play an integral role in helping marginalized individuals and communities increase economic security and improve quality of life. The role of a CED practitioner is complex. CED practitioners must be leaders, facilitators, trainers, motivators, and advocates as they work with a community to identify and prioritize needs, establish a course of action to address needs, and build community capacity. Future CED practitioners would benefit from a mentor that could provide guidance and offer perspective.



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## Appendix A: Budget

Pro Forma Budget Virginia Avenue Corridor Revitalization			
Expense Category	Planned Expense	Actual Expense	Variance
Property Acquisition	\$150,000.00	\$0.00	\$150,000.00
Property Rehab	\$300,000.00	\$0.00	\$300,000.00
Training			
Materials	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
Refreshments	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
Outreach Expenses			
Flyers	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
Advertising	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
Social Media	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Administrative Expenses			
Fax/Copies	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Postage	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Office Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Project Related Expenses			
Mileage(out of town travel)	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
Miscellaneous	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Operating Expenses			
Utilities	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
Insurance	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Other	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Salaries	\$29,074.50	\$0.00	\$29,074.50
Miscellaneous	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$496,324.50	\$0.00	\$496,324.50



## Appendix B: Monitoring Reports

<div> <div> <div>— May Report</div> <div>— June Report</div> <div>— July Report</div> <div>— August Report</div> </div> <div> <b>Monitor's Name</b> <u>Courtney Thomas-Winterberg</u> </div> </div>						
ACTIVITIES	DATES	STATUS	TIMELINESS	EXPLANATION FOR DELAY	ALTERNATIVE ACTION	ATTAINMENT OF OUTPUT
Identify and compile a list of blighted and/or vacant properties	Start:1/1/13 End: 3/31/13	Property inventory is complete.	On-Time	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	<b>Output 1:</b> Acquire two properties; Demolish one property.  <b>To date: 1</b>
Rate and Rank blighted and/or vacant properties according to condition for targeted acquisition and blight reduction	Start:06/03/13 End: 08/02/13	Property inventory and photos were shared at the meeting on June 3, 2013. Properties have been rank in order of condition. 6 properties have been identified for potential acquisition. A walk thru of 232/234 Virginia Avenue took place 7/11/2013. Owner would like \$50,000. Property owner of 232/234 Virginia Avenue has been approached to consider donating the property in exchange for a charitable tax deduction. First Property (310 Seymour Street) was acquired on July 30, 2013. Cost estimates (for demolition) on a second property located at 232/234 Va. Ave being sought. Stakeholders have made an offer of \$12,500 for property.	On-Time. First property was acquired on July 30, 2013. Dilapidated Demolition has toured the building and will provide cost estimated by 8/13/13 which will be reviewed by stakeholders at the August 15 <sup>th</sup> meeting. An offer of \$12,500 has been made on 232-234 Virginia Avenue. Stakeholders are waiting for the property owner to make a decision.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Identify funding to acquire/demolish properties	Start:02/05/13 End:03/05/13	Funding secured from ARC, NCI, SDSGI, County, and City. All grant agreements were executed by 6/28/2013. Waiting the release of the Community Legacy RFP. The Community Legacy application has been completed and was mailed to DHCD on August 20, 2013.	On-Time. Community Legacy application will be submitted in August 2013. The Community Legacy application has been submitted.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Acquire identified properties	Start: 07/08/13 End:12/31/13	Offer has been made on 310 Seymour Street, a vacant 5,000 square foot former Laundromat. Property is currently bank owned. Bank has accepted an offer of \$100,000 for the 310 Seymour St property. Closing is scheduled for July 30, 2013; A walk thru of 232/234 Virginia Avenue took place July 11, 2013. Owner wants \$50,000 for the property that is in very poor shape	On-Time.. Second property (for demolition) is being negotiated. Cost estimates for second property (for demolition) have been sought An offer of 232-234 Virginia Avenue has been made and a decision is pending.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	



