# HIGHLAND NEIGHBORHOOD FINAL PLAN PROPOSAL

*Innovative Plans for the Highland Community*

Providence Adu, Katherine Bernier, Daniel Crum, Zemin Dhanani, Kate Dolan, Heather Mullen

Photo Source: Michael McNair

## Contents

**Introduction** ..... **8**

*Background Information about the Highland Neighborhood* ..... *9*

*Community Input and Perspective* ..... *12*

*Ordinance Observations* ..... *15*

*Summary* ..... *16*

**Current Conditions** ..... **17**

*Poverty* ..... *17*

*Education* ..... *21*

*Housing* ..... *23*

*Home Value* ..... *25*

*Vacant Homes* ..... *27*

*Racial Dynamics* ..... *28*

*SWOT Analysis* ..... *29*

**Mission Statement** ..... **36**

**Final Plan Proposal Summary** ..... **36**

**Goals and Strategies Summary** ..... **38**

**Housing Strategy** ..... **43**

**Traffic Calming Strategy and Implementation** ..... **46**

Possible Funding Sources ..... 48

**Healthy Food Initiative Strategy and Implementation** ..... **48**

*Introduction* ..... *48*

*The Highland Community Food Environment* ..... *51*

*Gas Station Analysis and Visit: First Impressions and Observations* ..... *54*

*Food Insecurity Recommendations Based on Interviews and Visits* ..... *57*

*Healthy Food Initiative Strategy* ..... *58*

*Financing the Healthy Corner Store Initiative:* ..... *63*

*Conclusions for the Healthy Corner Store Initiative:* ..... *66*

**Bridge Strategy and Implementation** ..... **66**

Hampton Ave Extension Bridge ..... 69

Irving and Bernice Singer Pedestrian Bridge (Piscataquog River Bridge) ..... 70

River Place Park Bridge ..... 71

Spirit Bridge in Cancer Survivors Park ..... 72

*Proposed Highland Bridge* ..... *73*
**Mixed-Use, Mixed-Income Development Strategy and Implementation** ..... **79**
*Implementation Strategy* ..... *80*
*Funding for Mixed-Use* ..... *82*
*Funding Sources and Partnerships* ..... *83*
*Conclusion* ..... *85*
**Final Highland Neighborhood Plan Proposal Conclusion** ..... **86**
**Bibliography** ..... **88**
**Appendix A. Questions for Leroy Jeter** ..... **94**
**Appendix B: Community Outreach Advocate** ..... **95**
**Appendix C: Housing Authority Questions** ..... **96**

## Executive Summary

The Highland Neighborhood is a historically African American neighborhood that has a strong cultural identity with a long and varied history within the City of Spartanburg, South Carolina. The neighborhood has a strong and unique community identity and sense of place developed in part due to its natural physical boundaries and a history of being a multigenerational, tight knit neighborhood. Due to a variety of factors, the neighborhood has changed over the years from a thriving community to one of the most impoverished areas within the City. There has been a decline in resources within the community from housing options to healthy food availability, and the area has high concentrations of poverty, crime, unemployment rate, and health issues. During the planning process, an analysis of current conditions, including previous research and planning documents were assessed and the strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats to the community were complied. These factors as well as the interview with the Highland Neighborhood Association President, Mr. Leroy Jeter, were all used to contribute to this final proposal of the Highland Neighborhood.

## Final Plan Proposals

It is important to note that below are potential guidelines and recommendations. They are contingent upon community input. Community input is crucial to these proposed ideas to ensure long-term success of a plan.

*Improve Housing Quality and Quantity*

- Increase homeownership in the neighborhood
- Create more affordable housing

- Rehabilitate homes and build on vacant lots
- Partner with Spartanburg Housing Authority, Highland Neighborhood Association, and Low Income Housing Coalition
- Funding options include SC Community Loan Fund, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Funds, Habitat for Humanity

*Traffic Calming*

- Implement signage, speed humps, and speed feedback/radar signs
- Partners with the City of Spartanburg and SCDOT
- Funding options include City of Spartanburg and SCDOT

*Increase Healthy Food Access*

- Increase access to healthy affordable fresh food options
- Implement Healthy Food Corner Store Initiative or similar in existing convenience/local stores
- Increase Hub City Mobile Market stops in the neighborhood
- Partner with City of Spartanburg, SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC), Hub City, possibly Side Traxx or Sellers Seafood Market
- Funding options include Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI), Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program, Voices for Healthy Kids, Voices for Healthy Kids Incubator Grants, Community Economic Development Projects (HHS), Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI), and Local Enterprise Assistance Fund (LEAF)

*Create Connectivity: Bridge*

- Build a bridge to connect the Highland Neighborhood to the proposed mixed-use/mixed-income development
- The bridge will be ADA compliant, connect to our recommended trail provided later in this document as well as connect to the trail network proposed by Alta Design Consulting Firm for Spartanburg County
- Partner with City of Spartanburg, SC Department of Transportation (DOT), Spartanburg County Parks, Partners for Active Living, Healthy South Carolina Initiative, and Palmetto Cycling Coalition
- Fund options include City of Spartanburg, SCDOT, Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant, Appalachian Council of Governments (COG), Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), Federal Transit Administration Capital Funds (FTA), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Highway Safety Improvement Performance Program (HSIP), National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA), and the Recreation and Trails Program (RTP)

*Mixed Use Development*

- Build on an existing vacant 18-acre lot that is owned by Ingles adjacent to the Community
- Construct grocery store, community kitchen, daycare center, mixed-income housing apartments, commercial space, such as office, and retail areas

- Partner with City of Spartanburg, Spartanburg Housing Authority, Butterfly Foundation, Hospital Systems and more
- Funding options include: Spartanburg County, Mary Black and Spartanburg Regional Foundations, Private Business District, Gates Foundation, and private developer funding
    - Fund amount needed will depend on several factors such as scale, materials and timeframe

## Introduction

The Highland Community is a historically African American residential community located a little over one mile southwest of downtown Spartanburg. The physical neighborhood is bound by John B. White Sr. Blvd. to the northwest, S. Daniel Morgan Ave. to the north, S. Forest St. and a small tributary to the east, and Fairforest Creek to the south and southwest (location provided in **Figure 1**). As stated before, the Highland Community is characterized by its resilient community character and unique sense of place. Despite this intense level of community pride, the Highland Neighborhood has felt the effects of declining resources that have had dramatic implications on its residents including a decreased quality of life. In light of this trend, there is a movement among the residents that is resulting in renewed commitment to improving the community and making it a better place to live. Our aim is to help facilitate this movement by recommending practical plans that allow the community to thrive in a way that compliments the community's vision and goals. To this end, it is crucial for this project to consider the context of the community to solve prevailing issues within the community.

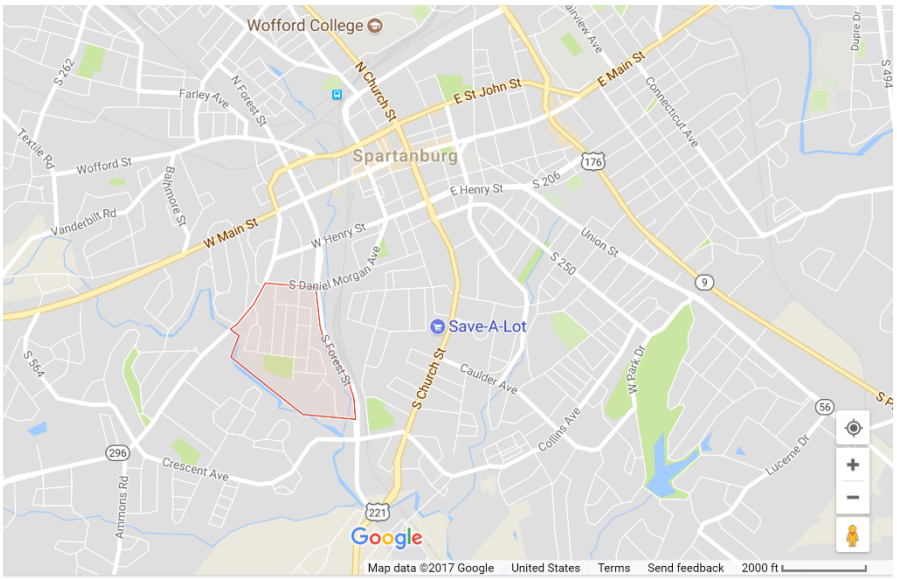


**Figure 1: Highland Neighborhood Location**
Note: The Highland Community is highlighted in red, south southwest from downtown Spartanburg
Google Maps (n.d.) [Google Maps location or Highland, Spartanburg, SC]. Retrieved Oct. 29, 2017.

## Background Information about the Highland Neighborhood

The location of the Highland Community is geographically adjacent to the downtown area, presenting some opportunities for employment and proximity to governmental services, though better connectivity and transportation services would improve access for residents. The community is also close to Main Street and Reidville Road, which have experienced positive change and appear to be continuing this trend for the future, with the possibility of growth spilling over to the neighborhood. There are also several vacant lots in the Highland Community and around the perimeter that offer room for both change and expansion. As it currently stands, there are formal agreements in place between several groups to promote change. This agreement includes agencies such as the Spartanburg Housing Authority and the City of Spartanburg. It also includes community partners like the Highland Working Group and the Bethlehem Center. This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provides a basic framework for

the partnership to build and expand into the future so that the needs of the community are heard and accommodated (Highland Working Group, 2016).

The Highland Neighborhood is a mix of public housing and single and multi-family homes. Originally, a single-family neighborhood, the content and character of the neighborhood changed in the 1950's with the development of public housing units. The three existing public housing properties in this area are Cammie Clagett, Prince Hall and Norris Ridge. Cammie Clagett is currently vacant and was purchased by the City using Neighborhood Improvement Program funds in early 2017 and was scheduled for demolition by November 30, 2017 (Go Upstate, Jan. 2017). Prince Hall could use some rehabilitation and updating, and Norris Ridge is also not in good shape and even the neighborhood residents wish to see it closed (City of Spartanburg, 2015). The housing units in the neighborhood are complimented by the recently renovated Stewart Park, which is currently a strong source of pride for its residents, and provides considerable space for community events. It also attracts outside residents to the park, building community relations.

This area has significant facilities that have played and will continue to play an important role in revitalizing the area. The aging Bethlehem Center, which is a cornerstone establishment in the community, serves as a multi-purpose space and is one of the main gathering venues within the community. The Center has group activities, daycare programs, after school programs, and senior wellness programs, as well as serves as an outlet for at risk youth, providing them with resources to thrive. In June of 2017, the Bethlehem Center received 25 new computers for the public to use (The 7 News). This technology will help both children and adults within the community to further their education. There is also a food pantry open

three days a week in the Center. Patrena Mims, the Center's Executive Director, credits the Center's centralized location as an asset to the community, noting that transportation is a barrier to accessing services and having the services being locally provided and easy to access is "life-changing" for this area (The 7 News). Another significant feature of this building is the bench that sits outside the front door called the "Listening Bench." The intent for this initiative is that if a person sits on the bench it indicates to others that they are looking for a person to talk to and it promotes active listening. The Listening Bench, along with the many programs in place at the center, promote emotional investment and help to build the bonds of the community. There are also many other influential facilities just outside of the community, including The Journey, a non-denominational church, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, and the Spartanburg Soup Kitchen, which border the community and serve a portion of its residents. All of the above entities provide a variety of much needed support services that supplement the community.

Despite its vibrant and rich cultural history, the Highland Community today is struggling with a variety of issues due to a historical lack of investment, isolation, and a deficit in resources. The first major problem the community faces is poverty. The community has a high number of people that receive government benefits due in part to the concentration of public and low-income housing in the area, and the general lack of nearby feasible employment opportunities (Highland Working Group, 2016). It is common for families and individuals in the area to be receiving multiple state benefits at one time because they qualify under more than one assistance program. The issue of poverty is further compounded by issues with food access and inequality stemming from the absence of local and affordable food sources, and

inadequate public transit options that connect Highland residents with resources outside the community. The lack of food options in the community and the travel requirements to reach grocery stores have resulted in this area being designated both low income and low access in regard to food. Crime and safety are also further problems stemming from the issue of poverty and overall lack of opportunity in the area.

To summarize, this community does have several issues that need to be addressed and as this analysis unfolds, these concerns along with the rich cultural history will be taken into consideration. The community has a sense of pride, tradition, and culture that rivals other neighborhoods in the City of Spartanburg. These aspects of the community are a fundamental lens that is being used to contextualize the approaches we are taking to help the neighborhood meet its goals. As we refined the approaches we are considering to improve the community, the team inventoried Highland's existing strengths and areas of opportunity, interviewed important community leaders, and researched current conditions extensively to create a project proposal to revitalize key aspects of the neighborhood.

## Community Input and Perspective

To ensure the Highland Planning Group was interpreting all of the provided information about the neighborhood in a way that reflected the experience of the residents, the team interviewed Mr. Leroy Jeter, a Highland native (please see **Appendix A** for a list of questions). Mr. Jeter grew up in Highland and has been the Highland Neighborhood Association President for seven years. He has been in Spartanburg most of his life and witnessed the changing character of the Highland Neighborhood. He grew up in Highland and instead of moving away, Mr. Jeter decided to stay and work to better the neighborhood. He stated many ongoing issues the community has including drugs and violence. He also said there are issues with the police

and community relations, job opportunities, housing, the aging Bethlehem Center and lack of grocery stores in the area. Mr. Jeter said these problems are worse than ever in his opinion.

He said the community used to be vibrant in the 50s and 60s. There used to be stores, restaurants, a pharmacy, and other mom and pop businesses in the neighborhood. These brought economic benefits as well as community members out onto their porches and walking the streets. He would like to see this happen again. Mr. Jeter said that Stewart Park was a way to renew energy in the community. He also said there needs to be more projects done similar to this to spur new energy and get the residents involved in the Highland Neighborhood according to Mr. Jeter. Getting residents involved has been a challenge. He said that it has been difficult to gain support from the residents to mobilize together for new projects. He wants to find a way to work effectively and productively as a community. The Neighborhood Association only has one meeting a month and it is often via Skype not even in person. Gaining support and getting involvement is a work in progress.

Mr. Jeter spoke of his concerns with housing tenure and food access. Mr. Jeter sees the affordable apartments as a quick fix but not a solution. Mr. Jeter and the rest of the community want to see more single-family homes. Currently, the neighborhood has a high percentage of renters. He and others in the community want more homeownership in the Highland Neighborhood. The group asked Mr. Jeter how he felt about food access for the neighborhood. Mr. Jeter first stated that grocery stores were not within the vicinity of the Highland Community and identified that the nearest grocery store, on S. Church Street, is a Save-A-Lot. This location is approximately a 30-minute walk away from the center of the community according to Google Maps. The other place Mr. Jeter mentioned to get food is at the Family

Dollar, though he emphasized that this is not an adequate food source. Food accessibility is an obvious problem in the neighborhood. He said people only use the gas stations because of the convenience, but he would like to see more healthy food options. The short-term goals Mr. Jeter identified for the neighborhood are to reduce crime and bring more people to the table, through partnerships and getting more community members involved. The long-term goals he stated were to better the housing situation through more single-family homes and increasing homeownership. He does not want to see anymore apartment complexes. He said another long-term priority is to get businesses back in the community to make it more vibrant.

Fortunately, Mr. Jeter said the neighborhood has a good relationship with the Housing Authority. He said the Housing Authority sold the apartment buildings to the City. The rest of Cammie Clagett should come down soon and the remaining apartments will be redeveloped by scattering housing and apartments. The already demolished portion of this housing is now Highlands Crossing, which has 72 rental assisted units. With respect to traffic concerns, Mr. Jeter spoke about speeding as an issue in the area. Beacon Street and Highland Ave. are the worst he said. Norris Street used to be a problem before a speed hump was installed to help prevent speeding by Stewart Park. He said people would like to see more speed humps around the neighborhood to slow down the traffic.

There are a few funds available to the neighborhood that Mr. Jeter mentioned. There is a grant that allows two officers stationed in the area. There is also a grant for a Community Outreach Advocate for the Highland Community (see **Appendix B** for job description). The job is a 32 hour a week full time salaried position funded by United Way in Piedmont. This person may be a good resource for our team to gain more information and insight about the wants and

needs of the neighborhood and its residents. There is also the Spartanburg County Foundation grant that gives funds to organizations. Our team also studied the information collected by a local non-profit organization, Highland Community Working Group that focused on the needs of the community. The group also gathered community level data from the 2015 Highland Community Survey.

In summary, President Leroy Jeter seemed enthusiastic about our focus areas and the Highland Planning Team remained on course with the recommendations for revitalization. The local data available to us through community surveys and non-profit groups also gave us a better, more comprehensive view of the Highland Neighborhood.

## Ordinance Observations

The Highland Neighborhood is predominantly classified as R-6, or general residential (see **Figure 2**). This designation is catered towards older neighborhoods that may have had their initial single-family housing units converted to multi-family and is characterized by medium level of density with a limit of 10 dwelling units per acre. The lots adjacent to the Highland Community in the commercial strip off of John B. White Sr. Blvd. are classified as B-3, or general business district. The Ingles lot targeted for redevelopment, potential growth, and expansion is classified as B-1, or neighborhood shopping. It is catered to meeting the day to day, convenience based needs of the community, but the zoning designation may need altering in order to accommodate the expanded scope of proposed development within the site (Spartanburg Zoning Ordinance, 2017, 27).

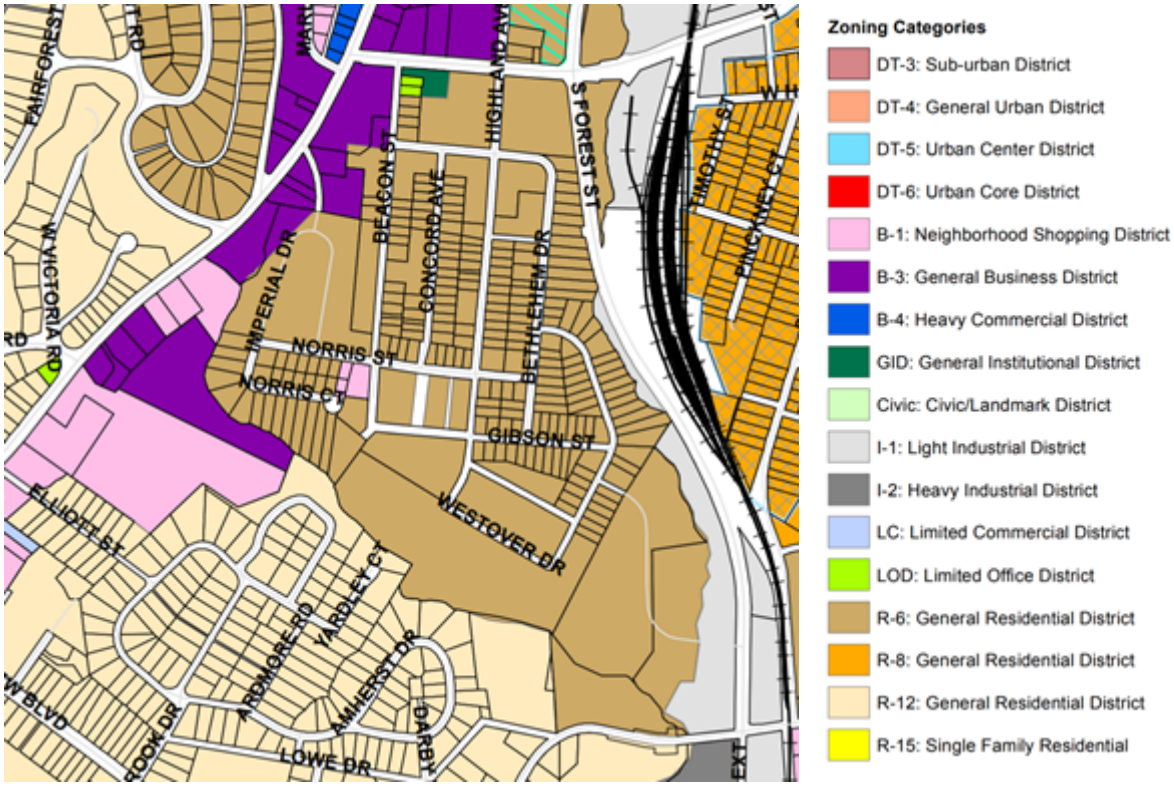


**Figure 2: Zoomed in Zoning for Highland Community**
City of Spartanburg Zoning Map May 2017 (2017). City of Spartanburg. Retrieved on September 20, 2017 from http://www.cityofspartanburg.org/cms_assets/Planning/Zoning%20Map%20May%202017.pdf

The neighborhood itself is not zoned for uses other than residential and Stewart Park has taken the large rectangular plot south of Norris Street including the shopping district. For this reason, there is great motivation for developing the Ingles lot. The benefit of the residential zoning, is the opportunity to increase home ownership within the community on vacant and empty lots. The specifics for these recommendations will be further discussed below.

