



COMMUNITY-LED
INVESTMENT PLAN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following plan is the product of an eight-year learning process to understand ways to foster social, economic and civic improvement in the Metcalfe Park neighborhood of Milwaukee. This plan builds on previous iterations, which guided the work of the Metcalfe Park Community Bridges neighborhood association over the past several years. We view this community-led investment plan as a living document that continues to evolve and improve with key learnings and insights from our work.



HISTORY & BACKGROUND

Milwaukee's Metcalfe Park neighborhood of today looks very different than the Metcalfe Park of the past. *Milwaukee: City of Neighborhoods*, written by John Gurda, chronicles both historical and contemporary Milwaukee. In it, Gurda notes that the neighborhood currently known as Metcalfe Park exists as a result of planning decisions made by the city over the past 40 years¹. The neighborhood was originally populated by residents of German origin who worked as tradesmen and industrial workers.

The development of a railroad line that enabled the neighborhood to be the engine behind the city's economic strength provided jobs for residents and fostered an active and thriving community. However, after WWII, returning white soldiers relocated their families away from the older neighborhood (likely a benefit of the GI bill) into newly

developed communities, which caused revenue decline for local merchants. African American veterans and their families moved in as this decline began, and within a matter of years the neighborhood had transitioned from zero to 53 percent black residents.

Discussions with senior residents (ages 70 and older) provide a more personal view of how the neighborhood has changed during their lifetimes. These elders, who have lived in Metcalfe Park for 30 to 40 years, speak of an earlier Metcalfe Park, a racially mixed community that boasted factory jobs and paid livable wages for people of varying education and skill levels. Residents were able to walk to work, and the community offered most of what was needed for family life (recreation, jobs, connections to job training and educational resources).

In addition, the neighborhood had a good mix of black homeowners and black-owned businesses. The factory industry peaked in Metcalfe Park in the 1960s, and many of these businesses lined the 30th Street Corridor, including Berber Kelling, Standard Leather, Findly Adhesives, Clark Manufacturing, Carry Lite, Helwig Carbon Products, William F. Filcheild and Sons, Peck Metals, Inc., Master Lock and Controls Corp of America. This Metcalfe Park was a highly sought-after community to live in.

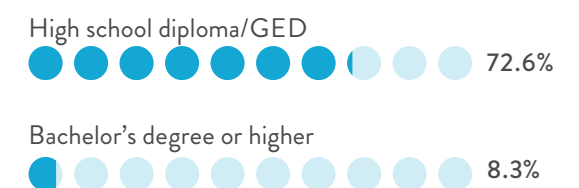
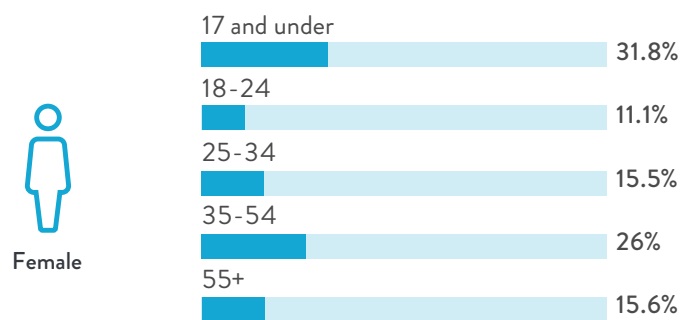
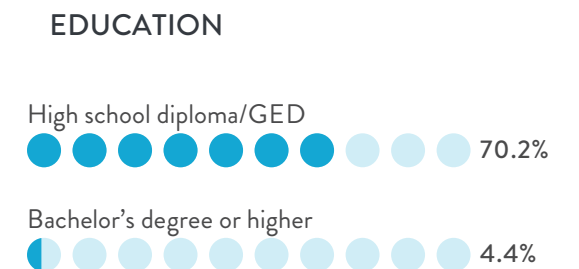
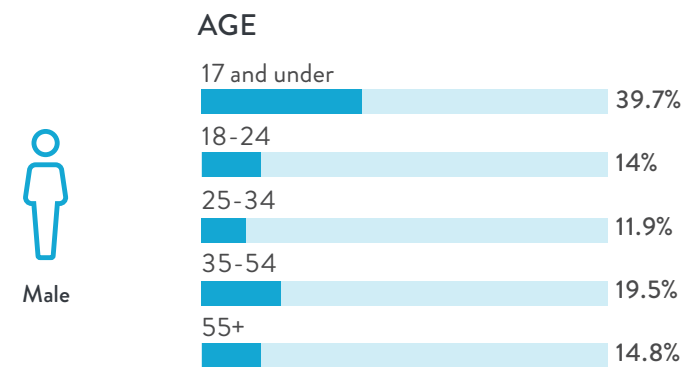
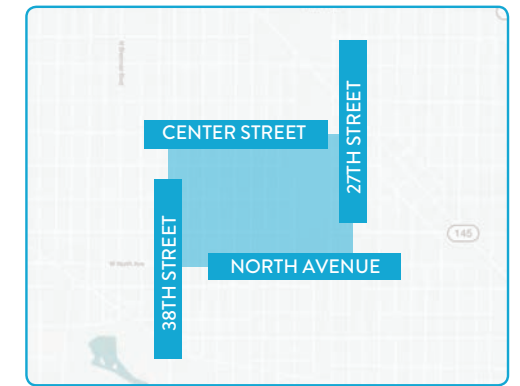
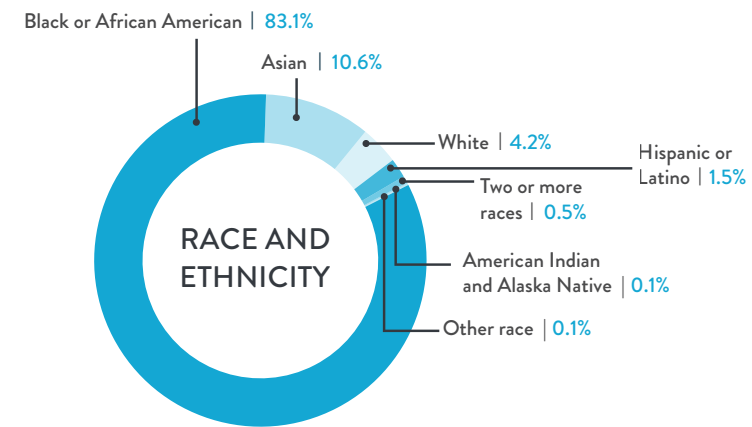
However, the 1980s recession saw the closing of many of the factories in the area as the neighborhood became increasingly African American and less affluent. Among the few remaining factories, Master Lock, which once employed close to 1,300 people, now has less than 400 employees. In addition, a decision was made in the 1960s to clear a region of the neighborhood to develop a freeway, a choice that destroyed hundreds of homes and stores, displaced social networks and weakened local institutions. While the development plans were ultimately dropped, these political choices resulted in structural damage that influenced the neighborhood's decline. Crime spikes led to the area being designated, at one point, as the most dangerous neighborhood in Milwaukee.

The culmination of these events left residents with hindered opportunities for advancement. The neighborhood that elder community residents remember became a neighborhood nobody cared about; one that possessed little political power and that became vulnerable to policies that impede progress.

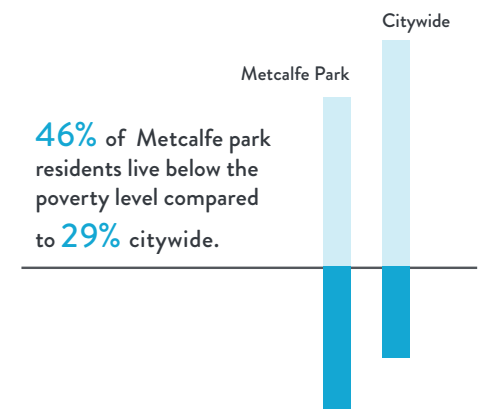
METCALFE PARK NEIGHBORHOOD

NEIGHBORHOOD POPULATION: 8,994

MEDIAN EARNINGS: \$21,886



Nearly 25% of people 20-64 years old in Metcalfe Park are unemployed and actively seeking employment, compared with 12% citywide.