		and would need demolished as rehab would be cost prohibitive. . 232/234 Virginia Avenue Property is being pursued and owner has been asked to consider donating the building for a charitable tax deduction. An offer of \$12,500 for 232-234 Virginia Avenue has been made. Discussion on 218,-222 Va Ave is pending until a decision on 232-234 has been made.				
Release RFP for Rehab and demolition work	State: 09/02/13 End: 03/31/14	. Closing for property is scheduled for July 30, 2013. Property closed on July 30, 2013. RFP for rehab work is in draft form and HRDC's Rehab Manager is getting cost estimates to provide ballpark costs based on the scope of work. The RFP will be released on August 21 <sup>st</sup> and will run in the newspaper on August 25 <sup>th</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup> , and September 1 <sup>st</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> . A walk thru for interested contractors is scheduled for September 6 <sup>th</sup> with proposals due on September 20 <sup>th</sup> . The RFP for rehab work on 310 Seymour Street released.	On-Time. Scope of work for acquisition property #1 complete. RFP is in draft form and cost estimates are being compiled. RFP will be released on August 21. The RFP for 310 Seymour Street has been released as planned. A walk thru is scheduled for Sept 6, 2013 and sealed bids are due by close of business on Sept 20, 2013.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Identify project stakeholders	Start:01/21/13 End:08/31/13	Representatives from the community, faith-based, business and public sector have been identified. Gaps in representation identified. Stakeholder engagement will continue through the summer. An effort to engage community members is an ongoing activity. . Twenty-five stakeholders have now been engaged in the project and contact was made with community members during the 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project held July 26-27, 2013 in an effort to increase awareness of the project and engage additional community support. Five additional people (4 residents, 1 employee of the City) participated in the wrap-up/evaluation meeting held July 31, 2013 and four of the five also participated in the visioning meeting on August 8, 2013. The number of stakeholders remains at 29 with full participation in the August 15 <sup>th</sup> and the August 22 <sup>nd</sup> meeting.	On-Time	Not Applicable. The information table set-up during the 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project provided an opportunity to interact with additional community members and share information on the project. Flyers with upcoming meeting dates were also provided. No additional stakeholders were identified and engaged in the project during this period. Efforts to engage additional stakeholders are	Not Applicable	<b>Output 2:</b> Engage a minimum of 25 stakeholders in the project.  <b>To date:</b> <u>29</u>  No Change as of 8/25/13



				still a priority.		
Meet with project stakeholders and share information about the project	Start:02/05/13 End:08/31/13	Two formal meetings have been held to date. Informal meetings have taken place with community members. <b>Two additional informal meetings have been held to engage more community members.</b> An information table was set-up and manned during the July 26-27, 2013 beautification project as a means to share information about the project, give residents an opportunity to ask questions, and extend an invitation to community members to participate. <b>Twenty-nine stakeholders participated in meetings held August 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.</b> No new participants attended the meetings.	Original deadline extended to engage additional stakeholders. <b>Informal meetings continue to take place to identify additional community members.</b> Verbal and Written information about the project was provided during the July 26-27, 2013 beautification project along with flyers advertising upcoming meetings. <b>Stakeholders remain consistent at twenty-nine.</b> No additional stakeholders or new participants attending meetings on August 15 <sup>th</sup> or 22 <sup>nd</sup> .	Initially planned to have all stakeholders identified by the end of April but more community members need to be engaged. <b>Community leaders, business owners, and employees of various businesses in the community are actively participating but I am still struggling to engage community members.</b> Twenty-five stakeholders have now been identified. Additional outreach was conducted during the July 26-27, 2013 beautification project to engage more residents. <b>No new stakeholders were engaged during this reporting period.</b>	Meeting with individual community members prior to inviting them to a meeting to gauge interest, answer questions, and encourage participation. <b>This approach has resulted in new community members attending meetings and will continue to be utilized.</b> Door to door outreach and word of mouth advertising (by stakeholders) of the project appear to be the most effective means of engaging community residents. An information table was set up and manned during the July 26-27, 2013 beautification project to increase awareness of the project, answer residents' questions, and encourage	



