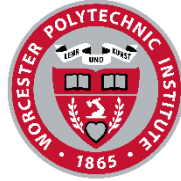# URBAN PLANNING: SPRINGFIELD'S NORTH AND SOUTH ENDS

Interactive Qualifying Project Report completed in
partial fulfillment of the Bachelor of Science degree
at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA

Submitted to:
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Abstract

Springfield, Massachusetts is a city that has struggled over the past few decades in terms of its economic growth and development. The goal of this project, sponsored by DevelopSpringfield, was to provide a set of robust solutions for the organization to implement with the intentions to improve the North and South Ends of Springfield. The team analyzed these neighborhoods separately in order to identify their unique needs and develop two separate strategic plans. Through an analysis of the C-term team's work and the utilization of participatory methods with the community, this goal was achieved. The results of this project were used to produce this white paper detailing recommendations for possible future initiatives by DevelopSpringfield.

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Project Goal

Located in western Massachusetts, the city of Springfield has long fell behind the rest of the state in terms of development and economic growth. Springfield is divided into seventeen distinct neighborhoods; this project focuses on the North and South End communities. The North End of Springfield refers to the neighborhoods of Brightwood, Memorial Square and Liberty Heights. Over 80% of the population is of Hispanic descent and many of these residents speak Spanish as their primary language. The South End is the smallest of the seventeen neighborhoods in Springfield, inhabited by a population of roughly five thousand residents. Once a large Italian community, the region has seen a considerable influx of the Hispanic population, leading to large ethnic and cultural divides.

Subsequently, many foundations have been formed in Springfield to combat these problems and the negative effects that they cause. At the forefront of this development is an organization called DevelopSpringfield. They are a nonprofit organization that serves "to advance development and redevelopment projects, to stimulate and support economic growth, and to expedite the revitalization process within the City of Springfield" (DevelopSpringfield, 2016). DevelopSpringfield has partnered with Worcester Polytechnic Institute in order to act as the sponsor for both the 2016 C-term and D-term Pioneer Valley Interactive Qualifying Projects.

The majority of the research in this report was based on the work done in the previous term and the personal observations of the current team through analysis and

meetings. The C-term team conducted an anecdotal survey with residents, visitors, and employees of both the North and South Ends of Springfield to evaluate the top problems in the area. The three highest rated problems in both Ends were substance abuse, crime, and low income level. The third and fourth highest rated problems varied by area, with the North listing the lack of job training and housing, and the South listing lack of parking and access to groceries. The objective of this project was to refine a list of solutions to each of these problems generated by the C-term team, as well as suggest other solutions to additional problems that were found in Springfield.

Methods

In order to gather data from the community, several methods were employed. The interviews and surveys of the C-term students were critically analyzed to ensure a full understanding of the purpose for this project. Next, the team attended community meetings held by important members of the area in order to establish contacts and to carry out introductions to the community. In-person surveys were conducted with residents to get honest feedback on different areas of interest in Springfield. And lastly, focus groups were held with residents and business owners to get an assessment of the in-depth solutions to problems that they had identified.

Findings and Recommendations

Blue Light Emergency Systems

Focus group participants agreed that the blue light emergency systems could be an effective method for quick police response. Additionally, they responded well to the possibility of the systems also having a 311 button that could report and transmit non-

emergency issues. The residents also offered insight to the possible problems that could be encountered when implementing a system like this. The most commonly expressed concern was the potential for prank calls as a means to waste valuable police time. An additional follow-up concern was the chance of vandalism to the machines. Participants divulged that they would be willing to see the blue light systems in highly trafficked, and therefore more dangerous, areas. The locations which were suggested included the main streets of both Ends and along the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway, which sees a lot of pedestrian and bike traffic, as well as crime.

We recommend that the city use a beta testing method to evaluate the potential success of the blue light emergency systems. From the information and community feedback received, we feel that these systems are a technology worth pursuing. Due to the heavy initial financial investment and ongoing maintenance costs, we recommend first conducting a beta test in a busy, recreational area. The team believes that, if it is economically feasible and if the beta test is successful, the city should work to institute the blue light emergency systems in other heavily trafficked, public areas in order to make Springfield a safer place to live and visit.