## Summary

There are many meaningful projects that could spawn from both the opportunities within the community and the weakness that we seek to improve. The following section will address the current conditions within the community, a SWOT analysis, and finally our goals, strategies, and plans for implementation.

## Current Conditions

### Poverty

The federal government defines the threshold of poverty based on household income. Any household with family sizes and incomes as outlined in **Table 1**, seen below, are considered being at or below the poverty level. Households might be working and earning income but irrespective of their earnings, they may still find themselves in economic stress or poverty. This could be due to a household having many dependents. For single individuals, it could simply be because the earnings are not enough to sustain them. Many aged or retired individuals could get their income from a government safety net such as Supplemental Security Income, which may not be enough to take care of housing, food, electricity and, for individuals without Medicaid, health care.

| U.S. Census Bureau Poverty Thresholds, 2015 | |
|---|---|
| **Size of Family Unit** | **Poverty Threshold (in Dollars)** |
| One person (unrelated individual) | 12,082 |
| Under age 65 | 12,331 |
| Age 65 or older | 11,367 |
| Two people | 15,391 |
| Householder under age 65 | 15,952 |
| Householder age 65 or older | 14,342 |
| Three people | 18,871 |
| Three people with two related children | 19,096 |
| Four people | 24,257 |
| Four people with two related children | 24,036 |
| Five people | 28,741 |
| Five people with two related children | 28,995 |
| Six people | 32,542 |
| Six people with two related children | 33,342 |
| Seven people | 36,998 |
| Seven people with two related children | 38,421 |
| Eight people | 41,029 |
| Eight people with two related children | 43,230 |
| Nine people or more | 49,177 |

**Table 1: Poverty threshold by size of family and number of related children under 18 years**
Source: U.S Census Bureau, 2015

**Figure 3** shows the number of families, individuals, and households that are earning incomes at or below the poverty level in Spartanburg County. As seen on **Figure 3**, identified by the star, the Highland Neighborhood is one of four neighborhoods with the highest level of poverty in the county.

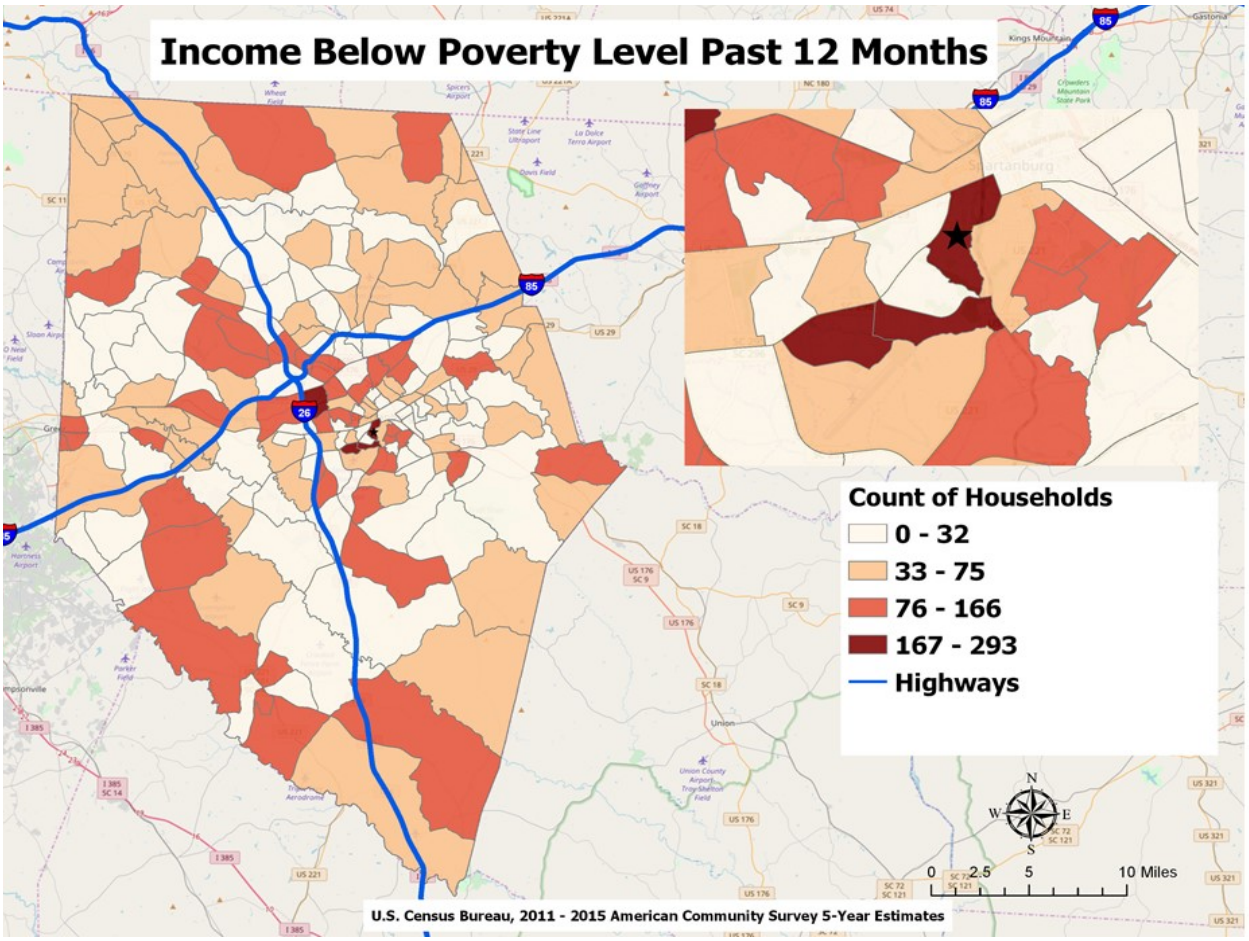


**Figure 3: Percent with income at or below poverty rate**
Source**:** U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

The **Table 2** below shows level of incomes, the count of households, and percentage in the Highland. This table depicts that there is a high concentration of households that are at or below the threshold of poverty. Collectively, the Highland Neighborhood and the City have the highest concentration of economically challenged households in Spartanburg County. The majority of the neighborhood, 48%, earns an annual income of less than $10,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Even when you control for age and dependents, the smallest threshold limit for below poverty is $12,000 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). This number unambiguously shows the dire economic situation of the Highland Neighborhood.

| Income | Count | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Less than $10,000 | 228 | 48 |
| $10,000 to $14,999 | 60 | 13 |
| $15,000 to $19,999 | 57 | 12 |
| $20,000 to $24,999 | 30 | 6 |
| $25,000 to $29,999 | 14 | 3 |
| $30,000 to $34,999 | 7 | 1 |
| $35,000 to $39,999 | 42 | 9 |
| $40,000 to $44,999 | 0 | 0 |
| $45,000 to $49,999 | 8 | 2 |
| $50,000 to $59,999 | 33 | 7 |
| $60,000 to $74,999 | 18 | 4 |
| $75,000 to $99,999 | 0 | 0 |
| $100,000 to $124,999 | 0 | 0 |
| $125,000 to $149,999 | 0 | 0 |
| $150,000 to $199,999 | 0 | 0 |
| $200,000 or more | 0 | 0 |

**Table 2: Household income in the past 12 months**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

In addition to household earning, another important key indicator of the dire poverty situation in Highland is the household median income. Over the years, the statistics show that median income at all levels (nationwide, state, county, and block group) have been increasing. Rising from a meager $9,868 in 2013 to $11,708 in 2015, the Highland Neighborhood has also seen some increase in its median income. However, this increase could be due to natural inflation. To put this figure in context, the median income nationwide as of 2015 was $55,775, nearly 5 times higher than the Highland Neighborhood's median income. The Spartanburg County and state median incomes are almost 4 times higher the Highland's household median income. This comparison shows that the poverty situation is exclusively worse in the Highland. Therefore, the Highland Neighborhood requires intense and strategic interventions for revitalization. (**Figure 4** shows median income at all levels in the United States).

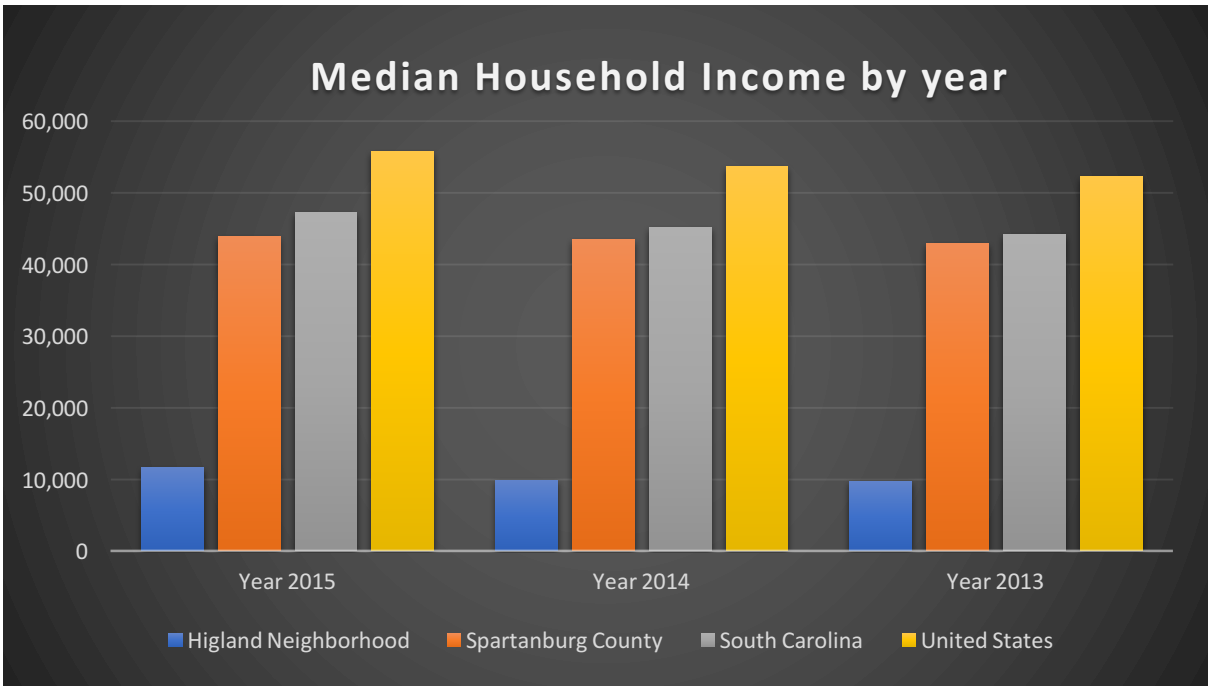


**Figure 4: Median Household Income in the Highland Neighborhood, Spartanburg County, SC, and U.S.**
Source**:** U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

## Education

In addition to the monetary indicators, a key indicator for the concentration of poverty in Highland is the education level of the neighborhood residents. To achieve upward mobility, having a GED or college degree is often crucial. Towards this end, the level of education in a community gives an idea of the income levels of the residents as well as the likelihood of achieving upward mobility. Social networks can help create opportunities for a neighborhood by making role models available for the younger generation, support for the vulnerable populations and even job opportunities for individuals. Likewise, the decline of a neighborhood could be due to such neighborhoods losing its social capital over time. The latter trend can be seen in Highland through the decline in residents who have higher levels of educational attainment. As of 2013, there was a reported sum of 19 individuals with a Bachelor's degree (U.S Census Bureau 2015). In 2015, there was only 1 reported resident with a Bachelor's degree

in Highland (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). This is a similar trend of residents with Associate degrees. The number of residents with Associate degrees dropped from 38 to 19 from 2003 to 2015 (U.S Census Bureau). While there are some efforts currently in place, there needs to be more incentives to keep residents with higher levels of education in Highland. See **Figure 5** for the decline in number of residents with higher levels of education in the Highland.

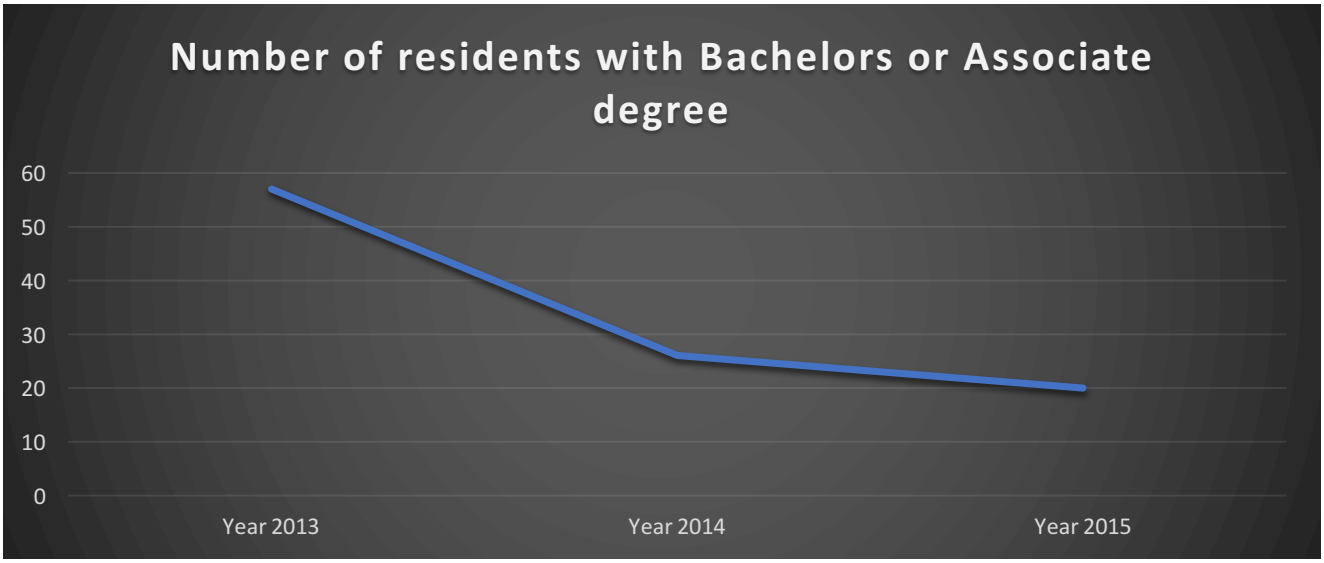


**Figure 5: Drop in residents with higher degree in the Highland Neighborhood**
Source U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

**Figure 6** below shows the large difference in educational attainment in the Highland Neighborhood in comparison with the rest of Spartanburg County.

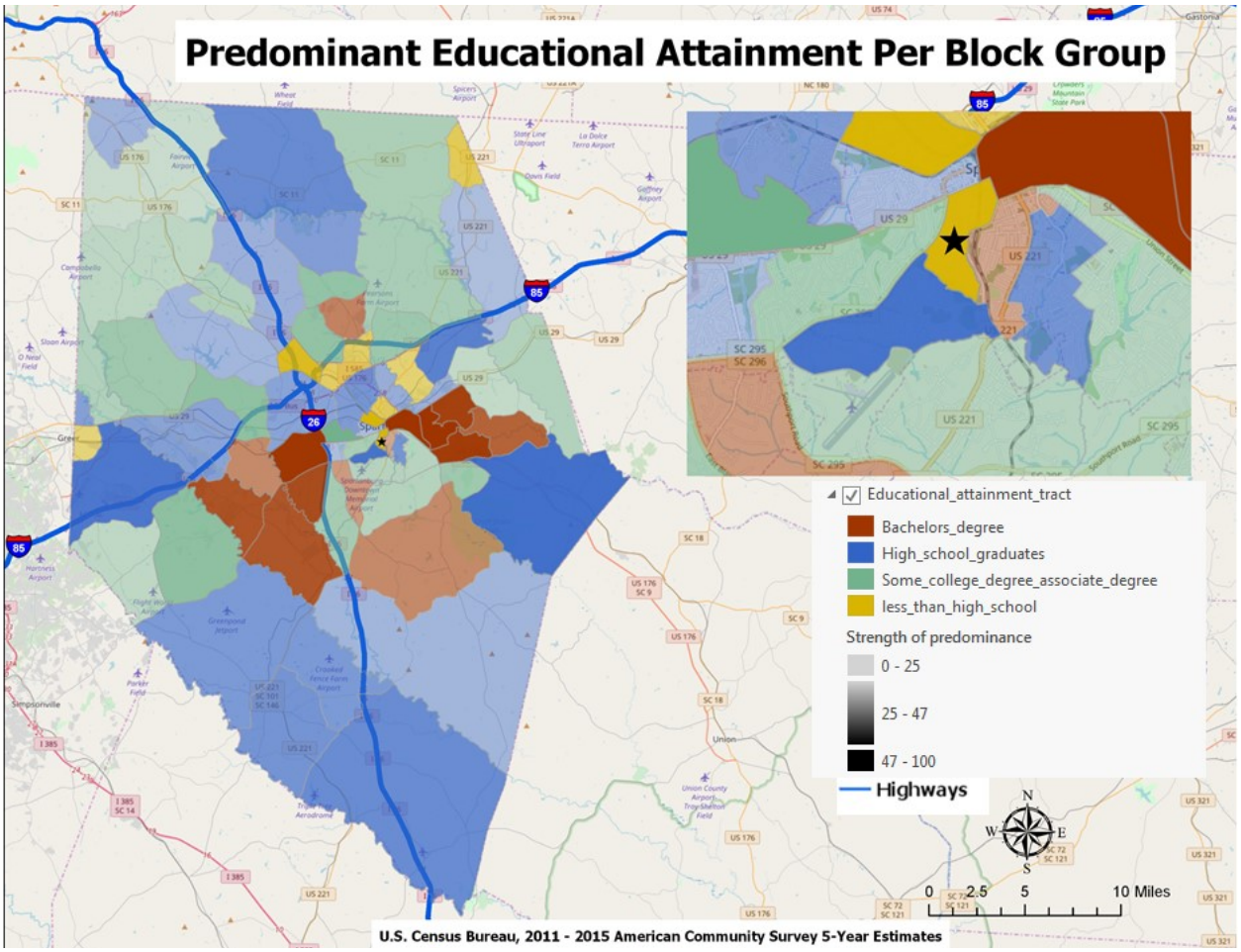


**Figure 6: Predominance of Educational Attainment per Block group**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

## Housing

The housing situation of an area helps portray how well the said location is doing. Affluent neighborhoods usually have high property values and higher owner-occupied residents compared to less affluent neighborhoods that often have low property values and many renters. The tenure situation in the Highland Neighborhood is one in which renters dominate and few owner-occupied homes exist. Neighborhood stability is highly influenced by tenure (see **Figure 7** below).