					resident involvement in upcoming meetings. Stakeholder engagement is still a project priority and efforts to recruit will be ramped up with the planning and advertisement of the 2 <sup>nd</sup> beautification project and informational meetings on the est. of a neighborhood crime watch.	
Identify potential projects	Start:05/15/13 End: 09/30/13  Identification of project #3 will be extended to 10/31/13 to allow for planning, execution, and evaluation of project #2.	Initial meeting held May 15, 2013. <b>Second meeting held June 3, 2013. Third meeting held June 17, 2013. A fourth meeting is scheduled for July 1, 2013.</b> Meetings took place July 15 <sup>th</sup> and July 22 <sup>nd</sup> . First beautification project took place July 26-27, 2013. An evaluation meeting is scheduled for July 31 <sup>st</sup> . Stakeholders have identified a need for community signage to identify community boundaries and add to the community's landscape. Beautification project #2 will be the construction of raised flowers beds and the planting of mums that will anchor a sign welcoming residents and visitors to the Virginia Avenue Corridor.	On-Track. . First beautification project, a community clean-up and block party, took place July 26-27, 2013. Project #2 has been identified and will take place Saturday, September 21, 2013.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable  Timeline will be extended to 10/31/13.	<b>Output 3:</b> Complete three beautification projects  <b>To date: <u>1</u></b>
Have stakeholder select projects	Start: 05/15/13 End: 09/30/13  <b>Selection of project #3 will be extended to 10/31/13 to</b>	Discussions have begun taking place. Stakeholders have decided to hold a community clean up on July 26 <sup>th</sup> and block party on July 27, 2013 from noon to 5pm as the 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project and social bonding activity. The first beautification project took place July 26-27, 2013. Evaluation of the completed project will take place July 31 <sup>st</sup> and a meeting to discuss upcoming projects will be scheduled at the conclusion of the	On-Track. Meetings are taking place every other week to ensure residents and community members are notified, permits are obtained for dumpsters and vendors, street sweeper has been scheduled, street closures have been scheduled by the police department, and trash collection times are published.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable  Timeline will be extended for project #3.	



	allow for planning, execution, and evaluation of project #2.	meeting. Project #2 has been identified and is scheduled for September 21, 2013.	Financial information on monies raised for the SCBCA's annual Christmas Toy Drive will be presented at the July 31 <sup>st</sup> meeting by HRDC's Finance Director. Money raised will be presented at the SCBCA's September meeting. Project #2 has been scheduled for Saturday, September 21, 2013.			
Identify materials and/or resources needed to complete projects	Start: 06/01/13 End: 10/01/13  Deadline to identify materials for project #3 will be extended to coincide with the identification and selection of a project.	Materials for Project #1- Community Clean-up and Celebratory Community Block party have been identified. The City of Cumberland has agreed to waive dumpster fees and street sweeper costs. City of Cumberland Public Works Department will pick up trash Friday evening and DJS will set-up stage, seating areas for the block party. City of Cumberland will remove any remaining trash from block party on Sunday, July 28 <sup>th</sup> . All materials for the 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project were secured. Materials for project #2, fall flowers and materials for raised flower beds have been identified.	On-Time.	Materials and resource needed for Project #2 and #3 cannot be secured until projects are chosen. Materials for project # 2 have been identified. In addition to fall flower, materials to build the raised flowers beds will need to be purchased or donated.	Not Applicable  Deadline needs extended	
Schedule Projects	Start: 07/27/13 End: 10/19/13  The deadline to schedule Project #3 will be extended to 10/31/2013 to allow time for the selection of the project.	Project #1 scheduled for July 26 <sup>th</sup> and 27 <sup>th</sup> . Additional advertisement of the beautification project was done through promotional flyers on Little Caesar's Pizza boxes.. Beautification project #2 will be the construction of raised flowers beds and the planting of mums that will anchor a sign welcoming residents and visitors to the Virginia Avenue Corridor. It is scheduled for September 21, 2013.	On-Time First beautification project completed July 26-27, 2013. . Project #2 has been scheduled for September 21, 2013.	On-Time. First beautification project completed July 26-27, 2013. Project #2 has been scheduled for September 21, 2013.	Not Applicable Project deadline for beautification project #3 will need to be extended to allow the execution and evaluation of project #2 scheduled for September 21, 2013 and the selection of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> beautification project.	
Implement Projects	Start: 07/27/13	Stakeholders are actively working on Project #1.	On-Time. First beautification	On-Time. First	Not Applicable	