Improved Lighting

Focus group participants and survey respondents agreed that the city rated poorly in terms of keeping the region well-lit. Not only did residents agree that many areas were lacking necessary lighting, but they also elaborated on the generally poor upkeep of the existing lighting systems. This makes the area look aesthetically displeasing, in addition to making these places more dangerous to traverse. By expanding the city's lighting system,

the amount of pedestrian traffic at night would increase and make it safer to be out on the street.

We recommend that the city increases its amount of lighting through the institution of LED lights and structures that light both the street and sidewalk. Because the citizens of both Ends of Springfield feel that it is unsafe to go out at night, we suggest that this problem be treated with high importance and priority. Residents had many areas that they wished to see more lighting. In the North End, this included Main Street, Jefferson Street, and Morgan Street. In the South End, residents suggested Adams Street, Morris Street, Ashmun Street, Dale Street, Palmer Street, Richelieu Street, Mill Street, Lombard Street, and Arlington Court. In addition to streets, parks were also brought up as areas that need to be brightened as a way to increase safety for pedestrian traffic.

Beautification

Community members generally expressed a positive reaction to the idea of beautifying their city, but communicated concerns about general upkeep and vandalism. Survey and focus group conversations revealed that many residents and business owners are dissatisfied with the appearance of their city. Most residents desired that more flowers and trees be planted as a simple way to brighten the landscape. Overall, the general message received from the focus groups was that the community must take ownership of their city and be willing to collaborate if any lasting changes are to be made.

We recommend that future beautification initiatives primarily utilize residents' ideas to promote ownership of their efforts and that local organizations head up these efforts in order to ensure that there is both funding and upkeep.

Community Space

Residents expressed that a new community space is a much-needed resource, but that it must be affordable and placed in a more convenient location. In both Ends, survey and focus group participants expressed that there is some amount of space available to gather, but usually at a price. This puts a boundary between those who can afford to spend money on such luxuries and those who cannot.

We recommend the addition of a centrally-located community space in the North End that is capable of holding large events and meetings, providing activities for the community, and putting on free programs for the less-privileged in the neighborhood. We recommend, in the South End, that multiple smaller community spaces be spread throughout Springfield. These small community spaces should have the essential community programs available, as well as some recreational facilities with an outdoor space. These community centers could gain income by leasing space to a restaurant that can provide catering for events hosted at the location.

Community Resources

Community resources are lacking in means of advertisement and in addressing the basic needs of the city. Some residents that were able to attend our South End focus group cited the cultural divides of the population as a reason for the lack of community engagement. Participants additionally expressed that they felt resources were too far away. The general consensus was that resources should be consolidated into one building that is located much closer to the Main Street area. Citizens that attended the focus groups were very adamant on how the means of advertisement currently used are not convenient for

most of the populace, and that many individuals are not able to view advertised material until it is too late, or even not at all. Other residents thought that the city should concentrate on the more basic needs of the community. By starting a dialogue with the community and paying attention to their needs, the city will begin to make the improvements that it needs.

Different methods of advertisement must be explored thoroughly. By testing many different advertising methods, the optimal approaches can be determined and promoted. We recommend continuing the efforts towards utilizing social media, as well as developing a new weekly newsletter/flyer delivered directly to the mailboxes of local residents. This newsletter should consolidate all available resources and events, as well as advertise sponsored company ads to help offset its cost.

Youth Cleanup

Community cleanup is a type of program that is commonly used in the schooling systems of countries, such as India, as a way for the youth to get involved in their community and learn about the impact of their actions. Students are assigned a certain area in the community that they are required to keep clean as part of their grade.

Youth community cleanup has the potential to be a dangerous and misperceived project. From the focus groups, it became evident that this program would not work. As a city with a school system "which is already failing," several of the participants noted that younger children should be focusing on their academics, and not a cleaning program. Additionally, there is the possibility that students will encounter trash such as needles, drugs, and weapons, which are hazardous materials for children to be interacting with. We

do not recommend carrying out the youth cleanup program because of the danger

associated with it. We instead recommend that the students participate in a gardening or

beautification initiative. We believe that this new recommendation would still teach

students about respecting their environment and the value of keeping it clean without

putting them in danger.

Adopt-A-Plant

This program was first proposed at a New North Citizens' Council meeting that we

attended. Sayan Sengupta, a graduate student on our team, shared his experience of this

type of program from his home country of India. Local businesses donated plants and

flowers to the community, giving residents the opportunity to 'adopt' and care for a plant.