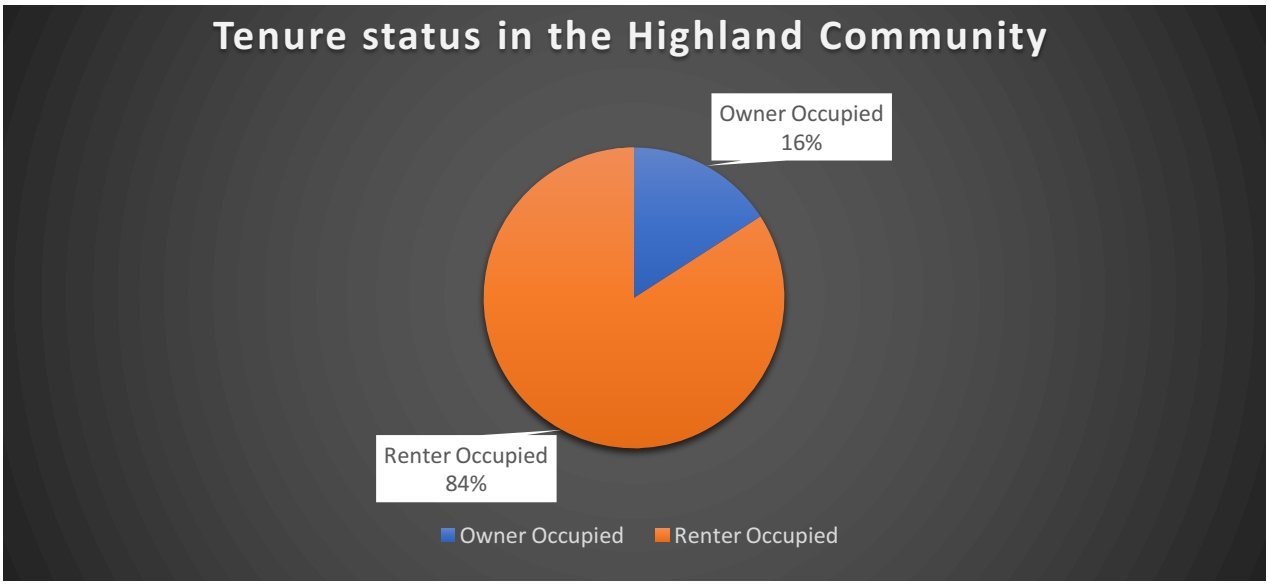


**Figure 7: Housing Tenure Status in Highland Community**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

**Figure 8,** below, shows the housing tenure in Spartanburg County. The star identifies the Highland Neighborhood. As seen on the figure, the Highland Neighborhood as well as many other parts of the City of Spartanburg are largely renters.

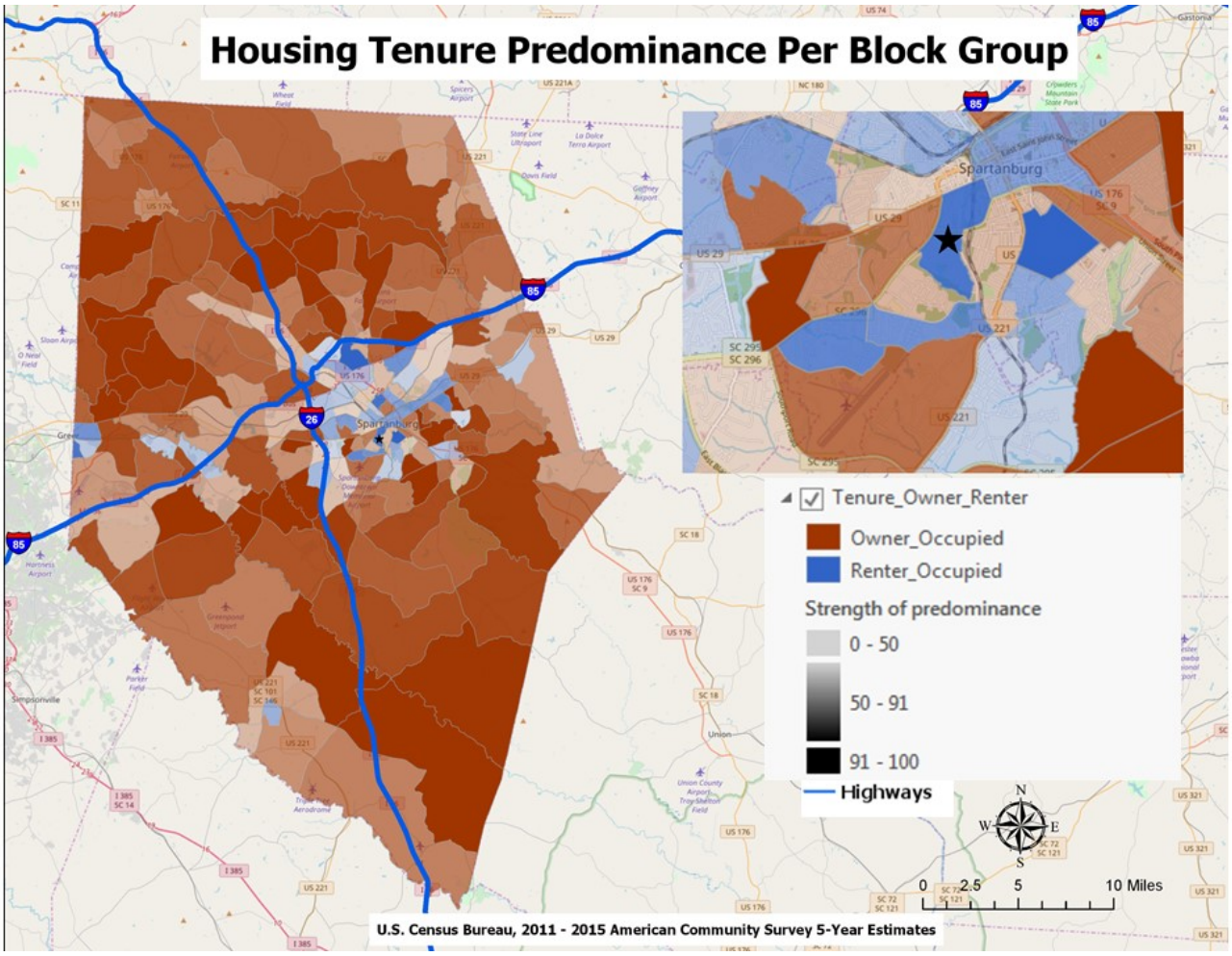


**Figure 8: Tenure Measured by Predominance per Block Group**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

## Home Value

The home value in Highland has been decreasing: a pattern that highlights the blight in the neighborhood. At the national, state, and county level, median home values have been increasing. Between 2013 and 2015, the home value for Spartanburg County increased from $121,300 to $123,800 (U.S Census Bureau, 2015). Although the increase was not huge, it at least showed how stable the housing prices in the County has been in this period. On the other hand, median home values in Highland saw a 26% decrease from 2013 to 2015, falling from $100,900 to $72,000 (U.S Census Bureau, 2015). While there have not been many studies on

what caused this huge decline, the general effect of such drop has negatively impacted investments in the neighborhood. When home values drop, financial institutions are reluctant to finance mortgages in such neighborhoods, given the increased risk. Thus, in the event of foreclosure, for example, a bank might not be able to recoup the loan they gave to the borrower from resale of the house as the value could potentially drop even further. Similarly, insurance companies are reluctant to finance those homes because, should the borrower default, the company might potentially have to repay financial institutions the difference between how much a house was worth and its current value. The outcome of such disinvestment is continued blight of neighborhoods until strategic measures are put into place to ensure home values to rise or at least stabilize. Below, **Figure 9** compares the median home values in the Highland Neighborhood, Spartanburg County, South Carolina and the United States.

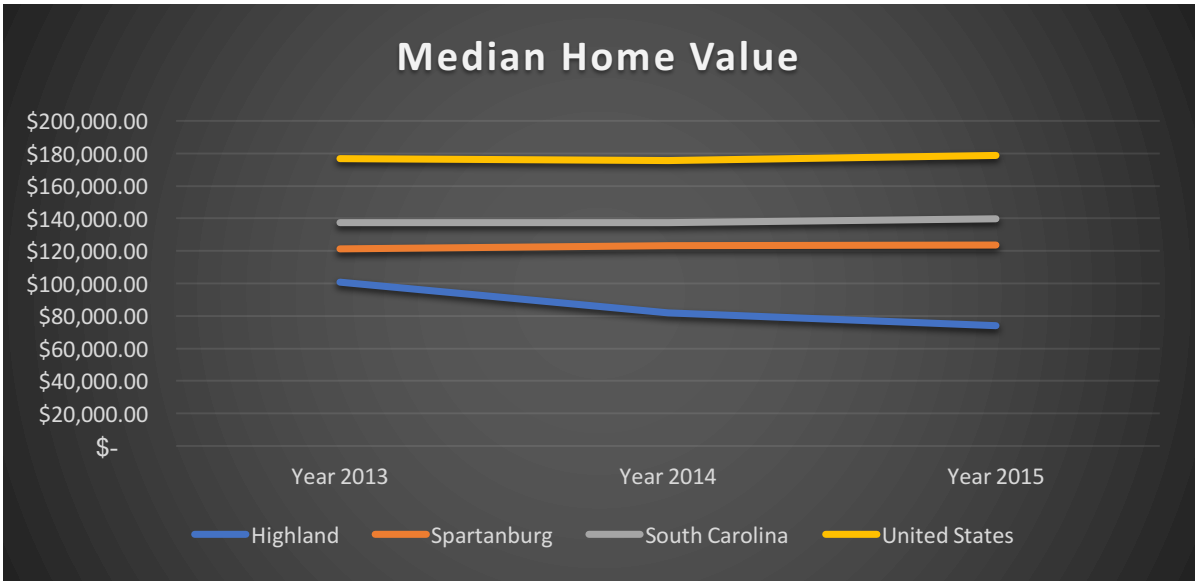


**Figure 9: Median home values between 2013 and 2015**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

## Vacant Homes

A contributory factor to the decline of home values are vacant homes. One reason is because vacant homes that are dilapidated can become hubs for criminal activity. Currently, there are public housing units in the Highland Neighborhood that are vacant awaiting demolition. The decision to tear down these vacant public housing units could be crucial in eradicating the criminal activity. Considering the ratio of total housing units to the number of vacant houses, the Highland Neighborhood is one the top 15 neighborhoods in Spartanburg County with vacant housing. **Figure 10** below shows the total number of vacant houses in the Highland Neighborhood, indicated by the star, in relation to Spartanburg County.

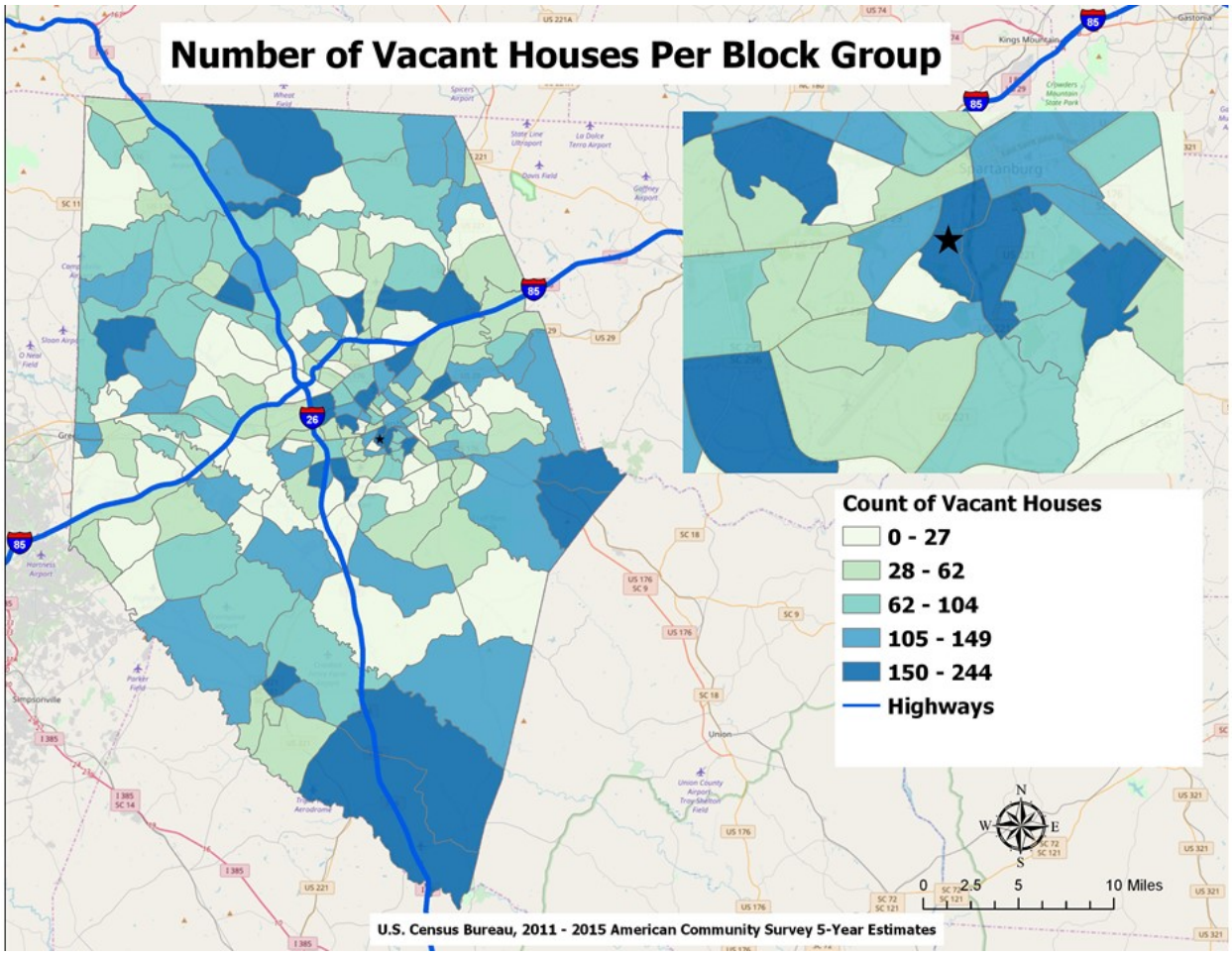


**Figure 10: Vacant Housing in Highland**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

## Racial Dynamics

A mixture of different incomes, housing types, ages and races can help promote a healthy neighborhood. According to the Scientific American magazine, being around a diverse group of people makes us more diligent, creative and harder-working (Phillips, 2014). The Highland Neighborhood suffers from a lack of diversity. As seen in the map below in **Figure 11**, the Highland Neighborhood is mostly Black/African American. Many of the surrounding neighborhoods are more diverse as noted by the lighter colors below.

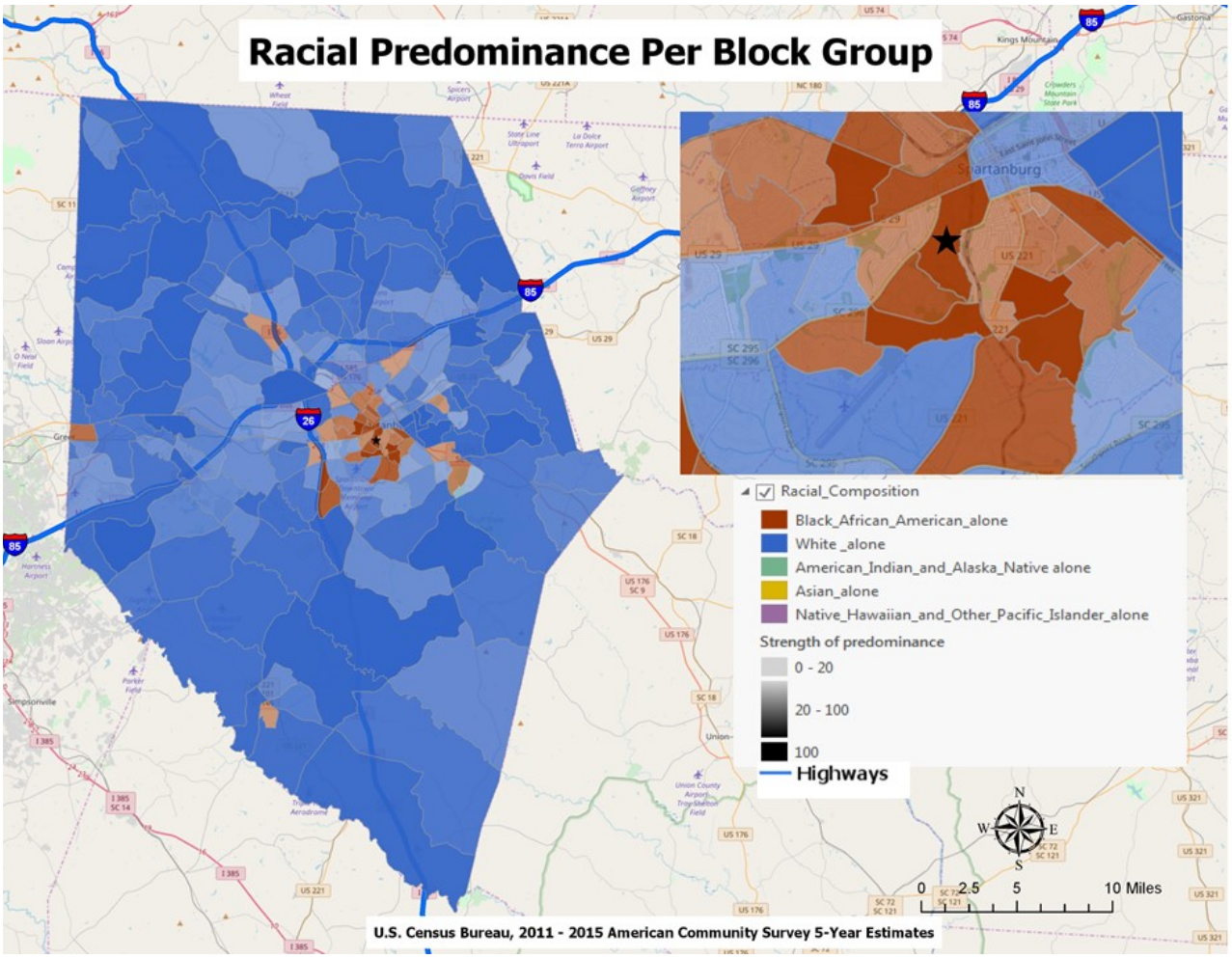


**Figure 11: Predominance of Racial Groups per Block Group**
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015

## SWOT Analysis

As we finished gathering data on the current conditions of the Highland community, we generated a SWOT analysis to organize our findings. A SWOT analysis gives a brief overview of the conditions of an area, listing the strengths of an area, weaknesses of the areas, opportunities for improvement, and threats/challenges to implementing those changes. What follows is the SWOT analysis that our group generated after the data collection step.

**Strengths-**

- *Pride and sense of place* - There is a robust African American population with many families being multi-generational. Neighborhood pride and sense of place is beneficial when trying to mobilize support for revitalization projects. Community members will want to be involved and participate to help better their beloved neighborhood.
- *Community spaces* - Bethlehem Center is a gathering place as well as a haven for the community. The newly renovated Stewart Park was identified by Mr. Jeter as a project that helped rejuvenate the neighborhood. The soup kitchen is an invaluable resource for the neighborhood being that it has a large portion of residents living at or below the poverty level.
- *Large community population available for feedback* – Large community feedback means there can be significant buy-in from the residents. Feedback provides policy-makers with the input they need to make informed decisions. This allows the City to see what works and what does not for the neighborhood and adapt plans and project in accordance with the feedback. Community feedback and input allows for the creation of more comprehensive plans.

- *Several existing community partners* (Spartanburg Housing Authority/City of Spartanburg/ Spartanburg Police Department to name a few) – Community partnerships are invaluable. It is nearly impossible to achieve anything by yourself. Community partnerships allow for more funding, financing opportunities, and provides different perspective on issues. Community partnerships are key to long-term sustainability.

**Weaknesses-**

- *Lack of funding for projects* - Federal funding for local governments and grants is dwindling and has been in decline for years. The City of Spartanburg has a limited budget and many other projects that need funding.
- *Vacant public housing buildings* - vacant housing leads to a gap in the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. The vacant housing leaves an area without surveillance that can foster criminal activity. Vacant housing units are also underutilized spaces that could serve as affordable housing for residents. The community has relayed that it wants more affordable housing and single-family homes. This area could be used to address this need.
- *Rundown public housing still in use* - Rundown housing leaves residents feeling underserved. The appearance of rundown houses also causes the “Broken Window” effect. People will not want to move into the area because it appears uncared for as well as unsafe.