* Metcalfe Park BNCP Profile, Data You Can Use 2016. This neighborhood report is based primarily on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 5-year estimates.

METCALFE PARK & THE INVISIBLE NET

When discussing factors that seem to obstruct neighborhood development and personal progress, residents expressed feeling that Metcalfe Park seems to be encased in a net that blocks advancement. This *invisible net*, which is especially harmful to our children, youth and young adults, is defined as structural barriers such as a lack of opportunity, poor quality of schools and vulnerability to environmental stressors that cause poor health, limited life expectations and mass incarceration. This net seems to have been created by the policies Gurda noted that drove African Americans from the downtown areas to the north side. This was subsequently strengthened by failed development policies, the economic recession and the housing crisis.

“YOU CAN’T SEE IT,” ONE RESIDENT COMMENTED. “OUR KIDS CAN’T SEE IT, BUT NO MATTER HOW HARD THEY TRY, NO MATTER HOW WELL THEY PLAY THE RULES, WHEN THEY TRY TO ADVANCE, THEY GET STUCK IN THE NET. IT TRAPS US IN.”

In 1990, Milwaukee’s mayor, in an effort to foster a sense of community, named the neighborhood “Metcalfe Park” in honor of African American Olympic champion Ralph Metcalfe. Metcalfe, a track star and Marquette University graduate, tied in the competition for the world’s fastest man in the 100-meter dash in the 1932 Olympics and was a member of the African American team that won for the United States in the 1936 Olympics. As a member of this team, Metcalfe was one of three African American track stars chosen to represent the United States at a time when the country was racially segregated (as it is today), and blacks held inferior political status. While the team’s success at the Olympics defied Adolf Hitler’s white racial supremacy theory, it did not lead to the opportunity for African Americans that black athletes had hoped for, nor did Metcalfe’s service in the U.S.

military during WWII (where he reached the rank of lieutenant). Metcalfe eventually relocated to Chicago where he lived and held political office at the city and federal levels for the remainder of his life, advocating for inclusion and opportunity for African Americans.

For us, Metcalfe’s life is an image of what we would like to hold up for our community. His athleticism, activism and politics are the very attributes we must encourage as we strive to make our neighborhood healthier, more connected and increasingly civically active. **Metcalfe exemplified the value of “going the distance” – understanding that progress and lasting change take time, stamina and perseverance to become sustainable.**

A MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE

In the summer of 2012, five Metcalfe Park resident leaders formed the Metcalfe Park Community Action Team (MPCAT), and together with citywide (Children’s Hospital, Safe and Sound) and neighborhood (Goodwill and Next Door Foundation) partners, began to consider how Metcalfe Park could be improved through activities that would stimulate resident engagement. In the same year, Metcalfe Park was chosen as a site for the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP), a federally funded program that provided the financial resources and support for residents and partners to catalyze resident-driven neighborhood revitalization.

During the process of developing a vision and comprehensive plan to guide our work over the next few years, Metcalfe Park Community Bridges, in partnership with neighborhood residents, focused not only on the content of what we do but also on how. In its first phase, resident and partner involvement in the BNCP process yielded a vision, mission and values for change, based upon the reality that Metcalfe Park residents had not historically been participants in the decision-making that affected their community. City policymakers and others had made changes to the neighborhood rather than with it, some of which was not what residents felt was needed.

The first two years of our work was an intensive education for residents on how to develop and build relationships with organizations, funders, city officials – and, interestingly enough, each other – that would respond to and reflect our desire for a resident-led partnership process for development. In the course of doing so, we built deep relationships with partners at the neighborhood and cross-sector levels, including a core group of foundations and organizations that remain trusted partners in our continued efforts to develop Metcalfe Park as a strong, safe and healthy community for its residents.

However, we encountered many hurdles as we worked with a neighborhood base skeptical of efforts that promised much and delivered little (or nothing), and grappled with how residents sorted themselves into groups in ways that reflected power dynamics that continue to make neighborhood cohesion difficult. We also learned how the physical geographic barriers in our community have prevented resident connectedness. Residents of Metcalfe Park have divided themselves into three sub-communities, which are divided by the 30th Street industrial corridor and the 35th Street pass. Our desire to cross these divides informed our decision to transform MPCAT into Metcalfe Park Community Bridges (MPCB) to signal the actions we wanted to take to unite our community.



THE CREATION OF METCALFE PARK COMMUNITY BRIDGES

Metcalfe Park Community Bridges (MPCB) is a group of residents with a passion to serve their community as advocates for change. This group includes:

Danell Cross, executive director (a former longtime Metcalfe Park resident)

Melody McCurtis, deputy director of programs/organizer (also a former resident)

- o She grew up in Metcalfe Park, attended Ralph Metcalfe Park School and gained her first job at Fitzsimonds Boys and Girls Club.

Annie Travis, community organizer and president of the board of directors (a 20-year Metcalfe Park resident)

Felicia Wilkins, board member (a Metcalfe Park resident and Armed Forces veteran)

As BNCP drew to a close, we documented residents' concerns, goals and dreams for the future of Metcalfe Park in an effort to ensure that the work we do is guided by the community. Our work highlighted the

absence of strong organizational partners in Metcalfe Park that could take on a resident-led initiative and reawakened the need for a neighborhood association to be at the forefront of revitalization.

Based on our desire to develop a resident-driven organizational structure with the capacity to bring people together through shared priorities, we legally registered Metcalfe Park Community Bridges as a 501(c)(3) organization and began to pursue training on topics such as board governance and resource management to develop and manage the resources needed to invest in change. At the same time,

we deepened our partnership with the Dominican Center, a partner organization in the adjoining Amani neighborhood, which served as our fiscal agent.

We welcome all residents to join in developing and implementing Metcalfe Park Community Bridges' work. It is only in coming together to achieve our priorities that we can lift up our collective power to make progress toward our longer-term vision. We aspire to bring together residents across generations to share their distinct perspectives and experiences in working toward a diverse community that thrives. In our diversity and cultural richness lies great strength.

MISSION

Metcalfe Park Community Bridges seeks first to be the authentic voice of Metcalfe Park residents, and we have taken great measures to ensure that the priorities of this plan articulate the wishes and dreams of those who live in our community. We have learned that engaging residents in community work is only possible when people have hope that their efforts will make a difference – hope that is fostered and grown when we can demonstrate tangible signs of progress.

Through our many discussions with residents at meetings, during organized surveys, and at all community events and activities, **we have ensured that those who read this plan will be seeing and hearing from the people most affected by these issues: Metcalfe Park residents.** In developing our mission for Metcalfe Park, we acknowledged that change and progress will come to our neighborhood. We want to ensure the people who live in Metcalfe Park are partners in designing and implementing these changes, and will directly benefit from the results of our collective revitalization efforts.

Mission

We are building a robust and thriving Metcalfe Park neighborhood in which residents are safe, connected to each other and the community; provided access to educational, economic and civic engagement-related opportunities; and a community that celebrates the diversity and culture of the area.



The BNCP process, including the development of this community-led investment plan, provided a vehicle to develop programs that responded to resident concerns, test them through implementation, analyze and improve our work. These lessons, reflected in this current plan, have been used to strengthen our work and understanding of how to move forward. **The following sections focus on both short- and long-term goals and the supporting strategies that we believe will move us further along the continuum of revitalization.**



96 PERCENT OF THOSE SURVEYED STATED THEY WERE CONCERNED WITH PUBLIC SAFETY; NOTABLY, 60 PERCENT INDICATED THAT THEY FELT UNSAFE DUE TO THE NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG ADULTS, WHO THEY DEFINED AS YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE 18-24-YEAR-OLD AGE GROUP.

behind these challenges, we knew a sole focus on law enforcement would not be sufficient for resolving all of the issues affecting safety.