We recommend using the Adopt-A-Plant program as the first test for evaluating the

potential success of a community garden. A focus group participant gave us the idea of

using this smaller program to feed into a larger initiative for the city, a community garden.

Summary

We believe that these recommendations, if chosen to be implemented by

DevelopSpringfield, will have a profound effect on the community of Springfield. In

addition, we hope that these solutions can be of help to any city that is in a similar position

as Springfield and is looking to grow and develop its economy, in addition to improving the

lives of its residents.

Authorship

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Findings		
Survey Results	Katie Curran	Katie Curran, Cameron DeWallace
Solution Development	Everyone	Everyone
Analysis of Information Gathering Techniques	Lindsey Andrews	Lindsey Andrews
Conclusions and Recommendations		
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Recommendations for Future Initiatives	Everyone	Everyone

The anecdotal survey was designed as a group effort by the entire WPI team and carried out by the Springfield Technical Community College students. The focus group flyers were created by Cameron DeWallace. Yanling Lin drafted the focus group RSVP forms and Lindsey Andrews edited and translated them. The North End focus groups were facilitated by Cameron DeWallace, moderated by Lindsey Andrews, and recorded by Katie Curran. The South End focus groups was facilitated by Nick Porter, moderated by Patrick Bemben, and recorded by Yahel Nachum. The audio was transcribed by Lindsey Andrews for the first North End focus group, Katie Curran for the second North End group, and Yahel Nachum for the South End focus group.

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1. Introduction

Located in western Massachusetts, the city of Springfield has long fell behind the rest of the state in terms of development and economic growth. Much of this is due to the educational background of the majority of its residents, where only 18.8% of those over 25 have a bachelor's degree or higher. As a result, the median household income of residents in Springfield is over $20,000 lower than that of the rest of the state ($34,734 vs $66,768) ("Springfield, Massachusetts," 2016). Springfield is divided into seventeen distinct neighborhoods; this project focuses on the North and South End communities. The North End of Springfield refers to the neighborhoods of Brightwood, Memorial Square, and Liberty Heights. Over 80% of the population is of Hispanic descent and many of these residents speak Spanish as their primary language. The South End is the smallest of the seventeen neighborhoods in Springfield, inhabited by a population of roughly five thousand residents. Once a large Italian community, the region has seen a considerable influx of the Hispanic population, leading to large ethnic and cultural divides.

Subsequently, many foundations have been formed in Springfield to combat these problems and the negative effects that they cause. At the forefront of this development is an organization called DevelopSpringfield. They are a nonprofit organization that serves "to advance development and redevelopment projects, to

stimulate and support economic growth, and to expedite the revitalization process within the City of Springfield" (DevelopSpringfield, 2016).

DevelopSpringfield has partnered with Worcester Polytechnic Institute in order to act as the sponsor for both the 2016 C-term and D-term Pioneer Valley Interactive Qualifying Projects. This report by the D-term team has built upon the work done in the previous term with DevelopSpringfield. Together, the two groups will deliver a comprehensive set of solutions that can be instituted by DevelopSpringfield in the near future. The C-term team has provided a list of possible solutions based on the top problems that they found in the area and we will evaluate these solutions.

The majority of the research in this report was based on the work done in the previous term and the personal observations of the current team through analysis and meetings. The C-term team conducted an anecdotal survey with residents, visitors, and employees of both the North and South Ends of Springfield to evaluate the top problems in the area. The three highest rated problems in both Ends were substance abuse, crime, and low income level. The third and fourth highest rated problems varied by area, with the North listing the lack of job training and housing, and the South listing lack of parking and access to groceries. From this survey and face-to-face interviews with business owners, the team was able to generate a set of solutions for the D-term team to further evaluate. These solutions included a blue light emergency system, increased street lighting, improved beautification to inspire a sense of community pride, a community center, better-developed community outreach through pamphlets and

social media, and a Springfield Pride Campaign. In the South End only, the team also proposed constructing a lighted path from the Basketball Hall of Fame to the new MGM casino and building a parking garage to combat the expressed need for more parking.