- *Lacking housing stock variety* - Stable housing situations is vital for people to be able to keep jobs. A good housing situation is one of the key ways for people to be able to rise out of poverty.
- *Lacking affordable housing* – The community is largely stricken with poverty. Most residents are renters. Community surveys, reports and community leaders have said that they want more homeownership. To do this, affordable housing must be available.
- *Fear of crime* - The Highland Neighborhood has some physical barriers that increase the fear of crime. Vacant homes can often be a hub for criminal activity. The lack of connectivity to the rest of the area causes the feeling of isolation. There is a negative perception of police and community relations.
- *Poverty* - The density of public housing buildings in the neighborhood causes a lot of people to live clustered in poverty. Concentrated poverty not only affects the neighborhood in terms of its safety, educational attainment, networking, health and various other factors, but it also affects those not living in the neighborhood as an unbalanced tax burden. The neighborhood is isolated from job opportunities so people in poverty who often do not have cars do not have occupation opportunities in walking distance from their homes.
- *Lack of education (vocational or collegiate)* - Lack of education often relates to high poverty rates. Based on Natalia Rosario's (2016) research it also seems that the children in the neighborhood are also not getting quality education due to too many children, which causes teachers to not focus on every child.

- *High government benefit usage among community members (SNAP)* - Because of the high poverty rate in the neighborhood, many people are forced to use the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Even with SNAP's impact, almost one in seven American households experience food insecurity (USDA 2014).
- *Lack of transit options after regular hours (nights/ weekends)* - Lower wage jobs are often shift jobs. The hours for shift work can be outside of the regular work day range of hours. Since the bus systems do not run past the normal hours, many people are left without the ability to get to their jobs. This is extremely limiting to the residents because they may be unable to take these certain jobs because of this restriction. This is also very restricting for people using the bus as a main mode of transportation because people will not be able to travel on weekends. This limits a person's ability to run errands on Sundays or participate in social activities.
- *Isolation*- Historically, the community has been culturally and geographically isolated from the rest of the city. Also as a historically African American community, the Highland Neighborhood was the target of segregation and discrimination for much of its history, which led to a deficit of resources and concentrations of poverty. These issues led to the stigmatization of the area by those living outside the region and deterred outside interaction with the community. Geographically, the presence of only two access points to enter the community and the residential nature of the community results in little reason for non-residents to visit the community.

**Opportunities-**

- *Build connectivity* – There is the opportunity to build a pedestrian and bicycle bridge that would connect the Highland Neighborhood to surrounding areas. Isolation is a problem for residents of the Highland Neighborhood because it restricts job opportunities to walking to desired destination areas. The bridge would connect the neighborhood to the proposed mixed-use, mixed-income development on the vacant Ingles lot. This bridge would allow community members to easily walk or bike outside to other areas as well as outside community members to visit the Highland Neighborhood.
- *Spur economic development* - Building a mixed-use, mixed-income development in the vacant Ingles lot is an opportunity to spur economic development. The proposed development is an opportunity for the Highland Neighborhood to have retail and office space walking distance from their home. In addition to retail and office, the center would have mixed-income housing units. Mixed-income housing is extremely beneficial because it will help separate and break up the clusters of poverty. There would be green space in the center to increase a sense of community and serve as a place to foster relationships across surrounding areas.
- *Reduce vacant land space* - Vacant land can be utilized and developed into single-family homes, retail, office or green space. Pursuant with Rosario's report, the community wants more single-family homes to increase homeownership (2016). Creating retail or office space could produce job opportunities or points of interest for neighborhood residents.
- *Increase access to resources* - Including a benefit bank near the community, like in the proposed mixed-use development, would provide better access to resources for

residents. The Butterfly Foundation has created a benefit bank host site that allows residents to access support programs like food stamps, voter registration, Medicaid and more all in one location. This is an excellent model to follow in the Highland Neighborhood. As expressed in Rosario's report, residents of the neighborhood would like better access to resources (2016).

- *Provide possible educational training (GED/ Vocational classes)* - Education and job training is important to help people out of poverty and reduce crime. Some programs the Highland Neighborhood could implement would be financial stability training, interview tips, help with job applications, GED resources, and basic health and wellness education.
- *Implement traffic calming measures* - Traffic calming measures will increase safety by slowing down cars and making the roads a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- *Introduce healthy food programs* – Visiting the different gas stations in proximity to the Highland Neighborhood identified the challenge of introducing healthy food programs. Some gas station owners were absentee, unable to be reached, or were just uninterested in trying to sell more healthy food options. Mr. Jeter identified healthy food options as a challenge for the neighborhood. Finding local gas stations that are interested in selling more fruits and vegetables is an opportunity for the neighborhood to have better access to healthy food, yet it is also a Threat due to potential buy-in challenges.

- *Promote police community relationships* (National Night Out/ BIGS IN BLUE Program) – Promoting strong police -community relationships are difficult when there is distrust. The fear of danger and crime in the Highland Neighborhood likely deters police from wanting to have a very strong presence. By initiating police-community programs or hosting events this could help build trust and promote police presence in the neighborhood.
- *Reduce crim*e - Integrating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts in new and existing regulations could help reduce crime in the Highland Neighborhood. As seen in many other cities like North Charleston, SC, Montgomery, AL and many more, the CPTED principles are used to help reduce crime. These principles can be implemented into new or current regulations. Policing is easier when the environment is suitable for safety like lighting requirements or sidewalks to direct the path of pedestrians.

**Threats-**

- *Inability to get project funds or support* – There is the threat that the City of Spartanburg and local organizations will not be able to provide the necessary funds to support new projects. There is a need for stronger networking and more partnerships to attain the necessary funding for revitalization and renewal projects for the Highland Neighborhood.

- *Losing sense of place*- A major threat we are concerned about is the neighborhood losing its historic character it has maintained for many years. Too many developments or changes proposed for Highland Neighborhood would exacerbate the threat.
- *Lack of community partners to facilitate changes*- It is easier to bring about change when a neighborhood has strong partners, this just increases the scope to reach different hierarchy of the planning department. Highland lacks partners that can help facilitate this change and hence it is a threat.
- *Negative Stigma towards the area*- Highland has been striving to achieve better recognition for the improvements it is making within the community. The community is making strides in community involvement and safety but the outside perception has continued to be negative towards the neighborhood, limiting outside attention and investment.

## Mission Statement

Our mission for Highland is to increase the health, safety and public welfare of the community. This includes physical health as well as fiscal health with the desire to spark economic development and revitalize the neighborhood.

## Final Plan Proposal Summary

We have identified many issues in the Highland Neighborhood including safety, connectivity, traffic, economic development, job opportunities, housing, and available healthy food. We hope to address these issues with a plan to construct a mixed-use, mixed-income development, a bridge to connect the Highland Community to the mixed-use, mixed-income development, and encourage the sale of healthy food in local gas stations. The final project

follows the model created by Mark Miller from University of Southern Mississippi seen below (**Figure 12**):

***Figure 12:*** **Economic Development Factors**
(Image Source: Miller, Mark. *Economic Development for Everyone: Creating Jobs, Growing Businesses, & Building Resilience in Low-Income Communities*. *Economic Development for Everyone: Creating Jobs, Growing Businesses, & Building Resilience in Low-Income Communities)*

The mixed-use, mixed-income development will provide job opportunities, housing and places of interest walking distance from the neighborhood to ignite economic development. It will have a community garden that will provide some fruits and vegetables as well as increase community buy-in and participation. The bridge will provide the connectivity needed for the community to access surrounding available resources.

## Goals and Strategies Summary

In order to fulfill our mission statement, we propose the following goals and measures to improve the Highland Community.

- ***Revitalize Highland Neighborhood Through Housing Policies and Strategies***
- ***Implement Traffic Calming Measures to Increase Pedestrian Safety***
- ***Increase Access and Affordability to Healthy Food***
- ***Increase Connectivity Between the Highland Neighborhood and Surrounding Areas***
- ***Bring Commercial Activity Back to the Area***

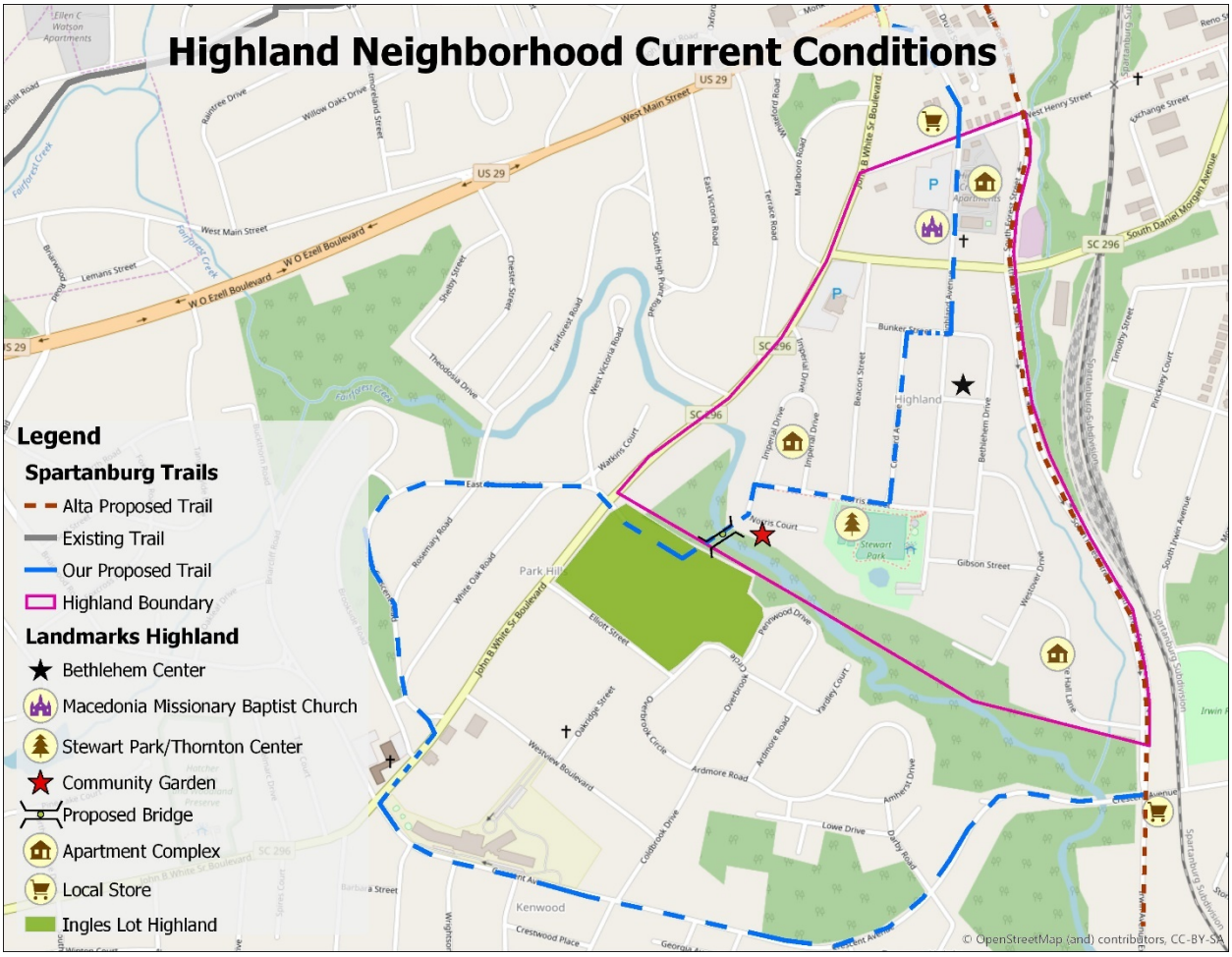


**Figure 13: Map showing site location for some of our proposals**
Source: Zemin Dhanani, ArcGIS.

The visual above (**Figure 13)** shows some of our proposals for the neighborhood. It highlights the location of Ingles lot which is the site for our mixed-use development. The bridge

symbol over the Fairforest Creek is the proposed location for the bridge that we believe will improve connectivity for the neighborhood to the proposed site of mixed-use development and also to John B. White Sr. Blvd. The grocery cart symbols are potential location for implementing the healthy food initiative. The red star is a potential location for the community garden. Finally, it proposes a 3-mile addition to the current trail system proposed by Alta Design, which fails to include the Highland community (see the Bridge section later in this proposal). This multi-use trail passes by some key areas within the community as well as safely connects the Highland Residents to outside amenities. This is a recommended path that should be modified based on the opinion of the residents within the Highland Community.

Below are the goals with the summary strategies for each key project proposed within this proposal (**Table 3.1- 3.5**)

| Strategy | Partners | Funding opportunities |
|---|---|---|
| ***Goal: Revitalize Highland Neighborhood through housing policies and strategies*** | | |
| Increase homeownership by building on vacant lots and promoting single family residential development | Spartanburg Housing Authority; City of Spartanburg; Spartanburg County; Highland Neighborhood Association; National Low-Income Housing Coalition | Community Reinvestment Act, HOME; Investment Partnership; South Carolina Community Loan Fund; Mary Black Foundation |
| Improve affordable housing supply and quality by redeveloping existing units and include in mixed-use | Spartanburg Housing Authority; City of Spartanburg; Spartanburg County; Highland Neighborhood Association; National Low-Income Housing Coalition | LIHTC; Choice Neighborhood; Mary Black Foundation; Fuller Center for Housing; South Carolina Community Loan Fund; Community Housing Partners |
| Rehab or replace vacant housing and vacant lots | Spartanburg Housing Authority; City of Spartanburg; Spartanburg County; Highland Neighborhood Association; National Low-Income Housing Coalition | LIHTC; CDBG; South Carolina Community Loan Fund; Habitat for Humanity; Fuller Center for Housing |

**Table 3.1: Housing Goal Summary**

| Strategy | Key Partners | Funding Opportunities |
|---|---|---|
| ***Goal: Implement traffic calming measures to increase pedestrian safety*** | | |
| Adopting specific measures: speed humps, speed feedback signs and signage on streets that are concerns for the neighborhood (Highland Ave. and Beacon) | City of Spartanburg and Highland Neighborhood | City of Spartanburg |

**Table 3.2: Traffic Goal Summary**

| Strategy | Key Partners | Funding Opportunities* |
|---|---|---|
| ***Goal: Increase Access and Affordability to Healthy Food*** | | |
| Find partnering corner stores who have a willingness to carry produce or allow produce sales to occur on premise. | City of Spartanburg and South Carolina DHEC | Not Applicable |
| Once locations are chosen, find distributors, coolers for display, and merchandizing/ marketing tools. | City of Spartanburg; South Carolina DHEC; Hub City; Store Owners; Local Farmers | FINI; Community Food Projects; Voices for Healthy Kids; HHS; HFFI & LEAF |
| Provide monetary aid and periodic check in help to ensure the program takes off and continues. | City of Spartanburg; South Carolina DHEC; Hub City; Highland Residents; Volunteers | FINI; Community Food Projects; Voices for Healthy Kids; HHS; HFFI & LEAF |

**Table 3.3: Food Access Goal Summary**

* See comprehensive list in the Healthy Food Initiative Section for a more detailed breakdown of opportunities

Note: Please also see Healthy Food Initiative Section for a stepwise strategic plan

| Strategy | Key Partners | Funding Opportunities |
|---|---|---|
| ***Goal: Increase Connectivity between the Highland Neighborhood and Surrounding Areas*** | | |
| Build a bridge to connect the Highland Neighborhood to the proposed mixed-use mixed-income development. | City of Spartanburg; SCDOT; Spartanburg County Parks; Partners for Active Living; Healthy South Carolina Initiative; Palmetto Cycling Coalition | City of Spartanburg, SCDOT, SCDHEC, TIGER Grant, Appalachian COG, TA, CMAQ, HSIP, NHPP, STBG, RTP |
| Connect the bridge to a multi-use path to complement the existing and recommended trail network proposed by Alta Design Consulting Firm | City of Spartanburg; SCDOT; Spartanburg County Parks; Partners for Active Living; Healthy South Carolina Initiative; Palmetto Cycling Coalition | City of Spartanburg; SCDOT; SCDHEC; TIGER Grant; Northside Development Group; The Appalachian COG |

**Table 3.4: Bridge Goal Summary**

| Strategy | Key Partners | Funding Opportunities |
|---|---|---|
| ***Goal: Increase Access to Healthy, Affordable Food*** | | |
| Construct Grocery Store | City of Spartanburg; South Carolina DHEC; Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce | Private Industry or Private funds; Spartanburg County Foundation; Mary Black Foundation; Spartanburg Regional Foundation; Hub City; United Way; Chapman Cultural Center |
| Construct Community Kitchen | City of Spartanburg; Butterfly Foundation | Spartanburg County Foundation; Spartanburg Regional Foundation; Mary Black Foundation; United Way; Chapman Cultural Center; Gates Foundation; Bloomberg Philanthropies |
| ***Goal: Bring Commercial Activity Back to the Area*** | | |
| Establish Neighborhood Scale Commercial Development | City of Spartanburg; Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce | Private Business District; City of Spartanburg |
| ***Goal: Increase Housing Stock*** | | |
| Create Mixed Income Multifamily Units | City of Spartanburg; Housing Authority; Project Developers; Nehemiah Corporation; Homes of Hope | Spartanburg Housing Authority; City of Spartanburg; CDBG/ HOME Funds; Nehemiah Corporation |

**Table 3.5: Mixed-use Goal Summary**

## Housing Strategy

Review of various housing revitalization efforts have shown different jurisdictions combine different funding sources to fund their housing projects. The federal government's housing devolution programs mean state and local governments can put in place strategies to raise funding for housing projects in their jurisdiction. It also means state and local governments can allocate federal funds and grants to community development and housing issues that they prioritize. This has given room for programs such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, Community Reinvestment Act, Housing vouchers, and Choice Neighborhood programs to play a key role in funding majority of low-income housing. Another great resource Highland has

available is the Spartanburg Housing Authority. The Spartanburg Housing Authority (SHA) is a funding source that provides affordable housing options in the City of Spartanburg and Spartanburg County. The SHA assists the residents through many different programs including vouchers, tax credits and homeownership. Unfortunately, since many housing programs are federally funded any cut in federal housing funding affects the availability of funds for these programs. For example, the current administration has proposed massive cuts in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding. This would affect funds available to state and local governments for their CDBG programs. Also, because almost all jurisdictions in the United States face housing problems, the funding for these programs are competitive. Further, application for these programs requires a long administrative process which could sometimes delay the availability of funds. Irrespective of these challenges, federal sources remain a major option for revitalizing the Highland Neighborhood. Currently, there are several federal programs that could be taken advantage of to provide funds for the implementation of the proposed solutions for Highland. These funding sources include: Community Development Block Grant, Low Income Housing Tax Credit, Community Reinvestment Act, Choice Neighborhood, and HOME Investment Partnership Program.

A common trend in community revitalization has been state and local authorities raising funds through non-federal sources to address their community development and housing needs. This trend has seen many non-profit organizations playing key roles in revitalizing communities. The funding for these non-profit agencies come from several sources which include federal funding. Thus, the funding requirements of some federal grants stipulate that a share of the grants should go to the non-profit organization. However, beyond federal funding

sources, non-profit organizations still manage to play a key role in financing and supporting projects in distressed low-income neighborhoods. Towards this end, it is the objective of this project to seek partnership and funding from non-profit organizations operating in Spartanburg. Our research revealed several potential non-profit organizations who could play a role in supporting the proposals we have made. Among these non-profit organizations are:

- Community Housing Partners – This non-profit is helping to build the Highland Crossing Apartments. Their main mission is to help homeless people gain access to safe and affordable shelter. With their history in Spartanburg and Highland to be specific, they present a potential source of funding for our proposed project.
- Mary Black Foundation – Mary Black is a non-profit organization committed to health, wellness and success of the Spartanburg County. Housing and health are very much related; hence, Mary Black Foundation's grants could be a source of funding for our proposals. In the past, a majority of Mary Black Foundation's grants have not gone directly into housing however, they have awarded North Side Development Group funds to support their HUD Choice Neighborhood Grant proposals.
- Fuller Center for Housing – The Fuller Center for housing is a faith-based non-profit organization which creates a partnership and provides support in building decent affordable homes or renovating existing homes.
- Habitat for Humanity – Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit organization that partners with the Spartanburg County to build affordable homes in Spartanburg. Their main goal is to create a community with no substandard housing. They do present an opportunity for partnership in realizing our objectives.