Metcalfe Park has faced significant challenges due to high incarceration rates and the ripple effect on individuals, families and our community. Residents are very concerned about the arrest rates among young adults in the neighborhood, and feel this was an inappropriate response by the MPD that reinforced cycles of deprivation. Some of these young adults are also likely parents, now faced with the amplified challenge of supporting themselves and their families with a criminal record.

We have to promote the development of policies, programs and systems that ensure our neighborhood's young people, current and future, are provided the support needed to achieve healthy growth and development. Over time, working across the age spectrum and embracing a holistic definition of what it takes to achieve our residents' definition of a safe neighborhood will diminish the need to intervene in the lives of Metcalfe Park's young adults.

WISCONSIN HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN AT OR NEAR THE TOP OF STATES WITH THE **HIGHEST INCARCERATION RATE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES IN THE NATION.** WITHIN MILWAUKEE, METCALFE PARK FALLS IN THE TOP 15 ZIP CODES FOR MOST INCARCERATED AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES.

BETWEEN 1990 AND 2010, THERE WERE **2,004 ADULTS RELEASED FROM INCARCERATION INTO OUR 53210 ZIP CODE**².

SAFETY & PLACEMAKING

We work with residents and partners to ensure resident safety through the development of public spaces where residents of all ages can interact and engage in activities that better support positive health outcomes and strengthen community spirit, cultural, physical and psychological safety outcomes.

During the early stages of our work (2012-14), we held facilitated visioning sessions and surveyed 168 individual community residents who overwhelmingly identified safety as the number one priority in Metcalfe Park. The general impression among respondents was that the neighborhood's young people were intimidating, engaging in fighting, drugs and weapon use.

Those who felt most unsafe regarding this behavior were women and children. Women reported feeling unsafe going into businesses where youth and young adults were spending time, especially corner stores. School-aged children shared that, in an effort to be safe, they often kept to themselves and tried to move in and out of the community without attracting attention. **A 13-year-old boy captured the feelings of many when he said, "I just try to be invisible."**

While adult men felt safe in the community, they were concerned by the lack of opportunities for themselves and younger adults. One man noted that it seemed young people were responding to the lack of positive opportunities in ways that endangered the rest of the community, and that their behavior was a reflection of a sense of hopelessness.

Metcalfe Park has long been framed as a dangerous community within the city and media, and has historically been marked for heavy involvement from the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD). During our first two years of work, representatives from MPD District 3 stated that many of their resources were concentrated in our community due to shared safety concerns related to the neighborhood's young adult residents. Still, based on the deeper story

YOUNG TEENAGE RESPONDENTS, AGES 13-15, SPOKE OF NOT BEING ABLE TO TALK TO THIS GROUP FOR GUIDANCE OR MENTORING. ELDERS EXPRESSED THEIR DISAPPOINTMENT IN YOUNG RESIDENTS' INABILITY TO COMPLETE SCHOOL, INVOLVEMENT IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES AND LACK OF FOCUS ON WORK.



PAST EFFORTS

RESIDENTS AND POLICE MET TO LEARN FROM EACH OTHER AND DISCUSS CHALLENGES FROM BOTH PERSPECTIVES. FROM THESE CONVERSATIONS RESULTED THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORE HUMANE POLICING STRATEGIES.

WE WORKED CLOSELY WITH CAPTAIN JASON SMITH OF DISTRICT 3 MPD, WHO IMPLEMENTED THE 21-DAY SATURATION STRATEGY TARGETING HOT SPOTS TO DECREASE CRIME IN OUR COMMUNITY.

RESIDENTS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS CONCENTRATED SHOW OF FORCE WAS NOT ONLY NECESSARY, BUT EMPOWERING TO THOSE DIRECTLY AFFECTED BY CRIMINAL ACTIVITY. RESIDENTS HAVE CONTINUED TO MAINTAIN THESE EFFORTS THROUGH DIFFERENT INITIATIVES, INCLUDING ROCK THE BLOCK EVENTS AND THE BRIDGE BUILDER PROGRAM.

GOAL

INCREASE SAFE PUBLIC GREEN SPACES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.



Metcalfe Park residents have expressed the **desire for their community to be physically, emotionally, racially and perceptually safe**. As addressed in this plan, working toward a safe community in Metcalfe Park is not solely about reducing crime and violence, although we are committed to that goal and believe it requires concerted action across all of our priorities. **It is also about creating a neighborhood with community spaces that foster connections.**

The first three goals described under this priority respond to resident-identified priorities on which there are clear steps that we can take to make progress. But there is also a deeper public narrative that we need to focus on changing: the frame on Metcalfe Park that has over time become deeply embedded in both internal and external perceptions about the type of neighborhood we live in and why. Unless we change this perceptual frame, the dynamics that keep our community marginalized, disenfranchised and excluded from many of the policy-related and political decisions that affect our lives will not change. For each of the identified priorities below, we provide background on the proposed objective as well as proposed actions to take in the future.

Public spaces that encourage congregation and activity are core to promoting a safe community. In a neighborhood where young children and families are the predominant population, Metcalfe Park has very few spaces where children can play safely and families can connect with each other.

In 2019, the neighborhood had only one park (Butterfly Park) with playground equipment and an unnamed “pocket” park. Both are underutilized in part because of disrepair (defective or broken equipment, inadequate maintenance), but also because of the limited choices for play. There is inadequate sitting space for adults, which may serve as a deterrent to visit the park, and overgrown trees also contribute to a sense of discomfort, as they create spaces where people can hide. As it is not unusual for teenagers to visit the park at night, this overgrowth has the potential to make other park visitors feel vulnerable and uncomfortable.

In the summer of 2019, a teenager from the community set fire to Butterfly Park. **We truly believe that, as the broken windows theory states, disrepair and neglect increases the chance of crime in these spaces.**

Before our neighborhood acquired his name, a small park was named for Ralph Metcalfe. Residents remember this space as one of many amenities, alongside a clubhouse used for community events and meetings and a venue for basketball and football, complete with space for spectators. Activity at this venue was disrupted by the removal of the park’s nets and hoops, which was a decision by the Boys & Girls Club management to

discourage nonmember use. As a result, Metcalfe Park’s residents no longer have a common space for recreation and connection. Basketball and football games that used to be played in parks have migrated to the streets. Without access to parks that meet their needs, families of young children have improvised by having their children play on their front lawns. It is not unusual during summer months to see little ones wading in front yard kiddie pools and young adults playing basketball in the streets, while parents and grandparents supervise from their porches. All of this contributes to a lack of safety for the young children, youth and young adults who participate in these activities and feeds into a sense of public disorder in the neighborhood.

To respond to these concerns, we plan to create spaces where children can play safely and where youth, parents and other adults have a variety of opportunities for connection, play and exercise (i.e., swimming pools or splash pads, basketball courts, baseball diamonds, protected bike lanes or paved walking trails) and equipment and shelter for their use, such as access to a clubhouse. As we would like to encourage active monitoring of children who visit these spaces, we also desire ample sitting areas for parents to connect with each other while watching their children at play. There are a few undeveloped parks in Metcalfe Park that we feel would be ideal for development. Ultimately, we plan to **redesign current neighborhood parks and provide positive programming in parks and repurposed vacant lots (including clubhouses and restrooms)**. We will also cultivate a natural environment throughout the neighborhood that is specific to Metcalfe Park.