The objective of this project was to refine the list of solutions generated by the C-term team, as well as suggest other solutions to additional problems that were found in Springfield. This analysis was done through hands-on work with residents of the North and South Ends. Through the combination of conducting surveys, attending meetings, and holding focus groups, we were able to effectively ascertain the main challenges associated with Springfield, as well as gauge the reaction of residents and business owners to a refined list of solutions. The economic feasibility and potential benefits of the positively-received solutions were evaluated in order for DevelopSpringfield to make the final decision regarding the implementation of these solutions. The ultimate goal of this project was to improve the development of Springfield and make the city a better place to live, work, and visit.

2. Background

Springfield, MA

The city of Springfield, Massachusetts was founded in 1636 by William Pynchon and was the first Springfield to be settled in the New World. It is the third largest city in Massachusetts and fourth largest in New England. The city's convenient location in central New England led to its early success as a major railroad center ("History and Culture," 2013). The city quickly grew and prospered, making it well known for its history and innovation. These accomplishments led to a mix of nicknames for the city: *The City of Firsts,* because of the numerous inventions that came to life in the city's limits, and *The City of Homes*, referring to the impressive architecture that the city boasts (Forbes, 2015). Springfield is divided into seventeen distinct neighborhoods; this project focuses on the North and South End neighborhoods.

North End

The North End of Springfield refers to three distinct neighborhoods in the community: Brightwood, Memorial Square, and Liberty Heights. Over the past century, the North End has been the first home to various nationalities of immigrants, ranging from Greek to Russian. Now, over 80% of the population is of Hispanic descent, with many of these residents speaking Spanish as their primary language. Approximately seventy percent of this Hispanic population is of Puerto Rican nationality. Other ethnicities with a strong presence in the community include Dominican, Italian, and Russian (McDowell & Seidman, 2005).

The largest employers in the area are Baystate Health, General Dynamics

Techsight, and Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance, respectively ("Labor and

Workforce Development," 2013). Despite this, the majority of jobs held by residents are

in fast food restaurants, manufacturing, and sales. A vast amount of residents receive

some form of government assistance, which adds to the amount of childhood poverty

and an increasing unemployment rate. The average household income is substantially

lower than the national average, which directly contributes to the extensively high

crime and substance abuse problems experienced by the community.

The North End has always been considered one of Springfield's most dangerous

neighborhoods. The construction of the "Hospital of the Future", now known as the

"MassMutual Wing" at Baystate Health in 2012, helped to change the perception of the

North End and also brought more people into the city and the surrounding areas

(Kinney, 2012).

South End

The South End is the smallest of the seventeen neighborhoods of Springfield,

inhabited by a population of roughly five thousand residents. For many years, the

neighborhood has been home to a large Italian community. This heritage is still evident

through the numerous Italian landmarks and statues, as well as many old businesses in

the area. Residents can sample traditional Italian cuisine at popular restaurants such as

Red Rose Pizzeria, Frigo's, and La Fiorentina. However, in the past thirty to forty five

years, there has been a massive increase in the presence of Hispanic culture in the South

End. Now, approximately 60% of the total residents are of Hispanic descent. This population shift can be attributed to the construction of Interstate 91 in 1965. The project was responsible for displacing over two-thirds of residents. In the long run, this drove many of the long standing Italian citizens of Springfield who were staying in the neighboring communities to move as well ("Editorial: Tapping potential of Springfield's Riverfront, 2010).

Currently, only about nine to ten percent of the total population of the South End has acquired a bachelor's degree or higher. With the absence of quality education, the area has an extremely low annual household income of just under $35,000, a salary far below the national average ("Springfield, Massachusetts," 2016). This low household income standard, combined with the lack of education, has directly contributed to the growing problems and concerns regarding the high rate of poverty, substance abuse, and crime in the area. In 2011, the South End was severely impacted by a tornado, which caused a massive amount of cosmetic and structural damage. The loss of homes and jobs as a result of this tornado led to an increase in crime, substance abuse, and poverty in the area. The rate of murder and rape in the South End has increased so much so that the number of these crimes amount to more than twice the national average ("National Average Wage Index," 2014).

A major project currently taking place in the South End is the construction of the MGM Casino, which is expected to be completed by fall of 2018. The construction budget is estimated to be about nine hundred million dollars and the casino is projected to

bring in an annual income of approximately twenty five million dollars for the city of Springfield. Many employment opportunities are expected to come from the building of the casino, including three thousand direct jobs and two thousand construction jobs, ninety percent of which will be offered to local residents of the community ("South End Revitalization Plan: Phase 2," 2013).