- South Carolina Community Loan Fund (SCCLF) – SSCLF is a non-profit organization that provides affordable housing loans. They help make available capital or credit for acquisition, predevelopment, construction, and rehabilitation. They provide loans as low as $10,000 which could rise in excess of $1,000, 000. Their objective and mission make them a potential option in terms of funding for our proposals.

## Traffic Calming Strategy and Implementation

Our proposed traffic calming measures for the neighborhood includes the following three measures:

1. Speed humps
2. Stop Signage
3. Speed Feedback Signs

The **Figure 14** below, shows the two main streets that are becoming a concern for the neighborhood, as pointed out by Mr. Jeter. The two streets are Highland Avenue. and Beacon Street. The city recently implemented one speed hump on Norris Street near Stewart Park, which has not been an issue for the neighborhood according to Mr. Jeter. Based on this we are proposing five speed bumps on both these roads, a speed feedback sign on Highland Avenue near Bethlehem Center, and stop signage at every intersection of the neighborhood, as shown in the **Figure 14** below.

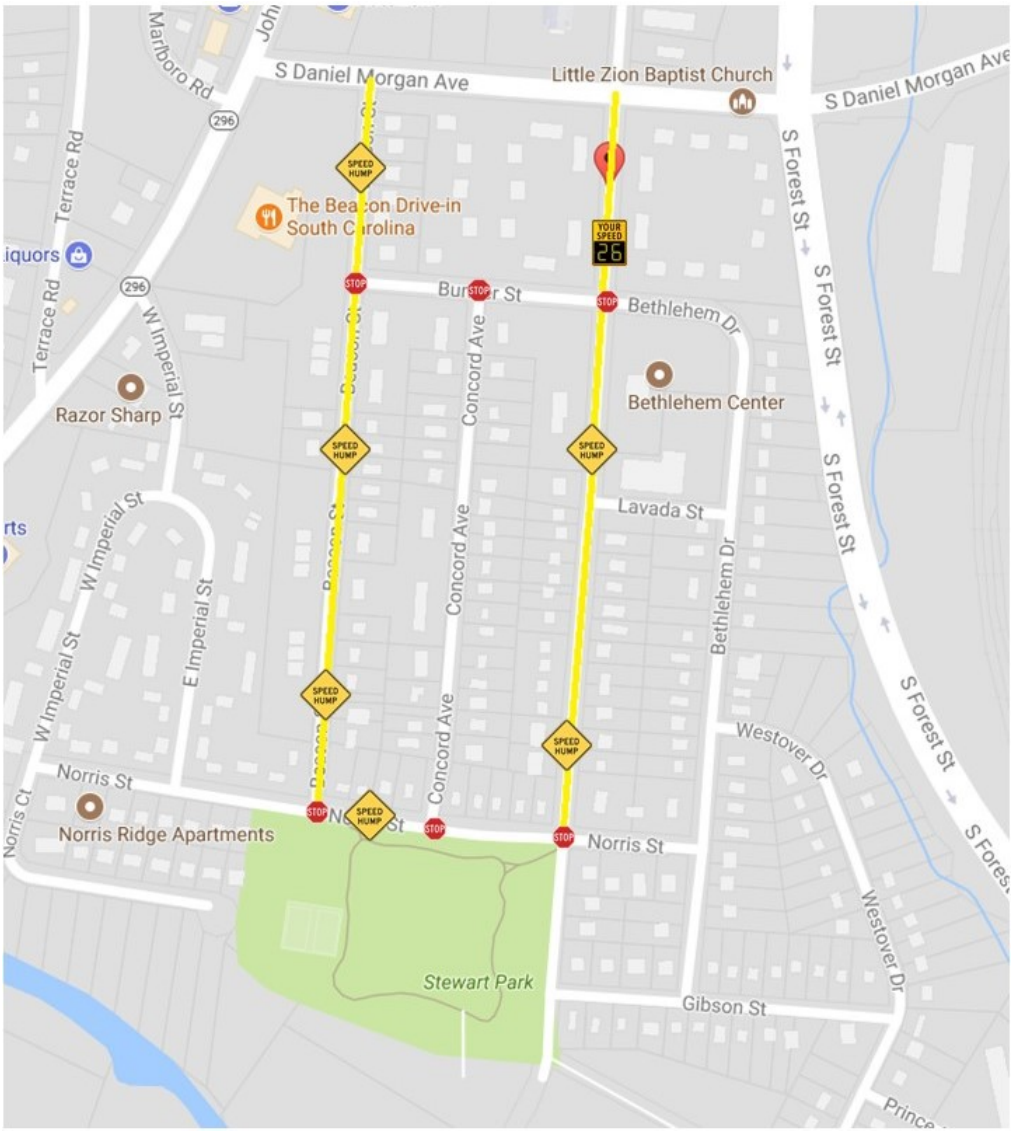


**Figure 14: Proposed location of the traffic calming measures**
Source: Zemin Dhanani, Google Maps

Our goal with the above traffic calming measures is to keep the speed at or below 25mph within the neighborhood. We believe the above measures would facilitate this goal for the neighborhood. These measures will help in addressing traffic related issues (especially speeding) in the neighborhood and also will help increase pedestrian activity within the neighborhood and increase safety.

## Possible Funding Sources

The greatest factor that was considered in coming up with the above measure was the cost of implementing these strategies. Based on the practicality of acquiring the budget, we opted for the above strategies and we believe these can be readily implemented The strategies we propose do not cost a lot in comparison to the other traffic calming measures, such as raised crosswalks ($10,000).

The **Table 4** below shows the cost of the traffic measures we propose for the neighborhood.

| Traffic Calming Measure | Cost ($) | Units | Total cost ($) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Signage | 250 | 6 | 1500 |
| Radar signs or Speed feedback signs | 3,000 to 5,000 | 1 | 3,000-5,000 |
| Speed humps | 2,500 (avg. cost) | 5 | 12,500 |

**Table 4: Cost Breakdown of Proposed Traffic Calming Measures**
Source: Li, Faghri, & Fan, (2017), 2. William Warwick, Personal Communication, (Oct. 10th, 2017) and 3. Bushell, Poole, Zegeer & Rodriguez, (2013).

The City of Spartanburg is a possible funding source for the above measures. It was indicated to us that the City already possesses some speed feedback signs that are not currently being used. It is the responsibility of the City to address speed related issues in any neighborhood of the city, therefore we believe the City is the best possible options to fund the implementation of these measures. The total estimated cost for traffic calming measure assuming the City has speed feedback signs that can be utilized is $14,000.

## Healthy Food Initiative Strategy and Implementation

### Introduction

Spartanburg County is one of only three of the 46 counties in South Carolina that is rated as having over 30% (31.54%) of their population in 2015 as both low income and low

access to a grocery store (**Figure 15**) according to the USDA (Food Environment Atlas, 2017). Although overall access to a grocery store has improved by nearly 5.5% between 2010 and 2015, those populations that are both low income and low access have seen an increase by nearly 7%. This indicates that we need to do a better job at focusing on the needs of the more impoverished populations within Spartanburg County with targeted approaches to helping these areas.

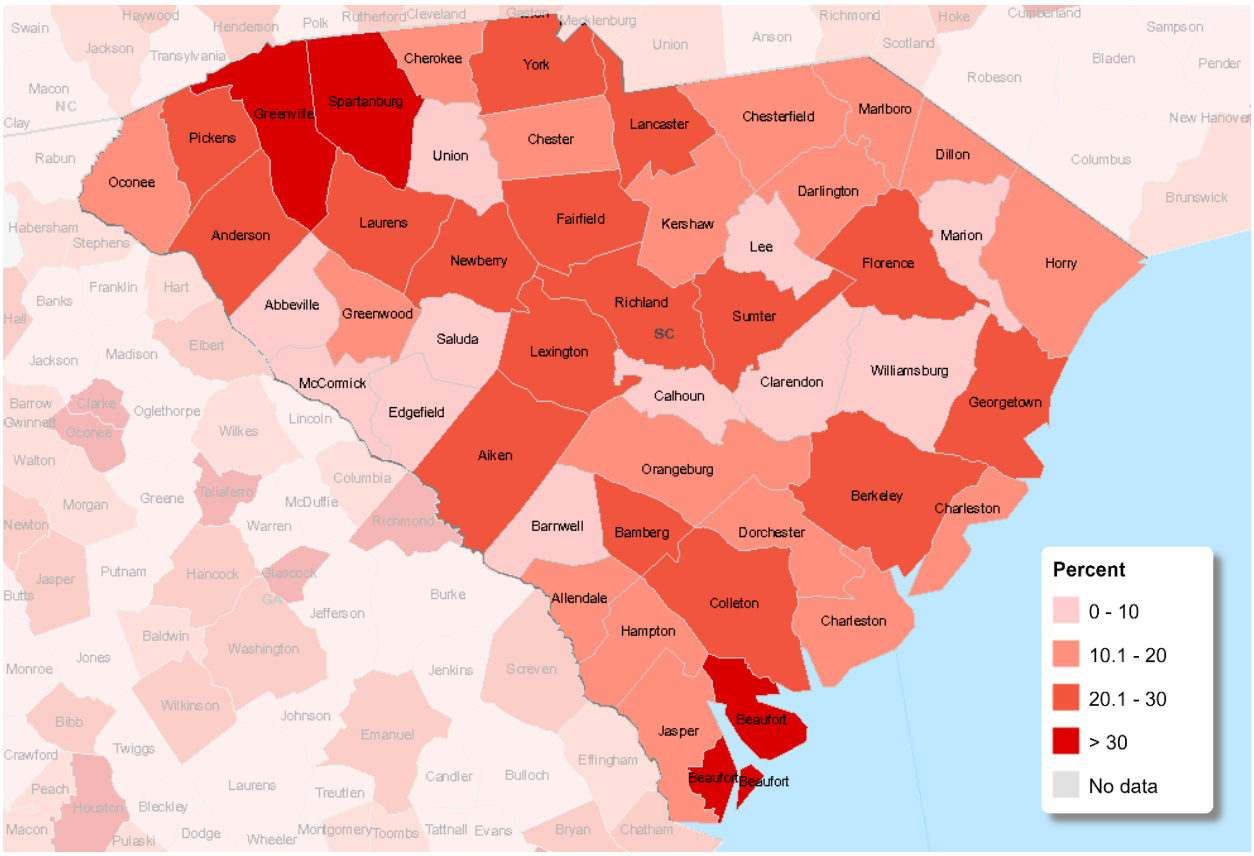


**Figure 15: South Carolina Population Percentage by County that is Both Low Income and Low Access to a Grocery Store, According to the USDA**
Food Environmental Atlas (2017). United States Department of Agriculture. Accessed October 29, 2017. Retrieved from https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/

A closer look at the Census Block Tracts with the City of Spartanburg reveals a clear divide of the city where there are both low income and low access (see **Figure 16 and 17**

below). The Highland Community is very close to those areas that are not low-income and low access. Again, focus on this area would make a big difference.

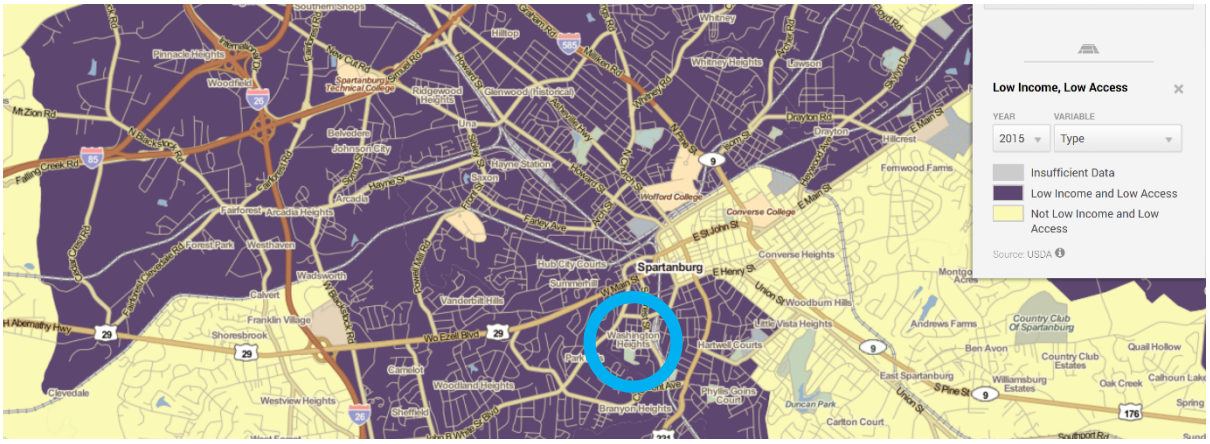


**Figure 16: City of Spartanburg and Surrounding Areas Illustrating Low Income and Low Food Access (by 2015 census tract data)**
Source: Policy Map, 2017. Retrieved on October 2, 2017 from https://www.policymap.com

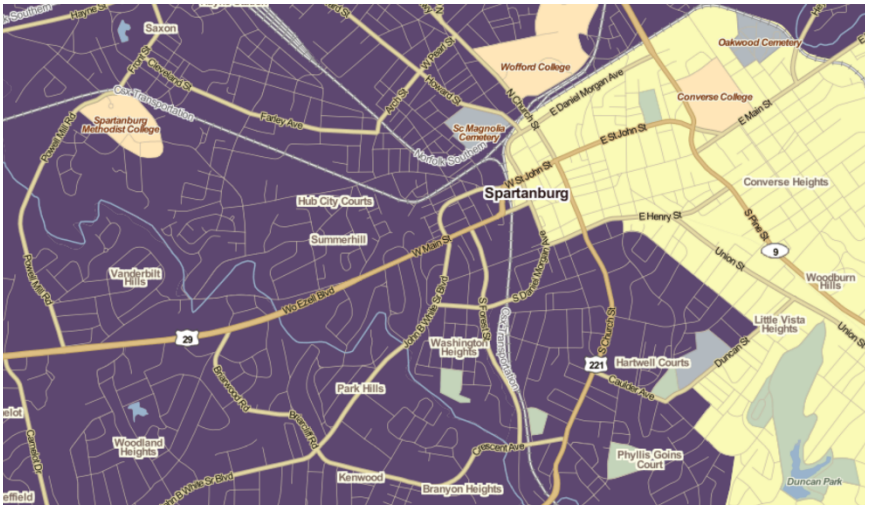


**Figure 17: City of Spartanburg and Surrounding Areas Illustrating Low Income and Low Food Access (by 2015 census tract data) Zoomed in to "Washington Heights" which is the Highland Neighborhood**
Source: Policy Map, 2017. Retrieved on October 2, 2017 from https://www.policymap.com

Finally, another important observation related to access is the localized area of the community that relies on public transit for work. This is another way of visualizing lack of access to food and to pinpoint how focal the problem is to the Highland Community (see **Figure 18** below).

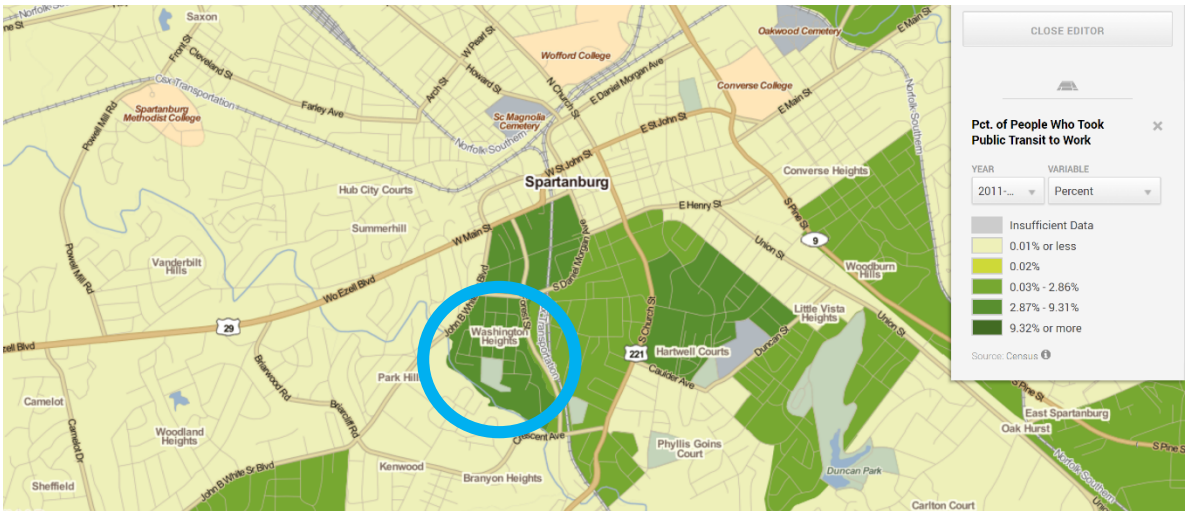


**Figure 18: City of Spartanburg and Surrounding Area Illustrating the Percent of Residents Whom Rely on Public Transportation to Get to Work Based on 2011 to 2015 data.**
Note: The Highland Community is 5.97%.
Source: Policy Map, 2017. Retrieved on October 2, 2017 from https://www.policymap.com

## The Highland Community Food Environment

According to the neighborhood survey, 84.76% of residents would like to see more grocery stores offered as a service within Highland Community (Highland Community Feedback, 2015). The survey also revealed that on any given day, 45.71% of Highland residents rely on walking as a form of transportation, 47.62% rely on the bus, and 44.76% rely on a ride from a friend to get around. Considering this data, food accessibility is a concern for the area. Depending on what area of the Highland Neighborhood a resident is located, the ability to reach groceries by foot is relatively limited. The following is a breakdown by mile (shortest walking distance) to various food access locations, utilizing the intersection of Highland Ave. and Norris St. as a central location for the Highland Community:

*Community Kitchen:*

- The Spartanburg Soup Kitchen: 136 S. Forest St. (0.7 miles)

*Grocery:*

- Sunny's Market: 108 Westview Blvd, (1.1 miles)
- Save-A-Lot: 550 S. Church St. (1.3 miles)
- Grahams Produce, 2081 S Church St. (1.4 miles)
- Sellers Seafood Market: 462 W Henry St. (0.5 miles)

*Discount Chains/Convenience Stores:*

- Corner Store One Hundred Five, 829 S Church St. (0.9 miles)
- Dollar General: 855 W. O. Ezell Blvd. (1.4 miles)
- Dollar Tree: 2024 S Church St. Ex. (1.3 miles)

*Gas:*

- Falcon: 201 John B White Sr. Blvd. (0.6 miles)
- Valero/Ken's Food Mart: 547 John B White Sr. Blvd. (0.7 miles)
- QuikTrip: 489 W Main St. (0.8 miles)
- Side Traxx/Dee Traxx: 704 Crescent Ave. (0.6 miles)

*Restaurants (within a mile)*

- The Beacon Drive-in: 255 John B. White Blvd. (0.4 miles)
- Francina's Soul Food Kitchen: 462 W Henry St. (0.5 miles)

*Note: Distances calculated by walking distance according to Google Maps*
Google Maps (n.d.) [Google Maps walking from the Corner of Norris St. and Highland Ave. to above location, Spartanburg, SC]. Retrieved Sept. 29, 2017.