GOAL

INCREASE TRAFFIC SAFETY AND REDUCE SPEEDING IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Traffic safety was a concern that surfaced during our first MPCB meetings and neighborhood canvassing sessions as there are several street crossings and hotspots in Metcalfe Park that residents identified as dangerous for children and adults. The 35th Street thoroughfare was reported during community meetings as especially dangerous to cross at all times of day and night. Residents living near Master Lock also identified 33rd Street from Center Street to North Avenue as a concern, due to the tendency for employees of the business to speed on their way to and from work. **As a solution, residents voiced their desire to have stop signs or lights strategically installed along the 35th Street corridor as well as speed bumps on 33rd Street to reduce speeding.** We also believe that protected bike lanes can lower the risk of accidents. However, few voiced these requests publicly, and as a result these hot traffic zones have received little attention from the city.

MPCB has supported residents in understanding that their collective action can yield change on this issue, but the

ability to have speed bumps, stop signs and protected bike lanes installed on these streets will require concerted and sustained action. We will work with residents to create and communicate a demand for these safety measures; ultimately aimed at **reducing the number of accidents and injuries as a result of traffic and speeding, focused on 33rd, 34th, 35th and 36th streets.**

While stop signs are provided at no cost by the city, homeowners and landlords will have to incur some costs for the construction of the speed bumps, which we recognize may be a barrier. MPCB will work with partners to determine the availability of financial assistance to help resident homeowners who might find these costs prohibitive. The process of implementing these safety measures is also lengthy, as stop signs will be taken down and put back at regular intervals to acclimate drivers to their presence. We will work with the city to determine if there are ways residents can temporarily support safety in these areas as we work to develop a more permanent solution.



IN 2018-2019,
THERE WERE
**49 REPORTED
ACCIDENTS ON
35TH STREET.**

GOAL

DECREASE URBAN BLIGHT AND ADDRESS ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.



The housing crash of 2008 hit our neighborhood especially hard, as some residents were unable to pay their mortgages or lost the value that had accrued in their home. For those residents who struggle to keep up with their housing costs and maintenance needs, it is extremely important to better understand how to access city programs that help with owner rehabilitation and foreclosure mitigation.

When foreclosed or abandoned properties are not quickly turned over, they add to blight and vacancy problems in our neighborhood. We would like to study how to address vacant houses and lots to ensure they are used to benefit residents, rather than torn down. Vacant properties are a safety problem, often becoming places where drug sellers and others hide and commit crimes; homeless squat and set fires to keep warm; and young people use as party houses or to sit on porches and drink. Unfortunately, police often cannot intervene in the absence of *No Trespassing* signs.

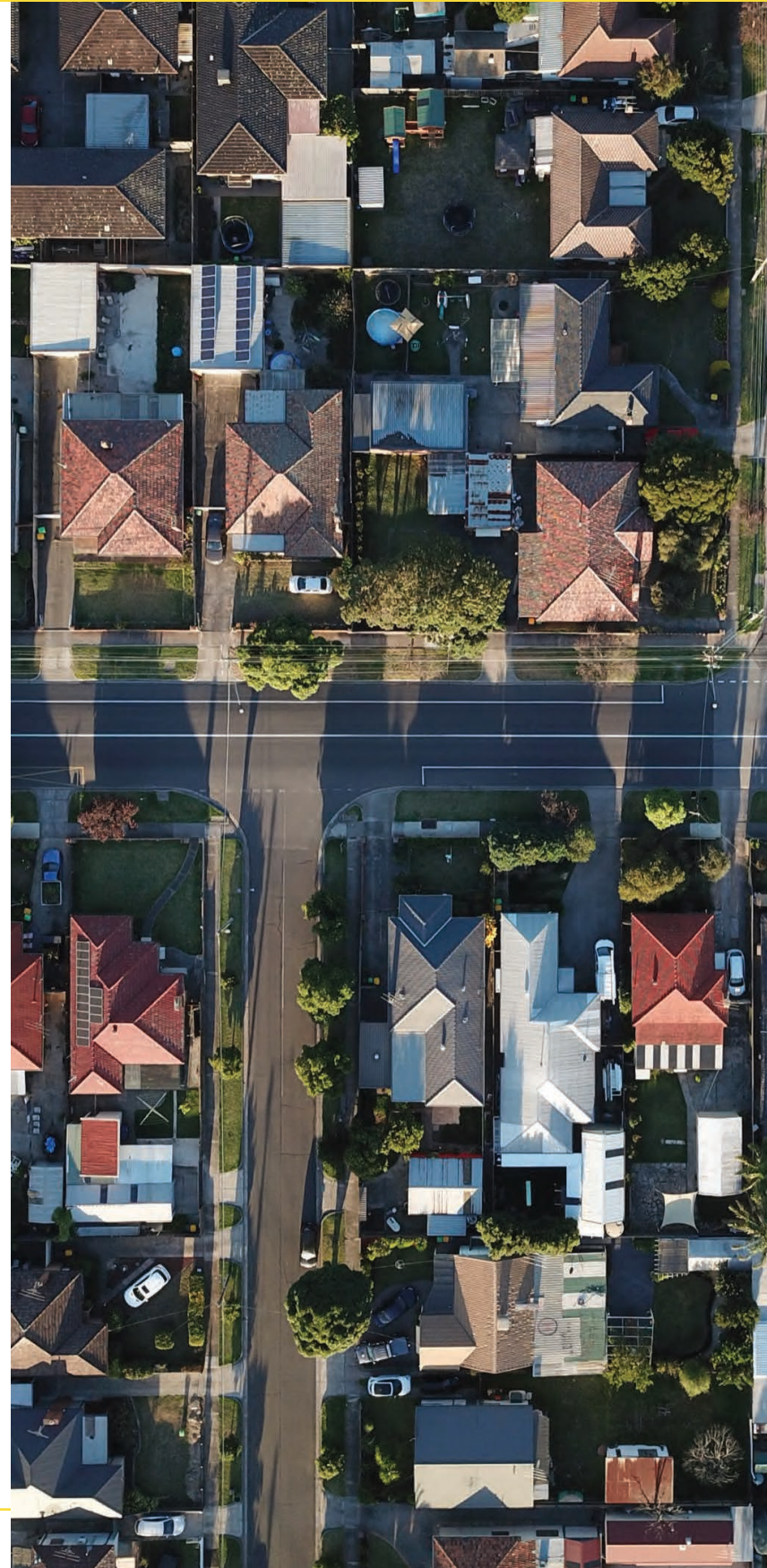
We would like to work with the city, including the police department, and residents to designate vacant properties as no trespassing areas and to protect them from vandalism by cutting down bushes, planting flowers, ensuring secure boarding and maintaining the grass. We believe this will help those properties to maintain their value and hopefully become an asset for neighborhood residents to buy. At the same time, we are committed to making sure that homeless squatters who could be displaced by this strategy have access to the resources they need. As a next step, we plan to conduct safety walks to document areas of concern **(i.e., overhanging trees, loose dogs, abandoned homes, vacant lots and critical property safety violations)** in order to identify a hierarchy of the environmental concerns that need to be addressed.

GOAL

IMPROVE THE PUBLIC PERCEPTION OF METCALFE PARK TO ENSURE THE EMOTIONAL AND RACIAL SAFETY OF RESIDENTS.

The media treatment of Metcalfe Park paints a neighborhood racked with violence and dysfunction, as it does for most of the African American north side neighborhoods in Milwaukee. In 2008, searching the phrase “Metcalfe Park Milwaukee” resulted in articles with titles such as “bad neighborhood to live in,” “ghetto neighborhood” and “worst neighborhood in MKE.” These themes continue, despite seeing an increase in positive stories about the neighborhood over time, including the reporting of activities and progress by the Metcalfe Park BNCP.

Our neighborhood is framed jointly by structural racism (deeply embedded notions about racial superiority and inferiority) and structural violence (strongly rooted beliefs that question our humanity and restrict our power). Both lock us in a dysfunctional interaction with, and diminish our power relative to, those outside our community.



MOST OF THE CITY'S DEVELOPMENT PLANS LEAVE OUT POOR NEIGHBORHOODS OF COLOR, ESPECIALLY THOSE THAT ARE PRIMARILY AFRICAN AMERICAN.