	End:10/19/13 Deadline to implement beautification project #3 extended to allow for the completion and evaluation of project #2	First beautification project completed July 26-27, 2013. Project #2 is planned for September 21, 2013 and planning is underway.	project completed. Discussion of upcoming projects will take place 8/15/13. Based on feedback, future projects will be one-day events. The second beautification project is targeted for September 2013. Project #2, a one-day event, is scheduled for September 21, 2013.	beautification project completed.	Deadline for implanting project #3 will need extended.	
Schedule Community Visioning meetings	Start:05/15/13  End: 06/30/13  End date extended to 9/30/2013	First meeting held June 3, 2013. Second meeting held on June 17 <sup>th</sup> . First beautification project completed on 7/26-7/27. Evaluation meeting is scheduled for 7/31 and the community visioning meeting is scheduled for 8/8. Twenty-nine stakeholders attended the August 22 <sup>nd</sup> meeting which focused on the City of Cumberland strategy to revitalize the neighborhood.	Delayed a couple of weeks initially. Two meeting have taken place in the month of June 2013 but additional meetings will need to be held in July and August. A community Visioning meeting is scheduled for August 8, 2013. The August 22 <sup>nd</sup> meeting spurred dialogue between residents and Mayor Brian Grim on the City's plans to help revitalize the community. The next visioning meeting is scheduled for September 5, 2013.	Determined it was best for stakeholders to interact and get comfortable with each other before the first visioning meeting. This allowed a meeting to take place prior to the first visioning session. At the first meeting stakeholders wanted to jump in and initially plan a beautification project as a means to get to know one another better and encourage additional participation. A second visioning meeting was held and the group is actively meeting to plan their 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project. Additional visioning meetings are needed and	Timeline needs extended. On track to complete community visioning meetings by the end of September 2013. A visioning meeting took place on August 22 <sup>nd</sup> . The next visioning meeting is scheduled for September 5, 2013.	<b>Output 4:</b> Publish and distribute a Community Vision Report.  <b>To date:</b> 0



				will take place in July and August. Twenty-five stakeholders have been identified. Additional outreach to engage more residents will continue. No additional stakeholder participated in the visioning meeting August 22 <sup>nd</sup> .		
Advertise Community Visioning meetings	Start: 05/20/13  End: N/A	First meeting has been advertised through flyers, website, and agency Facebook page. Second meeting was advertised through the same means. The Community Visioning Meeting scheduled for 8/8 is currently being advertised. The next visioning meeting is scheduled for September 5 <sup>th</sup> and is actively being advertised.	On-track	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Hold Community visioning meetings/monthly project meetings	Start:06/03/13  End:09/30/14	First meeting is scheduled for next week. Meetings held June 3 and June 17, 2013. A meeting is scheduled for July 1, 2013. Meetings held 7/15 and 7/22 to finalize plans for the beautification project. An evaluation meeting is scheduled for July 31 <sup>st</sup> and the next community visioning meeting is scheduled for August 8 <sup>th</sup> . Meetings held on August 15 <sup>th</sup> to identify the 2 <sup>nd</sup> beautification project and on August 22 <sup>nd</sup> a visioning meeting took place. Additional meetings are scheduled for August 29 <sup>th</sup> (planning) and September 5 <sup>th</sup> (visioning).	On-track. Meetings are being scheduled more frequently due to the timing of the first beautification project, details that need ironed out, and stakeholders enthusiasm. Meetings to finalize the 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project were held July 15 <sup>th</sup> and July 22 <sup>nd</sup> . An evaluation meeting is scheduled July 31 <sup>st</sup> and the next community visioning meeting will take place August 8, 2013. Meetings took place as scheduled. The next meetings will be held Aug 29 <sup>th</sup> and Sept 5 <sup>th</sup> .	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Establish a code of conduct for participants to formalize agreed upon ground rules	Start:06/03/13  End:06/28/13	Code of Conduct was adopted with each stakeholder receiving a copy of their signed agreement. New participants have received signed the agreement and received a copy. Meeting minutes have been distributed via e-mail and hardcopy for those who do not have computer access. Meeting minutes are also available for view in DropBox. Meeting minutes continue to be distributed via e-	On-track. Completed on time. New participants will be given a copy of the code of conduct to review and sign to ensure all participants are following agreed upon ground rules.. On-Track. Minutes distributed for meetings held 5/15, 6/3, 6/17. . Meeting minutes distributed for 7/15 and	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	