Although there are some food options under one mile away, the more comprehensive grocery stores are over a mile away. The USDA (n.d.) defines a food desert as "part of the country vapid of fresh fruit, vegetables, and other healthful whole foods, usually found in impoverished areas", due to the lack of "grocery stores, farmers' markets, and healthy food

providers". Not so surprisingly, when whole food options are restricted in an area, residents will rely on "local quickie marts that provide a wealth of processed, sugar, and fat laden foods that are known contributors to our nation's obesity epidemic" (USDA, n.d.). The key concern is not that the residents have access to unhealthy food, but that their options are severely limited. According to the Healthy Food Access Portal (2010), 21.14% of the adult residents living within the Highland Community census tract, report eating less than one serving of fruit and vegetables per day, compared to the national average of 8.01%. According to Larson et al. (2009) an increasing amount of research indicates that "residential segregation by income, race, and ethnicity contributes to healthy disparities in the U.S." (pg. 74). Walker et al. (2009) corroborates this notion, and mentions the adverse health outcomes that result from the disparities within these neighborhoods, highlighting poverty as one of the main concerns. Larson et al. (2009) also discusses completed studies that indicate a direct positive relation to accessibility to supermarkets and the increased intake of fruit and vegetables. Walker et al. takes this theme one step further and examines the relationship of other food locations, such as restaurants, corner stores, gas stations, etc. as places where locals can purchase food (2009). He argues that without considering these locations, one will be left with an incomplete representation of the food environment and food options available within a neighborhood (Walker et al., 2009).

One solution to this access concern is to increase healthy food options at smaller stores and convenience stores noted Pinard et al., 2016. Their research also pointed out the access issue to fruit and vegetables being of concern to low-income neighborhoods in particular (Pinard et al., 2016). A recent feasibility study of low income neighborhoods in New Orleans by

O'Malley et al. (2013) engaged the topic of healthier options at corner stores, considering both the consumer and business perspective. Consumers "indicated that they would be very likely to purchase fresh produce from the [corner] stores if it were stocked" (O'Malley et al., 2013, pg. 747). The business perspective was less optimistic as the perception was that there would not be an adequate return on investment; however, O'Malley et al. (2013), points out that with the recent passing of the WIC Program (Women, infants and Children) in 2009 and a city-wide passing of the Fresh Food Retail Incentive, these policy changes should begin to make corner store healthy options more feasible. Minneapolis has piloted a corner store healthy initiative program that has observed positive results. This program is discussed in detail below.

The abandoned 18-acre lot at approximately 555 John B. White Sr. Blvd. was once home to an Ingles grocery store. The location, even with Fairforest Creek blocking direct access is only 0.7 miles from the center of the Highland Community (using the intersection of Norris St. and Highland Ave. as the center point). This location is still owned by Ingles, but with a plan and motivation for the City of Spartanburg, it has the opportunity to become so much more to the members of the Highland Community.

## Gas Station Analysis and Visit: First Impressions and Observations

### *Valero and Falcon*

The two gas stations on John B White Sr. Blvd. are small square footage locations. The Valero/Ken's Food Market is the smallest with the least options. We spoke with the owner/manager about fresh food and he stated that he "would not be willing to carry fresh food items". This location had mostly unhealthy food options. There were eggs and a few milk

options, though the stock was very low. Only two 12 oz. and a single 1 gallon milk were available for purchase and all milks were not labeled with price. The Corner Store (also called Palmetto Gas and Food) had some frozen food items that we were surprised to see in stock. They carry frozen tilapia, and large boxes of frozen meat such as a 12 pack of Boneless Beef Ribeye and a 7 piece N.Y. strip steak. This location also had milk and eggs, though milk was only available in a half gallon size ($3.59). They also carried a bunch of center store items. Examples include but are not limited to Campbell's soups, flour, grits, ramen, cornmeal mix, pancake mix, beans, pasta sauce, canned fish, sugar, Chef Boyardee, canned veggies, canned fruit, pasta, and sugary cereal. On a whole, the options available are high sodium or high sugar. We spoke with the people working here as well and they were also not keen on carrying fresh produce. When we asked if they carried any, we were offered a candy apple.

*Side Traxx/Dee Traxx*

Side Traxx's store footprint is much bigger than the two on John B. White Sr. Blvd. It is a short walk from the Prince Hall apartments. Unfortunately, there is minimal sidewalk here and the road curves, making it potential dangerous for pedestrians. The speed limit is 25 mph hopefully keeping traffic moving slowly. There is a sidewalk on the busier S. Forest St., which is good for pedestrian safety. The woman working, whom we spoke with was very interested, though told us we would need to talk to the boss man and she gave us his number (864-542-2690). We were unable to formally connect with him. They only had gallon sized milk and no eggs (it appeared that they were out, purely based on our assumption of the empty space next to the milk). They also carried a bunch of center store items. Examples include but are not limited to Campbell's soup, flour, grits, ramen, cornmeal mix, pancake mix, beans, pasta sauce,

canned fish, sugar, Chef Boyardee, canned veggies, canned fruit, pasta, and sugary cereal. They also carry apple sauce, unsweetened cereal, and a lot more canned vegetables. Like the Palmetto store, Side Traxx also carries the same bulk frozen meat as the Corner Store, as well as other frozen items including shrimp, chicken wings, banquet meals, and Texas Toast. The prices of the food options were mostly consistent with the other smaller convenience stores, and were typically $0.10 to $0.15 cheaper than identical options at QT. This convenience store seemed more open than the other locally owned stores, and seemed to have adequate amounts of space that could be devoted to carrying fresh options, in the event that the owner would be willing to come on board with the plan.

### *QuikTrip*

The QuikTrip (QT) not so surprisingly has the best fresh and healthy food options. Also, from the center of the Highland Community to the QT there are sidewalks. Unfortunately, we noticed that the price point on most items (even the unhealthy ones) was higher at the QT than the other three gas stations. QT carries similar grocery items, but then is renowned for their superior fresh snack items. For example, humus, Chobani yogurt, apples, oranges, bananas, cheese, fruit cups, sandwiches, salads, sausage biscuits, wraps, grapes, and fresh fruit parfaits. All of these fresh items are close to the POS (Point of Sale), which allows for quick last-minute decisions that might be healthier. They even place bananas on the counter right next to the credit card payment system. Unfortunately, when were there, they were almost out of bananas and needed to restock them as the selection was not great. We were unable to speak with the manager on duty since the store was very busy and he was attending to a pressing matter. The

QT similar to Side Traxx has some room to provide the sale of more fresh produce. Since they are a large corporate chain, we would likely need to get permission for this store to be a pilot.

## Food Insecurity Recommendations Based on Interviews and Visits

As we move forward, one of the largest hurdles to implementation will be selling the idea of the profitability of fresh produce to the smaller store owners. The majority of the owners are not from the community, and so the idea of carrying fresh healthy options to improve the community does not hold as much meaning to the gas station owners. To bring them on board, they have to be convinced that there is currently an unmet demand for fresh produce in the area, and that the produce can bring a comparable return on investment as the junk food that currently occupies shelf space. Due to the typically low margins on produce and the lower income of the residents, a government subsidy may be necessary to make the fresh food profitable enough for the business owners to sell while still being cheap enough to be an attractive alternative to cheap junk food.

We originally saw this group focusing on QuikTrip and Side Traxx for a pilot program. After an interview with Mike McGirr we discovered that QuikTrip will not be a viable option. Mike McGirr is the owner of Feed & Seed in Greenville, SC and he has spent years working on food insecurity issues in the upstate. According to his research, QuikTrip is a highly regulated and multi-national chain that not only has contracts with specific food vendors but has a standardized pricing across their stores (personal communication, Oct. 26, 2017). Due to the strict platform that they work off of, they cannot even allow girl scouts to sell cookies on their property (personal communication, Oct. 26, 2017). Mike also mentioned that the goal of

QuikTrip is to focus on safety/security and friendliness, over affordability and hence their prices are higher to compensate for their labor costs and overall cleanliness (personal communication, Oct. 26, 2017).

We then spoke with representatives from Hub City Market to seek advice and insight on this issue. Meg Whiteley at Hub City provided some incite about the community gardens and Mobile Food Market. According to her, the community garden is in a very early phase, though hopes to address low incomes families with this program (personal communication, September 12, 2017). At the moment, the program is focused on the education piece and showing people how to grow their own food and to make it an affordable way to access food. In regard to the Mobile Market, the program goes to "areas where the need is the greatest" and they "have the highest likelihood of benefiting the highest number of people (Meg Whiteley, personal communication, September 12, 2017). Hence, they focus on the YMCA, the Carolina Pregnancy Center, Spartanburg Area Mental Health, Dialysis clinics, and other locations where people have limited income and access (Meg Whiteley, personal communication, September 12, 2017). Currently for the winter schedule for 2017, the Mobile Market goes to the Bethlehem Center in the Highland Community on Mondays between 11 and noon.

To determine recommendations for implementing a Healthy Food Initiative in the Highland Community, the planning team reviewed many existing programs to come up with our recommendations including, Minneapolis, MN; Dover Springs, TX; and Detroit, MI.

## Healthy Food Initiative Strategy

This strategy addresses our mission to improve the health and public welfare within the Highland Community. Increased healthy food access and affordability is at the focal point of

these suggestions. We also hope to save community members time and energy as they should be able to grab what they need for an evening meal and lunches more readily. The following steps should be implemented within Highland, specifically targeted at Side Traxx and possibly Sellers Seafood market:

- First, it will be critical to enlist input from Highland residents for the types of food desired and affordable price points that they would like access to at local convenience stores.
- To kick start this program we suggest holding a mini-farmers market that possibly includes an extra stop for the Hub City Mobile Market at Side Traxx and/or Sellers Seafood Market (or other location on West Henry Street), providing fresh and local products at a location residents may already be going. We would recommend beginning this in the summer to build community relationships with the farmers and products and then providing those same farmer products inside at Side Traxx and Sellers Seafood Market in the winter.
- Key stakeholders including SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC), the City of Spartanburg, as well as public and private partnerships would need to be involved to provide grant opportunities for merchandizing materials and acquiring refurbished or new coolers for produce display within the businesses.
- Similar to Minneapolis, it would be critical to align food ordinances with this program to increase the amount, variety, and quality of basic healthy food items

available in these stores. (Minneapolis Health Department, n.d.) (See **Figure 19** below for examples signage and display from MN).

- It would be beneficial to start small with about five produce items and to further incentivize the store owners by providing them with a $100 stipend to offset loss with the initial few weeks of the program, similar to the Dover Springs program (Texas Standard).
- Training to the store owners and employees would be important for understanding produce storage and handling as well as merchandizing techniques to increase and encourage sales.
- Store owners would need to be connected to local distributors, including Hub City Mobile Market, with a focus on increasing access to fresh produce and healthier options including low-fat dairy, whole grains, low sodium, and healthy beverage options.
- During this whole program including the initiation, and further down the line, it would be critical for there to be a point person to maintain a relationship with the store owner and to perform periodic checkups to ensure the program is gaining traction and running smoothly.
- Other food options could include partnering with the local Spartanburg Soup Kitchen or Butterfly Foundation to have refrigerated premade meals for purchase (See **Figure 20** below for inspiration from FreshCornerCafe.com, 2017).

It is important to note that this could serve as a pilot program for other low income, low access communities within Spartanburg County. Beginning with a handful of locations adjacent

to the Highland Community could provide the City and SC DHEC an opportunity to test this program and ensure successful implementation before creating a broader scale approach. It is also important to note that we feel this is an interim solution to a pressing food security issue. We believe this could quickly be implemented and that a long-term solution, a mixed-use development with a grocery store adjacent to the Highland Community, could provide critical amenities to the neighborhood that are lacking. Another benefit of this program is that from this initiative, depending on the enthusiasm of the community, it can lead to other initiatives such as childhood obesity awareness through child health education, which could begin at the Bethlehem Center with cooking classes. Also, physical activity awareness and community gardening programs could spawn from this healthy food initiative. These program add-on ideas are modeled after Dover Springs, TX (See **Figure 21** below) (GAVA, 2017).

Health Department staff used re-purposed coolers in highly visible locations and provided ongoing technical assistance to help owners maintain their produce displays

*Store owners committed and engaged in the program often experience the most sales growth.*

**Figure 19**: **Visuals from the Minneapolis Program**
Source: Minneapolis Health Department Nov. 2013 Report
http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@health/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-117774.pdf

**Figure 20: Fresh Cornr Café's Prepackaged Meals and Moblie Market**
Source: Fresh Corner Café, (2017) Corner Store Initiatives. www.FreshCornerCafe.com

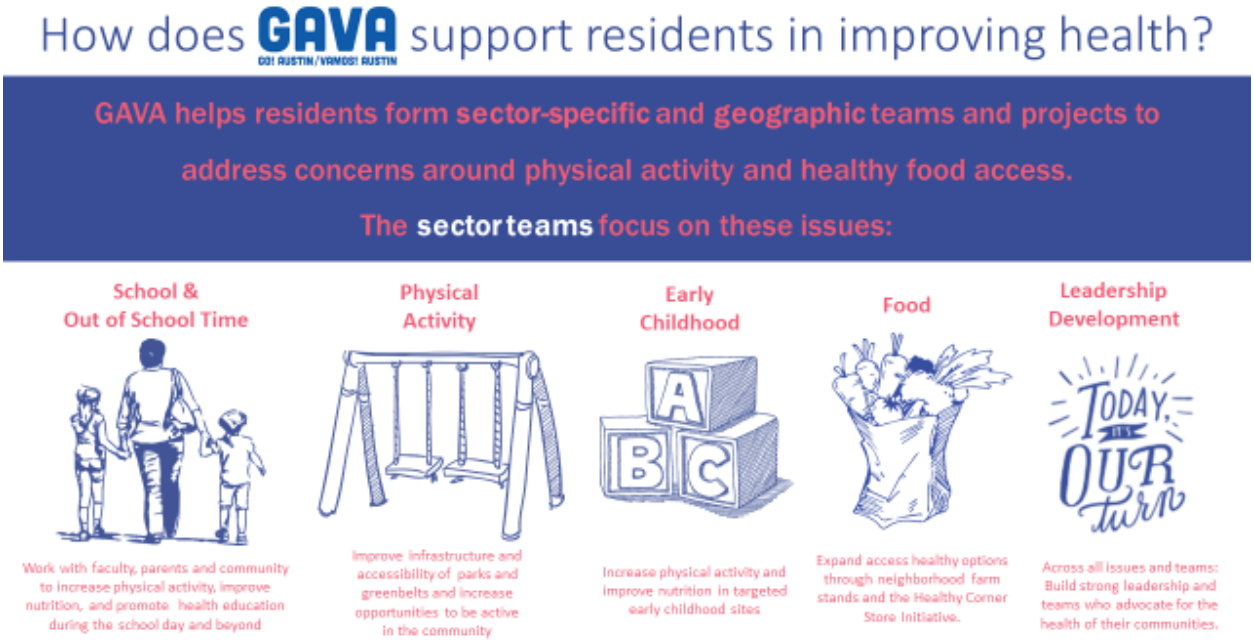


**Figure 21: GAVA Support Mechanisms**
Source: GAVA Go! Austin/ Vamos! Austin (2017) End of Year Report 2016. Accessed Nov. 1, 2017. Retrieved from http://www.goaustinvamosaustin.org/english

## Financing the Healthy Corner Store Initiative:

Funding for the onset of this program could be federal, local, grants, private investment, mission-based, organizational assets, or public funds. A summary of known available funding for these types of projects is provided below in **Table 5**. Although specific numbers for funding this type of initiative can drastically vary, the baseline funds needed to get this initiate going requires more time than money. In order for this program to takeoff, it is critical that the Highland Community members are involved at the beginning of the program and that the head person focusing on this program continually check in with the community. This could include the community advocate that is dedicated to the Highland Neighborhood. To provide an example, North Carolina just dedicated $250,000 in 2016 for a statewide Healthy Corner Store Initiative (Voices for Healthy Kids, 2016). We feel that this is a reasonable amount for the

statewide initiative and Spartanburg County could apply for a variety of grants to initiate this program as outlined below.

There are many existing grants within South Carolina that are worth noting. The first is the Butterfly Foundation, which we mentioned earlier. They used HFFI financing to support the creation of a Healthy Food Hub, The Monarch, and Fresh Food Store are all located in what used to be a food desert on the North Side of Spartanburg (Healthy Food Access "Find Money & Policy Efforts by State", 2017). They also raised nearly a million dollars and the University of South Carolina received just under $1.5 to conduct research for the benefit of this initiative. A similar project could occur within the Highland Community (Healthy Food Access "Find Money & Policy Efforts by State", 2017).

The South Carolina Community Loan Fund, which we also mentioned earlier with housing fund options, has enabled projects to takeoff including healthy food outlets within the state and has approved $1.8 million in healthy food loans (Healthy Food Access "Find Money & Policy Efforts by State", 2017). We have connected with them and they are already working with the City and are excited about Highland projects. There is also a HFFI initiative from 2016 that is specific for South Carolina for the "more than one million South Carolina residents who live in food deserts" (Healthy Food Access "Find Money & Policy Efforts by State", 2017). Spartanburg should take advantage of one or more than one of these many funding opportunities. Also, some of this grant money could help provide a stipend to make the affordability of the fresh items easier for the store owners. Finally, to help bolster this program financially it would be critical to increase the buying power of the Highland residents by allowing SNAP and WIC nutrition funding programs within the participating corner stores.

| Program | Funder Type | Funder | Application Date | Brief Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) | Federal Government | USDA and NIFA | December 13, 2017 | Program targeted at incentivizing the purchase of produce by SNAP clients |
| Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program | Federal Government | USDA and NIFA | December 4, 2017 | Program assisting low-income individuals and communities developing a self-reliant food system. (Require a dollar-for-dollar match) |
| Voices for Healthy Kids | Multi-Funder Partnership | AHA and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | July, 2018 | Aimed at healthy childhood weight initiatives |
| Voices for Healthy Kids Incubator Grants | Multi-Funder Partnership | AHA and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation | July, 2018 | Aimed at healthy childhood weight initiatives |
| Community Economic Development Projects (HHS)* | Federal Government | Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services | July, 2018 | Projects focused on enhancing job creation and business development for low income individuals |
| Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) | CDFI | Opportunity Finance Network | N/A | Makes funds available from CDFIs to increase both access and affordability for low-income neighborhoods |
| Healthy Food Financing Initiative | Corporate | Whole Foods | N/A | Focused on small – scale agriculture and low-interests loans to local farmers through LPLP loans |
| Healthy Eating Active Living | Private | Mary Black Foundation | N/A | Grants to 501(c)3 organizations that are working towards increasing the health and wellness of Spartanburg County persons |
| Local Enterprise Assistance Fund (LEAF) | CDFI | Local Enterprise Assistance Fund | N/A | Financing for cooperatives and other social enterprises that benefit low-income persons |
| Local Grants | Public/Private | Spartanburg | N/A | Financing for 501(c)3 organization providing services to the residents of Spartanburg County |

**Table 5: Summary of South Carolina Funding Opportunities for Food Access and Affordability**

Notes: USDA = United States Department of Agriculture; NIFA = National Institute of Food and Agriculture
AHA = American Heart Association; LPLP = Local Producer Loan Program
* Indicates a possible funding source for the mixed-use development

Healthy Food Access Portal (2017) "Find Money & Policy Efforts by State" Retrieved November 24, 2017 from http://healthyfoodaccess.org/resources-tools/find-money-policy-efforts-by-state?st=South%20Carolina & Mary Black Foundation (2017) Retrieved November 24, 2017 from http://www.maryblackfoundation.org/apply-grant/

### Conclusions for the Healthy Corner Store Initiative:

The most important aspect of this Initiative is that this program is affordable and does not require daunting sums of startup money. Aforementioned in this research concerning food deserts, it is clear that the Highland Neighborhood would benefit from a similar convenience store program. This low-cost program would be feasible to implement in the interim, while decisions are made on the abandoned Ingles lot. Also, implementation of the mixed-use recommendations on the Ingles lot will take time and it is critical that we address the food concern quickly since there are affordable and quick solutions to help mitigate this problem now. Once the mixed-use center is built, the program could grow to include more options for after school programs, exercise programs, more cooking classes, a community garden program, and hopefully another stop for the Hub City Mobile Market. The opportunities are endless, but this program needs to begin small and be a part of the community first to be successful.