Residents are concerned that the frame on Metcalfe Park puts us at risk for neglect and isolation from community development, as it separates us from and devalues us in comparison to neighborhoods that are wealthier, closer to the downtown area and not predominately African American. This frame affects our ability to attract business owners to our commercial corridor and influences other areas of our day-to-day lives, including devalued housing, higher automobile insurance costs, greater difficulty in obtaining employment and disrespect in the ways that service providers and public officials respond to our community. It also impacts the way residents feel about our neighborhood, ourselves, each other and those outside our neighborhood.

Our objective is to promote a more positive image by developing the way MPCB understands and tells the Metcalfe Park story. We have taken steps in this direction by organizing many of our neighborhood events and celebrations to highlight our many community assets, including expressions of solidarity and commitment to each other. Moving forward, we have plans to **develop and install unique community signage in the neighborhood to continue to reinforce a positive, unified community identity among residents.** This includes the addition of artistically decorated garbage cans as well as the planting of a “universal tree” that residents and community members will associate with Metcalfe Park.





46 PERCENT OF METCALFE PARK RESIDENTS LIVE BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL COMPARED TO 29 PERCENT CITYWIDE.

CONNECTEDNESS & CULTURAL VIBRANCE

We are committed to bridging the gap between members of our community to build and maintain strong relationships in order to increase connectedness and cultural vibrance.

Metcalfe Park, despite what its public frame would suggest, is in many ways a community that operates as a family. Because our neighborhood is resource-poor financially and otherwise, it is not unusual to see neighbors stepping up to provide aid and assistance to each other when needed. Whether residents are without food, shelter or, for one reason or another, have had to resort to lifestyles with which we do not agree, there is generally a neighbor who will help in times of need.

Our task in promoting connectedness and cultural vibrancy is to support residents' ability to overcome their sense of powerlessness and geographic isolation to embrace a sense of community connectedness, not only on their block or with their immediate neighbors, but across Metcalfe Park as a whole. This entails developing sustained activity, including employment, community and cultural development, that builds relationships while strengthening Metcalfe Park's economic base so that increased opportunities can benefit everyone in the community.

At the same time, we recognize that residents in Metcalfe Park are too often disconnected from access to critical services that prevent the need for emergency interventions and contribute to economic and family security. Community connectedness and the responsibility we feel and display for each other must be informed and supported by ties with the external resources we need not only to survive, but to thrive.



ACCORDING TO A NEIGHBORHOOD SURVEY, APPROXIMATELY **75 PERCENT – THE LARGE MAJORITY – OF RESPONDENTS STATED THAT THEY STRONGLY AGREED OR AGREED THAT PEOPLE ON THEIR BLOCK WATCHED OUT FOR EACH OTHER'S KIDS.** JUST OVER 10 PERCENT STATED THAT THEY DISAGREED THAT PEOPLE ON THEIR BLOCK WATCHED OUT FOR EACH OTHER'S KIDS.

OVER 70 PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS STATED THAT THEY STRONGLY AGREED OR AGREED THAT PEOPLE ON THEIR BLOCK WATCHED OUT FOR EACH OTHER'S HOUSES, WITH A LITTLE MORE THAN 15 PERCENT DISAGREEING.

GOAL

STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY AND CONNECT RESIDENTS ACROSS CULTURES AND GEOGRAPHY.

In our work, we have focused on extensive resident engagement and outreach, motivated by the belief that only by working together can we raise our voices to change conditions in our neighborhood. We have much to celebrate when it comes to the diverse talents and rich history of our community, and some of our most successful efforts highlighted our gifts – from an art contest that showcased individual artists to a baby shower and naming ceremony that lifted up our collective love and hope for our children. Many of these events incorporated elements from African American art and culture, reflecting the historical roots of Metcalfe Park and its current population (83.1 percent African American).

While Metcalfe Park has long been and remains predominantly an African American community, we have learned during our canvassing that it is also home to a small, but growing number of Asian and Latino residents. We believe and hope that relatively new residents in Metcalfe Park will stay, and we would like to welcome our new resident groups as integral members of our community. We see this diversity as a benefit for our city and our neighborhood and are eager to

PAST EFFORTS

INCORPORATED MORE INTENTIONAL OUTREACH TO THE ASIAN AND LATINO POPULATIONS IN METCALFE PARK.

ENGAGED NEW RESIDENT ARRIVALS IN OUR BUSINESS AS MEMBERS OF METCALFE PARK COMMUNITY BRIDGES.

BETWEEN 2000 AND 2010, THE PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS OF ASIAN DESCENT INCREASED FROM 7.3 TO 10.6 PERCENT AND HAS REMAINED CONSTANT SINCE.

seize this opportunity to develop a community that recognizes and celebrates our different backgrounds, while joining us together as one neighborhood.

In the course of promoting public celebration, healing and engagement across cultures, we are continuing our efforts to encourage new and diverse residents to become active members in everything we do, guaranteeing that one culture does not dominate the others. We are also committed to addressing the tensions that often arise when different racial groups and cultures begin to occupy the same space.

This is especially true for poor communities, and even more so for African Americans, who feel that despite the fact that they were forcibly located to the United States and endured generations of oppression and exclusion, they are not seen as needing or having a right to special support, reparations or healing. This can cause African American resentment toward other groups, which is unfortunate because others often share a similar story of dislocation from their ancestral home and relocation to a hostile environment. Now, more than ever, we need sustained, collective action to support the inclusion of us all in the wealth of our city.

To continue bridging the gap between those of different nationalities, we plan to **install culturally relevant artwork in our neighborhood, and change one of our street names to Ralph Metcalfe Street**. We believe this will contribute to an overall reinforcement of our neighborhood identity, as well as a concerted effort to recognize the different backgrounds that contribute to the strength of our neighborhood.

GOAL

INCREASE THE NUMBER OF BUSINESSES THAT REFLECT THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

We want to ensure that residents who plan to start their own businesses have access to entrepreneurial training and support. Entrepreneurship is particularly attractive for residents who face discrimination in hiring practices or do not have strong employment records, including formerly incarcerated individuals. It also increases the potential to create jobs for other residents, especially if small businesses receive incentives to hire residents.

We hope to identify and work with partners to help support small business diversity. We want to work with partners who are actively trying to revitalize the commercial corridors within the Metcalfe Park borders to attract new businesses that provide the goods and services requested by current residents, and that will hire from within the

neighborhood. Currently the 30th Street corridor is lined with vacant buildings and salvage yards. **We envision our corridors lined with family dining restaurants; drive-in shopping malls with grocery stores; wellness facilities that support healthy life choices (i.e., yoga and exercise) and provide much-needed medical services for adults and children; and other offerings to serve the needs of our growing Latino and Hmong populations.**

As part of this strategy, we will connect residents with the resources to support their job training, as well as the resources needed to open their businesses, including accountants, lawyers and information on best practices.





GOAL

INCREASE RESIDENTS' CAPACITY TO EFFECT NEIGHBORHOOD CHANGE AT THE POLICY LEVEL.

We want to ensure that we are using all the existing civic tools and assets already available to us in making our voice heard, while also advocating for policies that will strengthen resident voice and power. We have taken steps to provide residents with knowledge about the political process and are committed to providing ongoing support for residents to voice their needs and make important community decisions. In doing so, we are conscious that our community is a diverse one, and we will need to develop targeted strategies that address the needs

of specific resident populations, speaking with a united voice on areas of agreement within the neighborhood while making sure that different groups understand how to use and influence the political process when they have interests unique to their circumstances and perspectives. We will continue to **provide leadership and advocacy training to residents, with a particular focus on housing, social and environmental justice issues.**



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

We are dedicated to ensuring residents have an informed, active voice in the decisions affecting their community.