Community Issues

Once a bustling industrial city, Springfield has started to fall behind the rest of the state over the past few decades, boasting a decline in industry, jobs, and population. In 1960, one-third of Springfield workers were employed by the manufacturing industry. In the decades following, the manufacturing industry in general declined significantly, along with many of the jobs moving to more suburban locations. As a result, much of the Springfield population was left jobless, without the educational background or skills to be able to succeed in other job fields (Kodrzycki et al., 2009). Even today, only 17.9% of the total population has received a bachelor's degree and, as a result, an overwhelming 30.03% of the population lives in poverty (United States Census Bureau, 2015; "Springfield, Massachusetts," 2016). In the past decade alone, the population of Springfield has declined by 3% ("The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America," 2008).

Crime

In relation to crime, Springfield is rated the twelfth most dangerous city nationwide (Barbieri, Domnarski, & Cutone, 2011). For every 100,000 people, there are

578.1 crimes committed each year. This is almost double the national average of 294.7.

Even just in comparison to towns nearby, Springfield's crime rate is vastly higher

("Springfield, Massachusetts, 2016). Additionally, gang-related activity has gained huge

traction in the city. This increase has been attributed to a reduction in the employed

police force as a result of economic downturn. Additionally, budget concerns led the

police department to have to deviate from their successful community policing model.

Property holding stakeholders began to rely on police to respond to their calls reporting

crimes, while lower income renters with few ties to the area were plagued with a fear of

retribution for contacting the police. During the summer of 2009, gang violence became

so intense and well-organized that many residents did not even feel safe enough to

venture out onto the street. Meetings with local law enforcement established that the

issue was the lack of an ability to have 24/7 coverage for each neighborhood.

Additionally, general fear from residents promoted an atmosphere of apathy, with calls

to police only taking place when there was an active shooting, and not to report

activities like drug sales or gang action (Barbieri, Domnarski, & Cutone, 2011).

In October of 2009, Massachusetts State Trooper Michael Cutone worked with

local law enforcement of Springfield to introduce the Avghani Counterinsurgency

Operations (COIN) model to the city. This model had played an essential role for the

officer while he was stationed in Iraq, where he served as captain and team commander

of Special Forces ODA 944. Cutone used this initiative as a means to rebuild the

relationship between local Iraqi infantry and the police "by teaching basic skills and

progressing toward the practical application of those skills in rebuilding the local ability

to defend the community and maintain order" (Barbieri, Domnarski, & Cutone, 2011).

Due to its success in the Middle East, the COIN model was adapted to law enforcement

for city operations. This adaption has allowed Cutone to gather over 60 stakeholder

groups in the city of Springfield, where weekly meetings are held in order to ensure that

the model stays on track for combatting crime (Barbieri, Domnarski, & Cutone, 2011).

The city has had considerable success with the COIN model when established

alongside more community-oriented policing. Law enforcement has made considerable

gains since then, with highlights including the development of the C3 Policing Initiative,

the establishment of neighborhood walks to allow for relationships with residents, and

the provision of counseling mentoring, education, and training for youth formerly

involved with gangs (Barbieri, Domnarski, & Cutone, 2011).

Counter Criminal Continuum Policing, commonly referred to as C3 Policing, has

been regarded as one of the major successes resulting from the establishment of the

COIN model in Springfield. The mission of this agency is "to detect, deter, degrade, and

dismantle criminal gangs and drug dealers" ("C3 Policing," 2013). Unlike community

policing, which involves identifying a 'hot spot' of criminal activity and simply flooding

officers into that area, C3 Policing focuses on undermining the ability of gangs to

operate freely and openly. The goal of this system is to dismantle the gang system and

eradicate their roots and, as a result, keep these roots from regrowing. This system

relies on a working relationship between police and the community in order to allow for

information to flow freely between the two parties. From its institution in 2009, this

policing method has provided positive results for residents, where most surveyed

reported a higher quality of life and an increased feeling of safety ("C3 Policing," 2013).