### Bridge Strategy and Implementation

The Request for Qualifications for Transformation Plan for the Highland Neighborhood (RFQ) admits that the downtown master plan prepared years ago, does not address the improvements to John B. White Sr. Boulevard, which borders the Highland Neighborhood (2017). The RFQ also states that the City of Spartanburg, "has an interest in improving these major corridors into the City's central business district" (2017). This provides motivation to better connect the Highland Community to John B. White Sr. Blvd. with a bridge across the Fairforest Creek. The need for connectivity and better access to places for the residents of the Highland Neighborhood is also apparent from the community survey (Highland Community

Feedback, 2015). Nearly 50% of respondents rely on either or a combination of walking, the bus, or riding with a friend to get to where they need to go (Highland Community Feedback, 2015).

Building a bridge in the Highland Neighborhood will help fix the planning problem that has left the Highland Neighborhood in isolation. As stated above, many Highland residents do not have car access. Building the bridge to connect the Neighborhood with the proposed mixed-use development will spark economic development by providing residents the ability to walk to new job opportunities and frequent new stores and local businesses. This bridge to the mixed-use development will provide new job opportunities within walking distance. This will help level the playing field in attaining a job by taking away the challenge of transportation. In addition to job opportunities, the mixed-use development could have a grocery store. The Neighborhood Association President, Leroy Jeter, stated that food security was an on-going problem for the Highland Neighborhood. The bridge could provide access to a healthy food option walking distance from the community that is has previously been lacking.

Blockley (2012) confirms the importance of making bridges stable, strong, and effective. He goes further to state that although these three aspects are critical to the success of a bridge, they surround a more "obvious need and purpose of building a bridge" which is to "bridge a gap" (pg. 260). At the heart of the matter, which is made apparent with the below **Figure 22**, is integrating people, purposes, and processes. The bridge will provide the necessary connection for the current gap in the city's place network. Blockley (2012) goes on stating that "bridges are

built by people for people" and just like how relationships connect people, bridges do the same (pg. 242).

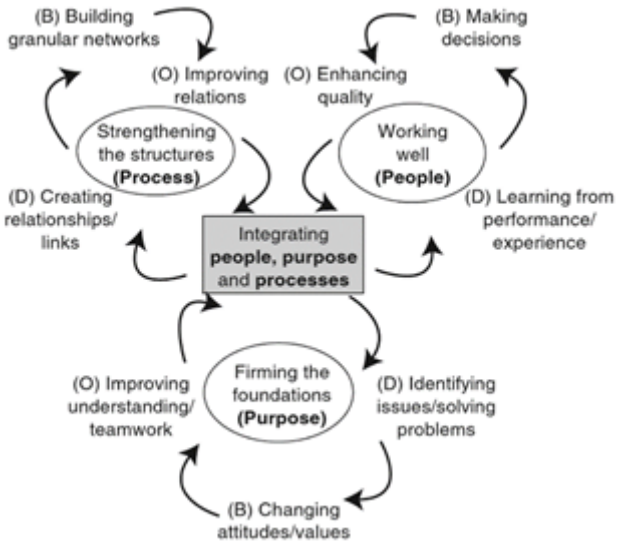


**Figure 22: Relationship between Bridges and People**
Source: Blockley, D. I. (2012). Bridges: The Science and Art of the World's Most Inspiring Structures. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The bridge will help address several other issues stated in the SWOT analysis like safety. In pursuant with the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (APA, 2013), making the Highland Neighborhood a place where people want to spend time will bring residents out of their homes onto the streets increasing surveillance and safety. The bridge will also give pedestrians a designated walking path so to control how people travel. This makes policing easier because the design makes pedestrian more predictable.

The Highland Neighborhood faces issues with traffic. Building a pedestrian bridge will be a means for traffic calming. People will not be able to speed through the neighborhood because of the increased pedestrian and bike traffic. The bridge will also encourage people to drive less and walk more because of the more enjoyable pedestrian environment.

Bridges and proposed bridge projects that increase connectivity are seen across the country as well in nearby local municipalities. Some of these bridges include the Hampton Ave Extension Bridge, Irving and Bernice Singer Pedestrian Bridge, River Place Park Bridge, and the Spirit Bridge in Cancer Survivors Park. These all vary in materials, cost and aesthetics. We used these bridges as precedents to determine cost, dimensions, materials, timeline and aesthetics. Examples of the bridges and key takeaways are provided below (**Figures 23-27)**:

## Hampton Ave Extension Bridge

- Located in an impoverished neighborhood in Southern Side, Greenville
- Addresses issue of isolation and crime with connectivity
- Cost of bridge 1.3 million dollars

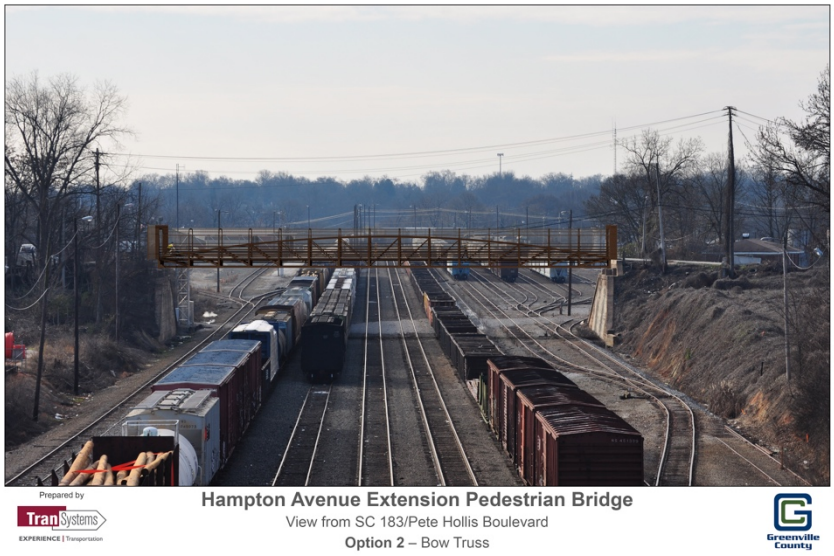


**Figure 23**: **Hampton Avenue Extension Pedestrian Bridge**
Source: Greenville County (2017) Engineering and Maintenance: Bridge Replacement Projects. Accessed September 24, 2017 at https://www.greenvillecounty.org/PublicWorks/BridgeProjects.aspx

**Figure 24: Hampton Avenue Extension Pedestrian Bridge**
Source: Greenville County (2017) Engineering and Maintenance: Bridge Replacement Projects. Accessed September 24, 2017 at https://www.greenvillecounty.org/PublicWorks/BridgeProjects.aspx

## Irving and Bernice Singer Pedestrian Bridge (Piscataquog River Bridge)

- Located in Manchester, New Hampshire
- This bridge connects recreational trails as well as recreational areas in Manchester across the Piscataquog River
- Cost of bridge $750,000

**Figure 25**: **Irving and Bernice Singer Pedestrian Bridge (Piscataquog River Bridge)**
Source: Alden, D. (2015, October 26). Piscataquog River bridge in Manchester officially opens. New Hampshire Union Leader. Retrieved December 1, 2017, from http://www.unionleader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?avis=UL&date=20151027&category=NEWAMPSHIRE03&lopenr=151029209&Ref=AR&template=printart

## River Place Park Bridge

- Located in Spartanburg County behind the Middle Tyger Library
- The bridge connects trails, schools, parks, the local library, community centers, and other places of interest in the area
- Cost of bridge unknown

**Figure 26: River Place Park Bridge**
Source: SPATS. (n.d.). River Place Park Bridge. Retrieved December 03, 2017, from http://spatsmpo.org/projects/bike-and-pedestrian-projects/river-place-park-bridge/

## Spirit Bridge in Cancer Survivors Park

- Located in Greenville's Cancer Survivors Park
- The picture below is the new boardwalk that was built in 2016, the Spirit Bridge is yet to be built
- Cost of bridge 1 million dollars

**Figure 27: Cancer Survivors Park Boardwalk**
Source: Landrum, C. (2016, June 20). Cancer Survivors Park opens boardwalk. Retrieved November 30, 2017, from https://greenvillejournal.com/2016/02/12/cancer-survivors-park-opens-boardwalk/)

## Proposed Highland Bridge

The location of the proposed bridge would be on Norris Ct, crossing Fairforest Creek, connecting to the currently abandoned Ingles parking lot. The connectivity could expand with a walking or multi-use path to Carlisle Park, Montgomery Park, and Hatcher Garden Woodland Reserve. This proposed strip would complement the existing and recommended trail network created by Alta Design Consulting Firm for Spartanburg (Spartanburg County Parks). Currently the design does not include the Highland Neighborhood and access to the network is missing, arguably further isolating Highland (please see network below in **Figure 28**).

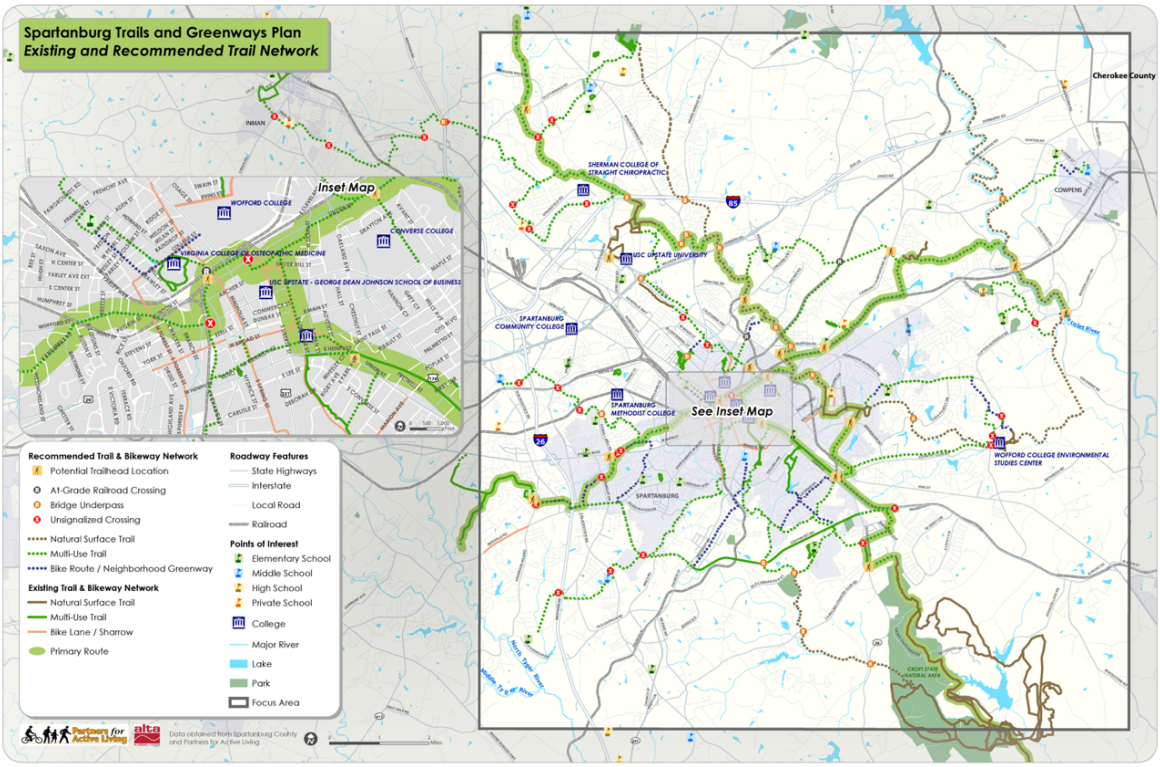


**Figure 28: Trail Map (Existing and Recommended)**
Source: Alta Planning + Design. (2013). Spartanburg Trails & Greenways Plan. Retrieved on December 07, 2017 from http://spartanburgparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Trails-and-Greenways-Masterplan.pdf

Finally, the floodplain narrows on Norris Ct., providing an ideal location for a pedestrian bridge to cross Fairforest Creek (see below in **Figure 29**).

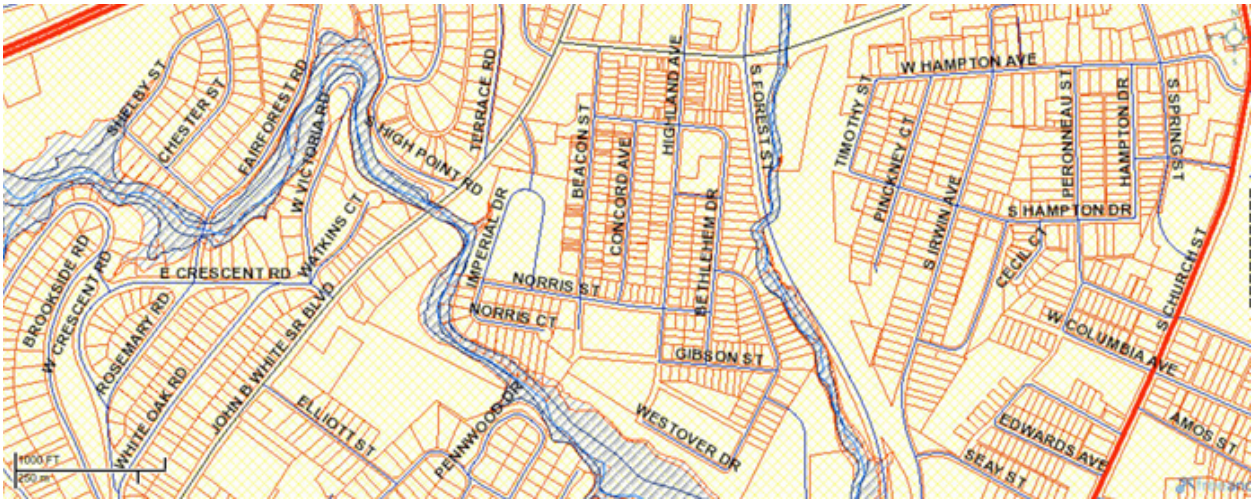


**Figure 29: Floodplains Map**
Source: Spartanburg County. (2015). Spartanburg County Geographic Information System. Retrieved December 07, 2017 from http://192.146.148.33/Freeance/Client/PublicAccess1/index.html?appconfig=DetailedWeb

After we studied baseline conditions (see Existing Conditions section) and created the goal to increase connectivity (see Goals and Strategies section), we created a strategy to build a bridge to implement the goal. To build the bridge, we had to conduct fiscal studies. This also involved analyzing existing conditions, forecasting expenditures and revenues as well as think about capital or minor costs. We identified possible funding and partnerships to support implementers and allocate resources. Ideally, we could have community input after this step.

The two most important powerful tools in implementation are capital investments and land-use control (Levy, 2000). Implementing the bridge will require the submission of a capital improvements project request. After approved, the design will include the scope and budget. A charrette should be conducted to get community's input in the design process of the bridge. We have estimated the budget based on similar bridge projects that are seen above (**Figure 23-27**). We also considered the length, width and materials in determining the cost.

The Anderson Bridge Company estimates that the price range for a prefabricated bridge is from $400 a linear foot to over $1,500 a linear foot (Anderson Bridges, 2015). Using Google

Maps, we approximated the width across the creek including an additional buffer to ensure we keep the bridge at a manageable slope to be 100 feet. The bridge will likely need to curve like the Cancer Survivor Boardwalk example above so the length will be longer. The proposed bridge for the Highland Neighborhood will likely be nearly 200 feet in length including curves and 8-10 feet wide. This width complies with ADA standards. This would put our estimated cost per linear foot to be $80,000 to $300,000. However, according to the Gator Bridge Company the most important factor for a bridge is the load weight (Gator Bridge, 2014). This will raise the cost of the bridge to be able to hold both pedestrians and cyclists. Another cost factor will be the cost of the land and also the cost of labor and installation. Comparing the total price of other similar bridges to the Highland proposed bridge, we estimate the cost to be $1.5 million dollars. There are hidden costs associated with the proposed bridge in necessary additional signage and lighting to ensure the area is safe and wayfinding is satisfactory.

To make this bridge possible, we identified key partners and funding sources. Some of the key partners would be the City of Spartanburg going back and forth with feedback from Martin Livingston and Natalia Rosario of the Planning Department. South Carolina Department of Transportation as well as the Spartanburg County Parks will have to be involved in the process. The area has many great organizations that support walking and cycling initiative. Some of the organizations identified to be key partners for the proposed Highland pedestrian and bicycle bridge are the Partners for Active Living, Healthy South Carolina Initiative, and Palmetto Cycling Coalition.

After the scope and budget of the bridge was determined, as well as the key partners, the next step is to determine how to fund the bridge. In the other bridge projects, mentioned

above, the funds came from local, state and federal sources. Some of our funding could depend on the voters if raising taxes is possible in the state and City of Spartanburg. The City could propose to raise the sales tax to raise money for more transportation projects like the bridge. Funding could also come from SCDHEC and the Appalachian COG. Other programs to potentially help fund the bridge include the Federal Transit Administration Capital Funds (FTA) Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), Highway Safety Improvement Performance Program (HSIP), National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA), and the Recreation and Trails Program (RTP). The City of Spartanburg could also apply for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant. The TIGER grant as well as the other programs are very competitive federal funding sources but are key sources of possible funding (see **Table 6**).

| Program | Funder Type | Funder | Application Date | Brief Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) | Federal Government | U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) | October 16, 2017 | Program that allows the DOT to invest in roads, rail, transit, port and multi-modal projects |
| Federal Transit Administration Capital Investment Grants Program (FTA) | Federal Government | DOT | N/A | Program invests in projects related to bicycle infrastructure that improves personal mobility |
| Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) | Federal Government | DOT | N/A | Program can fund maps for pedestrian/bikes, sidewalks, and trail bridges |
| Highway Safety Improvement Performance Program (HSIP) | Federal Government | DOT | Next call for projects (Cycle 9) May 2018 | Program can fund bikes lanes, education programs for bicyclists and drivers, awareness campaigns, and off road multi-use paths |
| National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) | Federal Government | DOT, Highway account of the Highway Trust Fund, Secretary of Transportation | N/A | Program can fund bridge/overcrossings for pedestrians /bikes, trail bridges streetscaping for pedestrian and bike routes and shared use/ recreational paths and trails |
| Recreation and Trails Program (RTP) | Federal Government | DOT | Letter of intent due November 2, 2017, application due March 14, 2018 | Program can fund bridge/ overcrossing for ped/bikes, tail bridges, lighting and recreational/ shared use paths and trails |
| Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA) | Federal Government | DOT (These funds require a 20% match) | Applications are accepted year-round | Program can fund bike plans, bike facilities, pedestrian facilities and streetscaping projects |
| Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) | Federal Government | DOT | December 2017 (must apply in 2017 for projects for 2022) | Programs funds streetscaping, trail bridges, lightings, maps, signage, shared use paths, and bicycle and pedestrian plans |

**Table 6: Summary of South Carolina Funding Opportunities for Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge Project**
Palmetto Cycling Coalition. (2016, September). Funding Biking and Walking Infrastructure and Programs in South Carolina: Eligible Funding. Retrieved from http://pccsc.net/pdfs/Funding-Biking-and-Walking-Facilities-in-SC.pdf

Once the planning process and design phase are complete, there must be an environmental review. The proposed bridge will cross kudzu and other vegetation as well as the Fairforest Creek. Environmental review is important to be sure that no natural habitats are harmed or wildlife. Once it is approved, then the construction step can begin. The timeline for the project is expected to be about five years from start to finish.

## Mixed-Use, Mixed-Income Development Strategy and Implementation

Finally, we propose developing the vacant Ingles lot on John B White Sr. Blvd into a mixed-use center as a way to address some of the critical problems of housing availability, food security, connectivity, and income level present within the Highland Community. In our conversations with community leaders, they lamented the shift from the Highland Community having locally owned small-scale businesses and commercial activity to the current lack of any meaningful community commercial activity. Implementing a mixed-use development in an underserved area would bring a variety of important uses to the Highland Neighborhood while generating tax revenue. The lack of easy access in the Highland Community to pharmacies, groceries, financial services, child services, and other community commercial uses can all be rectified by establishing these types of uses within the neighboring mixed-use development. As a mixed-use development, the Ingles lot development would not only provide additional commercial activity in the region and better connect the Highland Community with its bordering neighborhoods, but also would supply mixed income housing to supplement the supply in the Highland community.