Developing strong relationships with fellow residents and connecting them to organizations and resource brokers who share our values and will work with us as equal partners is at the foundation of everything we do. At the same time, connection and partnership are only possible when we possess the means to hold people with power and resources accountable for how their actions affect our neighborhood, for keeping their promises and for working to strengthen vehicles that encourage resident participation in decision-making and resource allocation.

GOAL

INCREASE RESIDENTS' CIVIC KNOWLEDGE.



As mentioned, some residents do not register, vote or participate in other ways due to a lack of understanding of the political process. We aim to change that dynamic by incorporating civic education into our regular programming, which includes increasing the number of residents who can participate in civic engagement training and developing related newsletters and educational materials. As part of this, we plan to **develop and support a civic engagement table**.

However, we realize that voting in elections is only one way to increase our political power. Decisions about funding and development in our neighborhood happen on a regular basis, and we want residents to understand how various policy proposals will affect our neighborhood and make our voices heard when these proposals are not in the interest of Metcalfe Park. We plan to develop a neighborhood newsletter that includes regular policy alerts and identifies ways to take action to support or oppose measures under discussion. Reflecting on the last several years, there are many instances in which we would have liked to have had more impact on what happens in our neighborhood, from school closings to budget decisions.

We have also learned that, too often, council meetings and other forums that allow for resident testimonials are held at times when working residents cannot attend. Therefore, we both need to learn about and participate in current venues and advocate that meetings be designed with attention to supporting the participation of all residents—not just those with the discretionary time and resources. It is also important that government officials not only expect us to come to them but also come to our neighborhood to meet residents where they are. We have learned that we have to define the way we want to be represented. For example, **Alderman Russell Stamper has developed stronger relationships with Metcalfe Park by partnering with MPCB to conduct neighborhood walks and knock on doors, along with representatives of City departments (i.e., Department of Neighborhood Services, Sanitation, the Police Department, Streets) who can answer questions and take note of resident concerns**. We believe this type of active and in-person contact in our neighborhood is an important step in increasing civic participation and awareness in Metcalfe Park.

GOAL

INCREASE VOTING PARTICIPATION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

To launch our voter registration and participation activities, MPCB developed a Political Open Mic Night in 2016 to educate residents on each of the offices that would be voted on in the election (i.e., aldermen, mayor, comptroller, treasurer, president and vice president). The event was initially geared toward young voters, as our assumption was that it was young people who were not voting. We set up information tables for each office and invited local candidates to attend. The results were disappointing, but instructive: only one candidate came and resident turnout was quite low. We believe that the lack of candidate interest was in part because we could not guarantee a large audience, reinforcing our commitment to increasing resident participation in civic affairs and demonstrating to our representatives that their attention to us matters.

After looking more closely at the data, it became apparent to us that young voters were not the only demographic not registered to vote. **Between the 2010 and 2014 general elections (the most recent years for which we currently have data), the number of residents registered to vote in Metcalfe Park dropped from 7,886 to 6,138. This decline was not only due to the lack of a presidential election to generate voter interest (voter turnout typically decreases in non-presidential election years). Voter registration, after rising slightly in 2010, also declined between the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections: from 7,000 in 2008 to 6,138 in 2012.**

VOTER PARTICIPATION OF THOSE REGISTERED **DECLINED BY 23 PERCENT BETWEEN THE TWO PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS** FROM AN EXTRAORDINARY **99.9 PERCENT IN 2008**, THE YEAR OF THE FIRST OBAMA ELECTION, TO **81.5 PERCENT IN 2012**. BETWEEN THE 2010 AND 2014 GENERAL ELECTIONS, THE NUMBER OF VOTES CAST IN METCALFE PARK DROPPED **FROM 4,994 VOTES IN 2010 TO 3,684 VOTES IN 2014**.

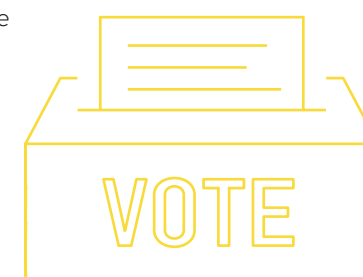
RESIDENTS DID NOT ALWAYS VOTE DUE TO:

MISINFORMATION ON VOTING RIGHTS OF THOSE WHO HAD BEEN INCARCERATED;
QUESTIONS ON WHETHER VOTING COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE;
LACK OF FAITH THAT THE CURRENT SYSTEM IS DESIGNED TO BE PARTICIPATORY AND **RESPONSIVE** TO THEIR NEEDS.

In response, MPCB started to work on voter registration in earnest, including having two members sworn in as registrars and helping residents fill out voter registration forms at local corner stores and a senior center. As we engaged residents and encouraged them to register, we learned more about why some residents did not want to register and even when registered did not always vote.

Nonetheless, relatively high voting rates during the years when President Obama ran for office gives us hope. Our neighborhood will vote when they believe their voice matters and when there are candidates who they believe will represent their interests. However, the only way to demonstrate that possibility is for those who are registered and voting to demand that our representatives take us seriously. Therefore, we will continue to work closely with partners and local businesses to increase registration in our neighborhood and to support residents who are registered in getting to the polls, while also developing a complementary strategy focused on education about voting and policy decisions affecting our neighborhood.

The fact is that history indicates no matter who is in office, the circumstances of Metcalfe Park residents have continued to worsen over time. This highlights both the need for greater efforts to get residents to vote, but also for groups like MPCB to influence before elections rather than have the neighborhood become victimized after. As part of these efforts, we will continue to **identify and register residents who are not currently registered to vote**.



WEALTH IS DEFINED BY WHAT PEOPLE OWN; NOT JUST WHAT THEY EARN (I.E., TOTAL ASSETS— REAL ESTATE, STOCKS, BUSINESS EQUITY, HOMES, AUTOMOBILES, BANKING DEPOSITS, ETC.— MINUS WHAT THEY OWE: E.G., LOANS, MORTGAGES, CREDIT CARD, AND OTHER FORMS OF DEBT).



GOAL DECREASE DISPLACEMENT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

OVER TWO-THIRDS (67 PERCENT) OF OCCUPIED UNITS ARE RENTED UNITS IN METCALFE PARK, COMPARED TO 57 PERCENT CITYWIDE.

The cost of housing in Metcalfe Park far surpasses what most residents can afford. **The most common rental rate in Metcalfe Park increased by up to 45 percent between 2000 and 2010 (from the 2000 rate of \$450 to \$499) to the 2010 rate of \$1,000 to \$1,249, then dropped slightly in 2014 (\$800 to \$899). Given the average median earnings of \$21,886 for working residents of the neighborhood, these rates are extremely high.** For those who are not working or have low and inconsistent wages, rent is even more out of reach, which we believe may be at the root of the homeless crisis in our neighborhood.

In our surveys, canvassing and conversations with residents and service providers over the past few years, we have continued to uncover the depth of the homeless and housing instability problems in our neighborhood. Residents and service providers speculate that reasons for homelessness are varied, ranging from young high school dropouts who place their parents at legal risk because of their educational noncompliance, to drug and alcohol addiction, to unemployment. Service

providers acknowledge the limited programming to support this particular age group (especially young men) because the homeless do not often successfully complete needed paperwork or do not meet organizational selection criteria, and programs often do not accept those with criminal records.

While renting is the most practical choice for many residents, we also believe that promoting homeownership is an important strategy to both stabilize our neighborhood (which has been losing population since 2000) and build wealth for Metcalfe Park residents. To support this, we plan to focus on **increasing resident homeownership while strengthening and creating healthy rental housing opportunities.** We are creating a plan to purchase properties from the city and work with partners to rehabilitate these homes to create affordable, healthy living spaces for residents of the neighborhood.

INTERGENERATIONAL WEALTH & OPPORTUNITY

We open doors of opportunity for residents through transformational educational, employment, wealth-building and entrepreneurial experiences.

Our community struggles greatly to access jobs, which deprives residents of consistent income and support for themselves and their families. A lack of resources and high housing and rental costs leaves many residents with inconsistent and unstable housing, which leads to homelessness for some and a constant cycle of eviction and temporary housing for others.