		mail and hardcopy as well as shared through DropBox. Meeting minutes continue to be distributed via e-mail and hardcopy as well as shared through DropBox	7/22. An evaluation meeting will be held July 31 <sup>st</sup> and the next community visioning meeting is scheduled for 8/8. Meeting minutes were distributed for meetings held on 8/15 and 8/22. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for 8/29 and 9/5.			
Document and distribute meeting minutes from Community Visioning meetings	Start:06/03/13 End: 08/31/13  End date for community visioning meetings has been extended to 9/30/2013.			Not Applicable. On track for next community visioning meeting to take place 8/8.	. It is not anticipated that there will be any further delays at this time.	
Present and adopt of Community Vision	Start:07/01/13 End: 08/31/13  End date for presenting and adopting a community vision has been extended to 10/31/2013.	Two meetings have been held but additional meetings are needed for community input. Community Visioning meeting is scheduled for 8/8/13. Participation at the 8/22 meeting remained steady at 29. The next meeting is scheduled for September 5 <sup>th</sup> .	Delayed. Community Visioning meeting is scheduled for 8/8/13. The community visioning meeting took place on August 22 <sup>nd</sup> . The next meeting has been scheduled for September 5 <sup>th</sup> .	Two meetings have been held. Stakeholders are actively planning the 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project to take place 7/26-7/27 as a vehicle to engage more community participation. Additional information exchanges need to take place before a community vision can be presented and subsequently adopted. Community Visioning meeting is scheduled for 8/8/13. No additional delays are anticipated. A	Timeline needs extended. Community Visioning meeting is scheduled for 8/8/13. No additional delays are anticipated. No additional delays anticipated.	



				community visioning meeting took place August 22 <sup>nd</sup> and the next meeting is scheduled for September 5 <sup>th</sup> . The meetings are on schedule to be completed in accordance with September 30 <sup>th</sup> deadline allowing one month for drafting and presenting the community vision to stakeholders.		
Identify community members and additional stakeholders by attending community meetings and working through faith based institutions.	Start: 05/01/13 End: 09/30/13	Have begun attending South Cumberland Business and Civic Association Mtgs. And met with Rev. McClay and Pastor Svenson. <b>Continue to attend meetings.</b> Stakeholders will continue to attend meetings and advertise upcoming events and meetings. . While meetings have taken place no additional training has been offered but cost estimates on training have been obtained.	On-track. <b>Twenty-two stakeholders were provided hands on training in project planning and implementation as part of the first beautification project.</b>	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	<b>Output 5:</b> 25 community members receive leadership training  <b>To date: 0</b>
Host a community “meet and greet” to meet community members and learn about community issues and concerns.	Start: 05/15/13 End: 07/08/13	Initial meeting held May 15, 2013. <b>Second meeting held June 3, 2013.</b> <b>Complete</b>	On-Time	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Conduct research on community initiatives.	Start:02/05/13 End:03/05/13	Complete	On-Time	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	<b>Output 6:</b> Distribute a report on current community initiatives