The proposed site of the mixed-use development is technically located outside of the Highland Community, but due to its spatial location, creating connectivity through the proposed bridge design would make it function as a part of the neighborhood. While the site is located on the other side of Fairforest Creek, with the addition of the bridge the development would be a less than 10-minute walk from every home in the Highland Neighborhood. By locating the commercial development outside of the neighborhood, it helps preserve the historically residential character of the neighborhood, while alleviating some of the isolation the community has experienced in the past. Furthermore, taking this approach does not require zoning changes within the neighborhood, and allows vacant lots in the Highland Neighborhood to be developed in a manner that more accurately reflects the community character without commercial development pressure.

## Implementation Strategy

First, it is critical that this project begins by getting considerably more feedback from the communities that are involved. This project is somewhat different from our other proposals because it involves neighborhoods outside of the Highland Study area. All of the stakeholders are going to have different ideas on the content, form, and direction of the development. Therefore, it is important to start this process by coordinating visioning workshops throughout the communities to help get the appropriate feedback for the uses that the area wants and needs. The development will follow LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED ND) criteria. LEED ND was created to create better, more environmentally sustainable, well-connected communities that promote positive and safe pedestrian environments (U.S. Green Building Council, 2014). While the majority of the content of the mixed-use development would be

flexible, the following aspects of the project would be non-negotiable due to the needs of the community that have already been expressed.

1. 20% or more of the housing units developed must be affordable low-income units
2. Must have 20% or more of the lot designated for green open space
3. Must have connectivity with the bridge spanning the Highland Neighborhood
4. The development must include the following uses lacking in the Highland Community:
    1. Grocery Store
    2. Pharmacy
    3. Daycare services
    4. Community kitchen

Other required uses would then be negotiated and discussed through community feedback. The developer would have flexibility and discretion with the rest of the commercial and residential space.

Once the community has identified its wants and needs, the process of negotiating the purchase of the vacant land from the Ingles Corporation would begin. During and after this process, the City of Spartanburg would need to reach out to potential developers and commercial partners to secure enough support and funding to ensure that the project can successfully implemented. But with the strategic location close to downtown, existing infrastructure, coupled with the lack of commercial and retail competition in the area should make it an attractive site for developers, potential commercial business owners, and potential renters. All stakeholders will need to be coordinated to ensure that a viable design that meets the developmental standards of the city is created.

With the ambitious nature of this project, it may be in the best interest of all parties involved to take an incremental approach to construction, with priority given to establishing the grocery store and any standalone multifamily housing. With the unmet need for housing in the area and the lack of grocery options for more than a mile, these uses can be successful regardless of the status of the other facilities. The increased awareness and foot traffic brought on by the successful implementation of the first wave of uses can be leveraged to help sell commercial space within the later stages of development. Having the grocery store available to the public early on will also speed up the adoption of the prescribed bridge project.

### Funding for Mixed-Use

Due to the malleability of this project and the flexibility with content and scope of the development pending community and other stakeholder buy-in, it is difficult to pinpoint what the exact timeline and costs of creating this mixed-use development will be. Following the cost guidelines provided by the Texas design firm, EVStudio, their estimates for the costs of developing mixed use buildings within a context similar to the Ingles lot fell within a range of $140-170 per square foot (EVStudio, 2017). Based on these cost estimates, the construction of a mixed-use development with 100,000sf of multi-family residential units, 40,000sf of the required neighborhood oriented uses, 10,000 square feet of office space and 30,000 square feet of general commercial space would cost approximately $25million.

With that level of investment, the area would gain space for 80 market rate apartment units, 20 affordable low-income units, 15 community level retail spaces, a grocery store, day care center, pharmacy, community kitchen, and room for 10 moderate sized offices. This estimate is in no way final, as the specific size and content of the development would be

determined after receiving community input, and could be expanded or reduced in size and cost as needed.

### Funding Sources and Partnerships

The proposed mixed-use center is an ambitious project. It will also require a lot of time, money, and effort on behalf of the City and the communities involved. This project will be a mix of private, public and partnerships to meet the financial needs to bring this project to life. Having a mix of public and private funds is important as it shows the potential developer there is adequate attention and interest in the project. Helping with the financing is especially important if the community needs or wants to have some special businesses or concepts included. With these ideas in mind, it would be helpful to have a certain amount of funding in place before getting a developer on board for the project. Luckily, Spartanburg has several different options for funding in multiple areas.

Spartanburg has several different agencies and nonprofits that have various interests that they fund to promote growth in the city. These entities cover broad subjects such as art, health, and safety. These overall goals have been mentioned in our proposals before. These areas are important to communities in general. It is especially important to neighborhoods such as Highland that suffer greatly in multiple areas of general wellbeing.

The Spartanburg County Foundation is a long-standing entity in Spartanburg for funding many projects throughout the county by non-profits. They have several programs that they run for community members throughout the year. An example of this is the Grass Roots Leadership Program they provide yearly. This foundation provides grants and has yearly deadlines that must be met. The foundation is not restricted in what areas that they will cover.

The United Way of the Piedmont is also another partner that could possibly provide funding. They are well known throughout the United States. The United Way has community funds that they give to non-profits. They are also the agency that runs the AmeriCorps VISTA program locally and that could possibly be of use. The agency needs to be contacted to find out specific deadlines and requirements to gain funding.

The Mary Black Foundation, as mentioned above, is also a local entity that can provide funding for the mixed-use center or other various proposed ideas. This foundation is associated with the Mary Black Hospital System. Their main area of interest is associated with health. This can cover a varied array of areas. It can be regarding health, healthy eating and healthcare education. This foundation has a set process to receive funding. It is laid out online and the application is also online.

The Spartanburg Regional Foundation is very similar to the Mary Black Foundation in that it is part of the Regional Hospital System and focuses on health of the community/individual. The Foundation would need to be contacted about the grant application process. These are yearly grants.

The Chapman Cultural Center also gives out yearly grants in a wider array of areas. The have Community Fund Grants, ArtsGrow Grants specifically for promoting arts in the community and General Operating Grants that can help with everyday operating expenses. This can be helpful to make the Highlands area better.

There are also other grant sources that are not local and would require more research to see if they would be a good fit. These are one such as Tiger Grants, The Gates Foundation, and more. These grants are competitive and would require more time and effort to gain. The

City might want to keep these in mind for the future, but need to be aware of the cost/benefit of applying for them.

Another federal program to take advantage of could be through the IRS Section 42 Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program. There is an application process for the allocation of State of South Carolina's Tax Credits through the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) (Warren, 2010). The proposed development must adhere to the South Carolina State Housing and Finance Department Authority's (SCHFDA) site requirements to be eligible for LIHTC funding (Warren, 2010). The Department of Treasury provides "dollar-for-dollar" tax credits that investors can use to balance their federal income tax liability (Warren, 2010). The Treasury grants the credits to states based on the state's population. There is a challenge when trying to implement LIHTC developments. One challenge is rooted in the demand of investors because low-income housing is very costly and does not produce much profit. There is also the challenge of the lack of state allocation of tax credits to a particular project in the area.

It would also be advisable to see if the private sector would be willing to participate in providing funds. Many businesses have funds that they invest in the community for many reasons. These can include community goodwill and community investment. It will be best to have a mix of public and private funding in place to entice a developer to invest in the project as well.

## Conclusion

While the costs may initially seem prohibitive, the mixed-use center is a much-needed space for the Highlands Community. It addresses some of their most critical needs of the Highland Community in a manner that is accessible to the entire region. It alleviates issues of food access, creates a modest increase in affordable housing stock, increases connectivity,

brings socioeconomic diversity into the area with market rate units, and makes performing daily tasks more convenient and accessible for the entire community. Creating a new, exciting space adjacent to the Highlands Community will help increase exposure to the community, and help dispel some of the stigma of the region. The success of the commercial uses in this type of environment will build consumer confidence, generate tax revenues for the city, and encourage further development. But most importantly, it provides a benefit both the City of Spartanburg and the Highland Neighborhood while preserving the neighborhood's unique character and tradition.

## Final Highland Neighborhood Plan Proposal Conclusion

In conclusion, in order to achieve our goals to increase connectivity for the neighborhood, increase access and availability of healthy food, spark economic development, and mitigate traffic problems, we created multiple strategies at varying levels of resource requirements. Our strategies include creating a healthy food program, implementing traffic calming measures throughout the community at problem areas, building a bridge between communities, and utilizing a vacant lot to build a multifaceted mixed-use center. After extensive research, for each strategy a thorough analysis was performed by gathering data on the current conditions of the area. That data that was then synthesized in light of the problems the community faced to create a context in which to develop plans and evaluate alternatives. From this we developed a variety of multi-level strategies to achieve the community's goals. Implementation for each strategy will require key partners in the community as well as fiscal studies that determine multiple funding sources.

Moving forward, it is crucial to remember the planning process is a circle. After there are public meetings, charrettes and visioning, we must review data and evaluate, assess current conditions, identify the changes to be made, plan the changes, implement the changes and then start again with evaluation. Feedback at every step as well as evaluating the final product is extremely important for long-term success. By following this process and working with the community, we are confident that we can implement a product that will make a meaningful impact on improving the Highland Community.

## Bibliography


Alden, D. (2015, October 26). Piscataquog River bridge in Manchester officially opens. *New Hampshire Union Leader.* Retrieved December 1, 2017, from http://www.unionleader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?avis=UL&date=20151027&category=NEWHAMPSHIRE03&lopenr=151029209&Ref=AR&template=printart

Alta Planning + Design. (2013). Spartanburg Trails & Greenways Plan. Retrieved on December 07, 2017 from http://spartanburgparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Trails-and-Greenways-Masterplan.pdf

American Planning Association. (2013). Community CPTED. PAS Quick Notes, 42. Retrieved from

Anderson Bridges. (n.d.). How Much Does A Bridge Cost? Retrieved November 30, 2017, from http://www.andersonbridges.com/cost

Blockley, D. I. (2012). *Bridges: The Science and Art of the World's Most Inspiring Structures*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Butterfly Foundation (2014). Retrieved from: http://www.butterfly-sc.com/home.html

City of Spartanburg Zoning Map May 2017 (2017). City of Spartanburg. Retrieved on September 20, 2017 from http://www.cityofspartanburg.org/cms_assets/Planning/Zoning%20Map%20May%202017.pdf

City of Spartanburg. (2015). Highland Community Survey Results [Online Survey]. Spartanburg, SC: Highland Working Group.

City of Spartanburg. (2016). Memorandum of Understanding. Spartanburg, SC: Unpublished.

City of Spartanburg. (2017). Request for Qualifications for Transformation Plan (Highland Neighborhood). Spartanburg, SC: Unpublished.

Dalvit, D. (2016). Construction Cost Per Square Foot for Multifamily Housing Based on Construction Type. EVStudio. Online

Food Environmental Atlas (2017). United States Department of Agriculture. Accessed October 29, 2017. Retrieved from https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas/go-to-the-atlas/

Fresh Corner Café, (2017) Corner Store Initiatives. Retrieved December 07, 2017 from www.FreshCornerCafe.com

GAVA Go! Austin/ Vamos! Austin (2017) End of Year Report 2016. Accessed Nov. 1, 2017. Retrieved from http://www.goaustinvamosaustin.org/english

GoUpstate.com (January 23, 2017) Vacant Cammie Clagett apartments to be demolished. Online

GoUpstate.com. (February 25, 2017) Spartanburg's Highland neighborhood sees signs of hope. Online.

Healthy Food Access Portal (2017) "Find Money & Policy Efforts by State" Retrieved November 24, 2017 from http://healthyfoodaccess.org/resources-tools/find-money-policy-efforts-by-state?st=South%20Carolina

Highland Working Group. (2016). Highland Neighborhood Transformation Plan. Retrieved from Clemson University website: https://clemson.instructure.com/courses/30173/files/folder/Highland%20Neighborhood?preview=1801763

How Much Does a Pedestrian Bridge Cost? Part III: Size. (2014, November 11). Retrieved November 30, 2017, from http://gatorbridge.com/pedestrian-bridge-cost-size/

How to Apply: TIGER Grant. (2014, February 25). Retrieved December 08, 2017, from https://www.transportation.gov/tiger/apply

Larson, N. I., Story, M. T., & Nelson, M. C. (2009). Neighborhood environments: disparities in access to healthy foods in the US. *American journal of preventive medicine*, *36*(1), 74-81

Levy, D. (2000). Investment–saving comovement and capital mobility: evidence from century long US time series. *Review of Economic Dynamics*, *3*(1), 100-136.

Meg Whiteley, personal communication, September 12, 2017

Minneapolis Health Department. *Healthy Corner Stores: Making healthy foods more visible, affordable, and attractive in neighborhood grocery stores* (n.d.) Retrieved September 25, 2017. From http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/living/new%20cornerstores

O'Malley, K., Gustat, J., Rice, J., & Johnson, C. C. (2013). Feasibility of increasing access to healthy foods in neighborhood corner stores. *Journal of Community Health*, *38*(4), 741-749.

Palmetto Cycling Coalition. (2016, September). Funding Biking and Walking Infrastructure and Programs in South Carolina: Eligible Funding. Retrieved from http://pccsc.net/pdfs/Funding-Biking-and Walking-Facilities-in-SC.pdf

Phillips, K. W. (2014, October 01). How Diversity Makes Us Smarter. Retrieved December 08, 2017, from https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-diversity-makes-us-smarter/

Pinard, C. A., Byker Shanks, C., Harden, S. M., & Yaroch, A. L. (2016). An integrative literature review of small food store research across urban and rural communities in the U.S. *Preventive Medicine Reports*, *3*, 324–332. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2016.03.008

Rosario, N. C. (2016). Highland Neighborhood Needs Assessment.

Solt, K. (2017, June 28). Highland Neighborhood opens Innovation Village. Retrieved December 07, 2017, from http://wspa.com/2017/06/28/highland-neighborhood-opens-innovation-village/

Spartanburg County. (2015). Spartanburg County Geographic Information System. Retrieved December 07, 2017 from http://192.146.148.33/Freeance/Client/PublicAccess1/index.html?appconfig=DetailedWeb County Parks Department (n.d.) *Network Recommendations: Proposed Trail Network*. Retrieved September 24, 2017 from http://spartanburgparks.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/Ch4_NetworkRecs.pdf.

SPATS. (n.d.). River Place Park Bridge. Retrieved December 03, 2017, from http://spatsmpo.org/projects/bike-and-pedestrian-projects/river-place-park-bridge/

Speed Humps. (n.d.). Retrieved December 07, 2017, from http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/speed_humps.cfm

U.S. Green Building Council. (2014). Getting to Know LEED: Neighborhood Development. Retrieved December 07, 2017, from https://www.usgbc.org/articles/getting-know-leed-neighborhood-development

USDA Defines Food Deserts. (n.d.) Retrieved September 05, 2017, from http://americannutritionassociation.org/newsletter/usda-defines-food-deserts

USDA. (2015). FACT SHEET: White House Report Highlights New Research on SNAP's Effectiveness and the Importance of Adequate Food Assistance. Retrieved November 10, 2017, from https://www.fns.usda.gov/pressrelease/2015/wh-120815

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Occupancy status, 2011 - 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B25002&prodType=table

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Educational attainment for the population 25 years and over, Population 25 years and over,2011 - 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B15003&prodType=table

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Household income in the Past 12 Months (In 2015 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars), 2011 - 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B19001&prodType=table

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Median household income in the past 12 months (In 2015 Inflation-adjusted dollars), 2011 - 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B19013&prodType=table

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Median Value, 2011 - 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. retrieved from

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B25077&prodType=table

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Poverty Status in the past 12 months by household type by age of householder, 2011 - 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B17010&prodType=table

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Poverty threshold for 2015 by size of family and number of related children under 18 years. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html

U.S Census Bureau (2015), Race, 2011 - 2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. retrieved from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B02001&prodType=table

Voices for Healthy Kids (2016). North Carolina General Assembly Funds Healthy Corner Store Initiative. Accessed November 29, 2017. Retrieved from *https://voicesforhealthykids.org/nchcs/*

Walker, R. E., Keane, C. R., & Burke, J. G. (2010). Disparities and access to healthy food in the United States: A review of food deserts literature. *Health & place*, *16*(5), 876-884.

Warren, M. (2010). *South Carolina Low Income Housing Tax Credit Development: Process, Procedures & Proposal* (master's thesis). Johns Hopkins University. Retrieved December 8, 2017, from https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/35915/Warren_SC%20Lo

w%20Income%20Housing%20Tax%20Credit%20Development%20Deerwood%20Aveneu
_2010_Sislen.pdf

William Warwick, personal communication, October 10th, 2017

## Appendix A. Questions for Leroy Jeter

1. What're your top three short-term priorities for the community?
2. What is a long-term priority for the community?
3. We have read that safety, police and community relations, job opportunities, housing needs
   (vacant lots and old homes), aging Bethlehem Center, and food desert is issues- would you agree with this list?
4. What do you see as the biggest problem? Are all these problems still relevant?
5. Has the City approached these problems - any plans, what's the progress?
6. Is there consensus across the community that these are the main problems?
7. Are you open to partnerships besides the people in the Memorandum?
8. Are there any current funded projects going on that we should be aware of?
9. Are there any partnerships you have that provide funding?
10. What's your relationship with the Housing Authority?
11. Anything you absolutely do not want to see suggested?
12. How do you mobilize support for projects?

## Appendix B: Community Outreach Advocate

United Way of the Piedmont

**JOB DESCRIPTION**

**Position:** Community Outreach Advocate: Highlands Community

**Reports to:** Vice President of Community and Collective Impact

**Job Category:** Salaried, Full-time {32/hrs/wk) (this is a grant funded position)

**Purpose:** The Community Outreach Advocate (COA) will seek, foster, and strengthen relationships with neighbors and organizations in Spartanburg County. An advocate speaks up for a person, or for an issue that needs a champion. Through advocacy efforts the position will begin to promote and further equity by integrating strategies that address identified social and community needs and disparities by creating partnerships between neighborhoods and the larger community to create fairer, healthier, and more supportive environments. The COA will be addressing a variety of the socioeconomic factors that impact health equity. While many outcomes will be related to those socioeconomic factors, the ultimate measures of success will the improvement of health outcomes and individual perception as it relates to equitable access and treatment. The position requires strong interpersonal skills to make connections and build relationships with the target client base. The COA will work within their own community to build the capacity of individuals, families and the broader neighborhood community to advocate on their own and attain collective outcomes.

**Minimum Job Requirements:**
To qualify for this position, an individual must meet the following minimum job requirements:

- High School Diploma or GED
- Good knowledge of the Highland neighborhood and community resources
- Reside within the Highland neighborhood
- Familiarity with the Highland neighborhood and its occupants
- Familiarity with local health and social problems
- Ability to effectively use, at the basic level, computer applications such as spreadsheets, word processing, calendars, emails and database software
- Ability to read, write, understand and communicate in English
- Ability to effectively communicate, both orally and in writing
- Ability to speak before groups effectively, show emotional maturity, good judgment and tact; integrity, tolerance of differing points of view and beliefs
- Interest in community organizing and outreach
- Experience developing community partnerships and collaborations
- Proven relationship-building skills, ability to participate in work teams
- Demonstrated ability to work independently, manage multiple projects and deadlines, and prioritize work

## Appendix C: Housing Authority Questions

1. What is the rest of the plan for Cammie Clagett? And is the community aware of this plan?
2. What is next for demolition within the Highland Community? We have heard both Norris Ridge and Prince Hall are being considered.
3. What are the existing plans in regard to the land after demolition?
4. If you're rebuilding, what kind of housing will it be? Number of units? Will there be a net gain or loss for housing units? In general, how are you looking to mitigate displacement?
5. Does the neighborhood know what you're planning on doing? What is public knowledge versus plans that are in the works?
6. What's your relationship with the community?
7. Would you be open to funding affordable housing in vacant lots, specifically one on John B. White Sr. Blvd, adjacent to the Highland Community?
8. Are there any outstanding governmental grant applications for funding?
9. What is the budget for the city next year? Are there any restrictions to implementing working class housing/affordable housing programs?
10. Are there any plans to address the vacant single lots?
11. Is there any other information we should be aware of as we draft our suggestions for the Highland Community in regard to housing concerns?