As residents struggle to bridge income gaps and respond to emergencies, the ability to build savings and wealth, or invest in future opportunities such as home ownership and higher education, rapidly diminishes. A lack of opportunity in one generation affects the next, which explains in part why children who grow up in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty are much more likely to remain there or reside in similar communities as adults.

It is essential for us to generate intergenerational wealth and opportunity, both of which have been absent in our neighborhood for decades. Supporting Metcalfe Park residents to build their assets and access opportunity

begins with providing school-age children, as well as disconnected youth and young adults, with the quality education they need to pursue their passions, cultivate their talents and gain skills for employment. However, education is not enough on its own. We also want to **increase partner investments to bring in wealth and sustain community life, while involving and engaging residents in the careful development of our neighborhood that generates economic opportunities for existing residents—from new jobs to business and property ownership.**

Our neighborhood bears the imprint of decades of disinvestment; however, too often, we are dismissed as incapable of generating value for investors. This dynamic will only change when residents are included in development decisions and when the city and other partners look beyond profit to invest in human capital: the residents of our neighborhood. Only then will our efforts shift from the critical goal of stabilizing our neighborhood and reacting to challenges to developing the robust and thriving community that is at the center of our vision.



GOAL

INCREASE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS TO BUILD PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY WEALTH.

The concern about lack of opportunities for training and education for young adults was a common thread in our conversations with community residents. They noted that young adults face many barriers, including incomplete or poor educational experiences, failing schools, hostile environments (especially for adolescent males and primary school boys), lack of child care for young adult parents who need to return to school and the scarcity of programs that couple work and school for young parents who are heads of household. All of these issues have devastating consequences for young adults' educational attainment and employment prospects.

We feel that blame for lack of educational attainment is too often placed on individuals rather than looking at the school system as a whole, as well as the range of environmental and family factors that influence educational achievement. A significant number of young people who have dropped out of high school, or pursued but not completed post-secondary education, struggle to balance child care and work needs with the cost and time of education. These students, along with disconnected youth and young adults (i.e., those who are

neither in school nor working) would benefit from alternative forms of education outside of a traditional school setting, including training and technical education options and educational programs that provide support for young parents and working adults.

While some of the young people who would benefit from alternative education programs are themselves currently working, many young adults in Metcalfe Park have grown up in a community where jobs are scarce, and as a result they lack workforce

“UNEMPLOYMENT INCREASES STRESS AND UNHAPPINESS, AND HEIGHTENS THE RISK OF MALNUTRITION, ILLNESS, MENTAL STRESS, LOSS OF SELF-ESTEEM AND DEPRESSION.”

AS OF 2014, **OVER A QUARTER OF RESIDENTS 18 TO 24 HAD LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE** (27.7 PERCENT OF MALES AND 31.8 PERCENT OF FEMALES).

FOR ALL RESIDENTS 18 YEARS AND OLDER, **35.9 PERCENT OF MALES AND 27.3 PERCENT OF FEMALES DID NOT HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE.** LOOKING AT THE NEXT TIER OF EDUCATION, **39 PERCENT OF MALES AND 32.1 PERCENT OF FEMALES HAD A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA OR EQUIVALENCY, BUT NO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION.**

experience. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH), an organization that advocates for the rights of homeless people of all ages, “unemployment increases stress and unhappiness, and heightens the risk of malnutrition, illness, mental stress, loss of self-esteem and depression.” Lack of employment also increases the likelihood that Metcalfe Park residents will rely on illegal ways to gain income, which weakens their need for legitimate work, increases the possibility of contact with law enforcement and reinforces a negative community subculture.

It is imperative that alternative education opportunities, curricula and offerings are informed by knowledge and understanding of what skills are needed to gain employment, as well as what industries local to Milwaukee have job openings. To support this, we aim to **identify partners who can co-create financial education and employment programs (banking services, investment clubs, better paying jobs).**

GOAL

PROVIDE YOUTH WITH WEALTH-BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES.

Metcalfe Park is a neighborhood whose schools struggle, and often fail, to meet the Milwaukee Public School District expectations. A lack of quality education creates a cycle of negative consequences, in which school administrators and teachers often are pitted against families and students. Schools struggle to protect themselves from funding cuts and/or district and state intervention, while families struggle to ensure that all children are properly educated and that those who need additional support receive it, rather than simply being removed from the classroom as the result of disciplinary infractions.

Discussions with Metcalfe Park parents about their experiences has exposed the many barriers families face when it comes to involvement in their children's education – from previously incarcerated residents who are not allowed to volunteer in the classroom, to parents who worry that expressing concerns about their child's education or school experience will lead to retaliatory treatment of their child/ren (especially boys). **We believe that one of the primary solutions is not only to promote parent involvement in our local schools but also to promote community-involvement overall.**

What we have heard from residents to date through our employment activities (i.e., partnering with local organizations to offer job fairs and resume development workshops) is that they badly want to gain economic self-sufficiency. However, they also want to find work from which they derive meaning and hope. Most importantly, they want support in developing careers rather than moving from one low wage job to the next. Residents also want to have a choice about whether to work in Metcalfe Park, the neighborhood they call home, versus finding employment elsewhere.

Through this focus area, **we aim to expose youth to career pathways and activities that prepare them to build assets, including green jobs, coding, SAT prep, entrepreneurship and financial education.** As part of



this, we want to better understand new industries that could offer employment opportunities, including emerging green jobs such as creating and installing green energy products, (i.e., furnaces, hot water tanks). We need to do additional research to better understand this sector and the potential it may hold for Metcalfe Park.



GOAL

INCREASE A SENSE OF PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING FOR RESIDENTS.

Our first partner in our health and wellness efforts was the Medical College of Wisconsin, which came out to meet with the community for a program focused on smoking. We found that, while residents were not engaged in the focus of this program, they were engaged in the opportunity to explore ways to cope with stress.

Cardiovascular disease is a public health burden, and the source of stark racial and socio-economic health disparities, particularly between white and black Americans. Racial disparities in cardiovascular health are rooted in the stress experienced by African Americans, including racial segregation, financial stress, lack of perceived safety and stress caused by discrimination.

Together with the Medical College of Wisconsin, MPCB and community members designed a yoga and mindfulness project to help residents reduce their stress and anxiety and pursue other healthy behavioral changes. Participants were recruited from the Metcalfe Park neighborhood with

leadership from MPCB and its members. During this program, we observed a high level of engagement among participants and a positive response that focused on the accessibility of yoga and mindfulness to all ages and levels of fitness and health. As a result of this program, several residents are going on to become yoga instructors.

We want to continue to connect community members with health and wellness activities, and are focused on efforts to **assess community health concerns and hold regular wellness, food and resource events.** By building neighborhood capacity in this area, we will be able to put residents in control of their own health and provide them with opportunities to control their health outcomes. As part of this initiative, we are working with the Medical College of Wisconsin to host quarterly wellness days, where residents can attend for immunizations, flu shots, blood pressure checks and referrals for care. Our team is also looking forward to meeting with the YMCA to create a program for Metcalfe Park residents to participate in its service offerings (i.e., swimming).

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Metcalfe Park is a clean and green, environmentally and emotionally healthy neighborhood.

If the health of our community members suffers, so does our work, as so many of our efforts are community-led. We have brought a focus on health and wellness into our priority areas to examine what is causing our community to suffer with various health concerns, and identify what actions we can take to change these outcomes through health education and programming.



CHECK, CHANGE, CONTROL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

MPCB ASSESSED HEALTH NEEDS, SPOKE WITH 120 RESIDENTS AND AROUND 60 STAYED ENGAGED IN THE PROGRAM WITH ONGOING BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS.

GOAL

INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS TO LIVE IN SAFE, HEALTHY AND SECURE HOUSING.