Low Income Levels and Lack of Jobs

As the industrial base of the city crumbled during the second half of the

twentieth century, poverty began to increase steadily. In 1970, 13% of residents lived in

poverty ("The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America," 2008). As of

2013, that number has increased to 30.3% ("Springfield, Massachusetts," 2016). Many

residents in this area have trouble finding jobs due to the limitations that come from

lacking a high school or college diploma. Case studies have cited that there "appears to

be a mismatch between the kinds of jobs people are trained for through government

programs and the higher-wage jobs that provide a route out of poverty" ("The Enduring

Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America," 2008). Unlike other metropolitan areas

which have experienced a growth in the manufacturing, construction, and finance fields,

Springfield has lost jobs in these areas and instead grown in the service industry. In

general, the services sector does not provide high-wage jobs; as a result, many workers

are forced to take on multiple jobs to be able to provide for themselves and their

families ("The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America," 2008).

This lack of well-paying jobs has contributed to the overall low income levels in

Springfield. The median household income in the city is only $34,731, over $30,000

below the statewide average (United States Census Bureau, 2015). In 2000,

unemployment rates were recorded as 6.0% for men and 5.0% for females. When broken down by ethnicity, one can see that that these rates varied greatly. For non-Hispanic whites, only 5.0% of men and 4.0% of women were unemployed, compared to 15.0% of men and 13.0% of women of Hispanic descent ("diversitydata.org," 2016). While job training programs are available for residents, often times, they do not line up with job opportunities in the area. James Morton of the Massachusetts Career Development Institute in Springfield summed this up through his observation that "frequently the demands of the job market change, yet it takes considerable time for training dollars to reach the field to provide the specific training needed to meet the demand" ("The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America," 2008).

These prospects continue to seem bleak for the increasing generation, as the quality of education of the Springfield schools are subpar to the rest of the state. For the 2013-2014 school year, 86.1% of students in Massachusetts successfully graduated; in Springfield, this number was only 61.6%. Additionally, the dropout rate in the city is nearly double that of the statewide rate (7.2% vs. 3.8%) ("Springfield Special Education Data," 2014). In Massachusetts, state law mandates that all students enrolled in school take the standardized assessment known as the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. This provides a way for the state to evaluate the effectiveness of every public school against the general statewide results ("Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System," 2014). Students are graded based on the Composite Performance Index, where they can be assigned a score of 100, 75, 50, 25, or

0. The average of all students is taken in order to judge the performance of a school or district ("2011 Glossary of Accountability Reporting Terms," 2011). In 2014, the cumulative score for all students in the district was 71.4 for English Language Arts and 61.8 for Mathematics. In comparison, the state reported scores of 86.7 and 80.3 in English and Math, respectively ("2014 MCAS Results by Subgroup by Grade and Subject," 2014).

Substance Abuse

Springfield has had a problem with substance abuse for many years. According to the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, in 2014 alone, 4,515 people received treatment for substance abuse. Of these people, 50.2% were using heroin, 31.1% were abusing alcohol, 7% were using marijuana, 6.7% were using crack/cocaine, 3.7% were using another opioid, and 1.2% were using some other drug (e.g. PCP, methamphetamine, etc.). These numbers have been relatively steady since 2005 ("Description of Admissions to BSAS," 2014). However, the statistics only include individuals who have sought treatment; thus, the actual number abusing substances is likely much higher than reported.

Housing

The poverty level in Springfield is very pronounced and visible through the state of its housing. The city is characterized by a large number of rundown houses, empty lots, and abandoned buildings. The median house/condo value as of 2013 was $143,400, nearly $200,000 below the state's median ("Springfield, Massachusetts,"

2016). Less than 20% of residents own their home and roughly one-third of renters live in amenities subsidized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Development ("The Enduring Challenge of Concentrated Poverty in America," 2008).

The high level of poverty in Springfield has led the area to be associated with higher crime rates, lower standard public schools, and poorer quality infrastructure and buildings. As a result, wealthy and even middle-class families and individuals are more likely to migrate outside of Springfield and settle in areas with better services that are more comparable to their income level (Browne et al., 2011). This migration has caused a lack of mid-level housing in Springfield. Once people in lower-income situations begin to make a better living, they are essentially forced to move out of the city if they wish to find a home corresponding to their financial means. This is a problem for Springfield because it stunts the city's economic growth. However, fixing this problem requires private property owners to either take on an expensive remodeling of current living spaces or totally rebuild new mid-level housing. In an area like Springfield, this is a project that is typically outside of the financials means of its residents.