Compile information on current community initiatives.	Start: 03/15/13 End: 04/30/13	Complete. Will review with stakeholders to ensure nothing has been overlooked before final version is distributed. Reviewed with stakeholders. Deadline for feedback is July 12 <sup>th</sup> . Goal is to distribute the report August 1, 2013. Final comments received. Resource Directory sent to the printer on 7/23/2013. Directory will be ready for pick-up on 8/1/13. Resource Directory has been printed and is actively being distributed.	On-Time. Directory sent to printer on 7/23/13, will be picked up on 8/1/2013 and distributed to stakeholders, area churches and social service agencies and will be readily available for community members. Resource Directory distributed.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	to serve as a community resource guide.  <b>To date: 1</b>
Meet with representatives from the City of Cumberland Police Department.	Start: 05/01/13 End: 08/31/13  Deadline needs extended to 10/31/2013 to allow for additional discussion with representatives of the City of Cumberland.	First meeting took place. Initial data on crime in the area has been provided. City of Cumberland Police Department Personnel was on hand on July 27 <sup>th</sup> to interact with community members. Mayor Brian Grimm participated in the community visioning meeting on August 22 <sup>nd</sup> . He has been asked back to speak on details of the City of Cumberland's plan to help revitalize the Va Ave. Corridor.	On-Time.  Additional discussions are needed. Deadline will be extended.	Not Applicable Deadline needs extended to allow for additional discussion with representatives of the City of Cumberland.	Not Applicable  Deadline needs extended	<b>Output 7:</b> A signed Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Cumberland Police Department  <b>To date: 0</b>
Organize meetings between community members and the City of Cumberland Police Department.	Start: 07/01/13 End: 09/30/14 Deadline needs to be extended to allow more discussions. The deadline will be extended to 10/31/2013 to coincide with the deadline to have a signed MOU with the City.	Captain Leake has been met with stakeholders to discuss details of the 1 <sup>st</sup> beautification project. City of Cumberland Police Department Personnel was on hand on July 27 <sup>th</sup> to interact with community members. Captain Leake attended the August 8 <sup>th</sup> community Visioning meeting. Mayor Brian Grimm is scheduled to attend the August 22 <sup>nd</sup> meeting. Mayor Brian Grimm participated in the community visioning meeting on August 22, 2013. He will be invited back to continue discussions with stakeholders.	On-Time. Meetings have taken place and ongoing discussions are needed. Deadline may need extended depending on the outcome of the August 22, 2013 meeting. Additional discussions are needed. Deadline will be extended.	Not Applicable Deadline may need extended depending on the outcome of the August 22, 2013 meeting. Additional discussions are needed. Deadline will be extended	Not Applicable  Deadline needs to be extended.	
Develop a MoU neighborhood crime watch.	Start: 10/15/13 End: 11/30/13			Not Applicable	Not Applicable	<b>Output 8:</b> Establish a neighborhood crime watch
Advertise	Start: 08/15/13	Meetings dates of September 9 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> have been selected and are currently being advertised.	. Meeting Advertisements were distributed on August 19, 2013.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	



	End: 10/01/13					
Host informational meetings	Start: 09/01/13 End: 10/15/16	.Informational meetings will be held on August on September 9 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> .		Not Applicable	Not Applicable	<b>To date: 0</b>
Identify a trainer	Start: 08/01/13 End: 08/15/13	Captain Leake of the City of Cumberland Police Department has provided the names of three trainers that stakeholders will contact to determine availability and cost. A trainer has been selected dates are finalized.	. A trainer has been selected.	Not Applicable  Complete	Not Applicable  Complete	<b>Output 9:</b> 10 community members receive training on organizing and establishing a neighborhood crime watch.  <b>To date: 0</b>
Schedule trainings with community members	Start: 10/15/13 End: 10/30/13	A trainer has been selected and training dates finalized.		Not Applicable	Not Applicable	
Provide training	Start: 10/15/13 End: 11/30/13			Not Applicable	Not Applicable	