Historic practices of segregation, biases in public and private investment allocations, and the exploitation of poor and working class households has left Metcalfe Park both underdeveloped and poorly maintained. The resulting environment of the neighborhood, including its housing stock, exposes residents to environmental hazards and social risks.

We have developed a housing initiative with the goals to increase opportunities for residents to live in safe, healthy and secure housing; increase homeownership opportunities for residents of Metcalfe Park; decrease neighborhood blight and prevent resident displacement; and employ contractors from within the community.

MPCB, along with co-developers Fatima Benhaddou and Anthony Kazee, will renovate five to six homes in Metcalfe Park and market them to promote homeownership in the

THE AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL
PROPERTY VALUE IS \$55,000,
UP FROM \$53,000 IN 2018.

neighborhood. We will use City of Milwaukee subsidy, MPCB discretionary funds, donations, fundraised dollars, grant funds and lender financing to complete the renovation projects.

Some Metcalfe Park residents interested in homeownership have voiced concerns related to financial readiness. To address this, MPCB will expand on existing relationships with housing counseling groups and local banking groups to **increase the community's knowledge of eviction laws, legal and mediation support, and other resources that address housing quality/and financial literacy.**

GOAL

INCREASE RESIDENT PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES.

As global temperature changes persist, people in poverty will be among those most impacted by the changes in conditions. We want our community members to get ahead of this by learning and implementing environmentally responsible practices; as part of this initiative, we're aiming to **increase resident participation in backyard gardening.**



OF 545 RESIDENTIAL
PROPERTIES, **160 HOMES**
ARE OWNER-OCCUPIED
(29 PERCENT) AND **224** (41
PERCENT) **ARE OWNED BY**
SOMEONE WHO LIVES IN
ANOTHER ZIP CODE.



GOAL

REDUCE RESIDENTS' EXPOSURE TO ENVIRONMENTAL TOXINS IN THEIR WATER AND ENVIRONMENT.

In Metcalfe Park, many residents risk exposure to environmental toxins (lead) in their homes. In addition, the issue of basement flooding exposes residents and their families to mold and mildew. Reducing environmental toxins is critical to overall health, and moving forward we will work to **increase residents' knowledge of the impact of lead exposure in paint, water and dirt, and other toxins such as pharmaceuticals and animal waste; and connect them to wellness activities to reduce such exposure.**



CONCLUSION

Based upon our journey of working with and understanding resident concerns, needs and desires, we have presented a long-term, comprehensive plan for the development of Metcalfe Park. We continue to use our resources wisely to support the development of a small but growing sense of community agency in Metcalfe Park, and have kept a strong focus on putting residents first, despite many challenges. We have implemented programs, strategies and activities to elevate support for our priority areas, and continue to evaluate them to inform our next steps.

KEY LEARNINGS

Resident engagement is hard work, especially in places where hope has been repeatedly dashed through the starts and stops of promising initiatives, and where people have experienced intergenerational segregation and alienation. Past experience has taught residents to not invest themselves in new ideas; it has also diminished hope and caused residents to feel as though their efforts to effect sustained change are in vain. While residents are eager for change, they do not have the historical memory that allows them to believe change will happen. Mobilizing disempowered residents is difficult, and engaging them long term is even more so. We have had to adjust our expectations about the number of residents who will come to and stay at the table, but have also realized joy from residents who have come to see our organization and its efforts as a stable source of support.

Resources are scarce in places like Metcalfe Park, and the infusion of resources for one group or neighborhood can set off a chain reaction of jealousy and resentment among others who do not receive them. And, control of resources in a place where control has often meant misuse and power can cause distrust and make it difficult for people in our communities to join together.

Neighborhood revitalization takes organizational strength. MPCB and the neighborhood itself were both limited in their involvement in the BNCP because of the absence of a strong neighborhood organizational partner that could provide us with the administrative and management support needed to engage our work. While the absence of such an institution in our neighborhood was a problem, it was also a blessing as it pushed us to learn how to manage our work on our own.

Community change takes time, resources and capacity building for all engaged partners. The factors that created communities like Metcalfe Park happened over time and across generations. Sustained change in Metcalfe Park is likely generational as well, meaning that rather than an outlook of 3-5 years (the general window for most initiatives), we should envision sustained work over 10-20 years. To continue the revitalization process, we will need stable, multi-year, sustained financial and in-kind support from a variety of public and private partners, and we will need to revisit and adjust our plans as we learn from and improve the projects we hope to lead.

We hope to reach a point where all partners truly listen to the community and use what they hear to inform strategies and programming. We want our partners to acknowledge the wealth of knowledge that lies within the community, and to work with us as respected partners in the revitalization of our community and the city of Milwaukee, acknowledging the structural barriers that hinder advancement and the attainment of quality lives. **We hope to see investments made not just into the neighborhood, but into the people who live here. We will continue to address these issues as we work together with partners to develop a community that models how we can live and work together across race and class.**



FOOTNOTES

¹ Gurda, John, Milwaukee: City of Neighborhoods. Milwaukee: Historic Milwaukee, Inc. 2015.

² Pawasarat & Quinn. Wisconsin Mass Incarceration of African American Males: Workforce Challenges for 2013. University of Milwaukee (2013). p 8.

³ The neighborhoods statistics included in this plan are from the Metcalfe Park BNCP Profile, Data You Can Use 2016. This neighborhood report is based primarily on the U.S. Census Bureau's 2014 5-year estimates.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all of those who invested their time, resources and expertise into the Metcalfe Park community, supporting our ability to create this community-led investment plan.

We are grateful to the Metcalfe Park Community Action Team, a small group of residents, for bringing their unique skills to this work. Their efforts paved the way for us to lift up the value of residents and organizations working together as equal partners. We would also like to thank the Metcalfe Park Bridge Builders, who have elevated these efforts by connecting neighbors to the work one block at a time.

We would also like to extend our gratitude to the members of the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP) technical assistance team, who were instrumental in assisting site coordinators in facilitating the process and provided invaluable training and support on a number of topics, including resident engagement. Thank you to Kristin Yeado and Lauren Wechsler, senior program analysts at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, as well as Fatima Benhaddou, who served as our site manager. A special thanks to Linda Bowen, executive director of the Institute for Community Peace, for helping us to understand structural racism and structural violence and how both affect our work.

The success of the Metcalfe Park BNCP was possible because of the hard work provided by the Metcalfe Park Community Bridges staff: Danell Cross, Leilani Lopez, Sara Bauer, Annie Travis, Felicia Wilkins and Melody McCurtis.

Thank you to our partner communities, [Amani](#) and [Muskego Way](#), for sharing their learnings over time with us. We're especially grateful to the [Dominican Center](#) and the [United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee](#) for providing fiscal sponsorship, as well as development and moral support.

We thank our on-the-ground partners, including [Medical College of Wisconsin](#), [Imagine MKE](#), [Wisconsin Voices](#), [African American Roundtable](#) and the [City of Milwaukee Home Grown Initiative](#). We also thank [Groundwork Milwaukee](#) for its work with the Metcalfe Park Green Team and [Angela Pruitt](#) for her work with the Metcalfe Park Young Cats, as well as the [Black Historical Society Museum](#), all of which have worked diligently with us to impact our priority areas.

We are especially thankful for our cross-sector partners, including the [Greater Milwaukee Foundation](#), the [Zilber Family Foundation](#) and the [Northwestern Mutual Foundation](#). We'd like to recognize Susan Lloyd at the Zilber Family Foundation for her support during the BNCP process and steadfast commitment to resident-led community change. We'd also like to extend a special thank you to [LaQuondra Shaw](#) at the Northwestern Mutual Foundation for her commitment to changing the dynamics that exist in community and philanthropic initiatives, bridging the gap between corporate and community.

And finally, a special thanks to [Dr. Katie Pritchard](#) and [Carrie Koss Vallejo](#) of Data You Can Use for researching and developing the data in the Metcalfe Park profile and plan.