Cultural Divisions

In comparison to the rest of the country, Springfield is considered to be a rather diverse city. However, the city was not always this way. In 1960, more than 90% of Springfield was Caucasian (Kodrzycki et al., 2009). As of 2013, the population was comprised of 34.4% Caucasians, 40.5% Hispanics, and 20.5% African Americans ("Springfield, Massachusetts," 2016). The city contains very strong cultural lines;

communities within the North and South Ends are largely defined by their ethnic orientation. Relationships between groups of different ethnicities are largely nonexistent within the city, and residents have learned to associate only with those of the same background as themselves.

Community Resources

North End

Many organizations exist within the community as a means to provide guidance to both residents and business owners. For the North End, the New North Citizens' Council (NNCC) is the main ally for residents. The mission of this organization is "to provide advocacy, public and human services to Hampden County residents with an emphasis on the Hispanic/Latino community for the purpose of enhancing the preservation and support of the family resulting in the improvement of quality of life" (New North Citizens' Council [NNCC], n.d.). Neighborhood residents are able to vote for the governing Board of Directors, which is designed to reflect the demographics of the region. This organization, along with acting as a community and individual advocate, offers programs for residents such as Child Care Services, Parent Aid Programs, and Family Support Services (NNCC, n.d.)

South End

One of the greatest allies for business owners in the South End of Springfield is the South End Business Association (SEBA). Comprised of over forty local businesses, the organization aims to encourage business growth and community engagement in

order to provide citizens with places to eat, shop, and receive services locally. SEBA was established early in Springfield's history, at a time when South End residents were predominantly Italian. Classic businesses like Frigo's, Red Rose, and Albano's Market were among the first businesses to join (South End Business Association [SEBA], n.d.). While SEBA does a lot to promote business and maintain the South End's heritage, it also causes some tensions among new business owners who cater to the growing Hispanic population. A growing problem in the South End is trying to find a way to integrate these two communities to allow both Italian and Hispanic businesses to thrive.

Review of Existing Research

The work of the C-term team for the Pioneer Valley project site comprises a majority of the background research for this project and is regarded as part one of this two part project. The main purpose of this team's project was to identify the top problems of the city and possible corresponding solutions for each one.

The deliverables for this team were collected through the creation of an anecdotal survey. The group surveyed respondents on the street and in front of businesses, attempting to gather results from a population that accurately reflected that of the North and South Ends. The survey respondents were given a list of 14 choices of top problems in Springfield and from there provided a numbered rating of their personally identified top five problems from least to most severe. The top problems in both Ends were identified as substance abuse, crime, and low income level. The differences were established with the fourth and fifth highest rated answers, with the

North End listing lack of jobs and housing and the South End listing parking and access

to groceries (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

Proposed Solutions

Blue Light Emergency Systems

The C-Term team identified blue light emergency systems as a means to prevent

crime and substance abuse. Blue light systems are most commonly seen on college

campuses in the United States, as well as occasionally in train stations, along walking

trails, and on beaches. These systems are well-known for the blue LED light atop the

towers, in addition to the emergency phone mounted on it. The model is designed so

that anyone in an emergency can simply walk up to the pillar, press the emergency

button, and immediately be connected to local authorities. The blue light systems can

also function as a notification system, where one can dial 311 for an informative public

announcement recording. This sort of system is used in Malden, Massachusetts to warn

beach-goers of dangerous weather conditions. On average, these nine foot tall towers

cost about $2,000 and the phones about $500, with additional added maintenance and

installation costs. Depending on how many systems are needed, this has the potential to

add up to a considerable amount of money (Newsom, 2014).

However, there are some problems that can be attributed to the emergency

systems. The effectiveness of the system is based on its ability to provide an immediate

response. If the calls are not answered quickly, the system's credibility is greatly

diminished. Additionally, the necessity for calls to be answered promptly forces officers

to be ready to respond at any moment. The police department may potentially need to increase the size of its force in order to deal with this. Lastly, there is a possibility that the systems will be subjected to prank calls or vandalism.

In an interview with WPI Police Lieutenant Ellsworth, the success of the blue light system at WPI was discussed. Overall, the emergency system received calls that amounted to mostly small incidents or accidental misuse. However, Lt. Ellsworth said that the system "worked when it needed to work," meaning that the system was useful in the case of a real emergency (M. Ellsworth, personal communication, March 21, 2016). Though the blue light system "may not stop the bad guy," the flashing LED and speakerphone succeed in drawing attention to the incident (M. Ellsworth, personal communication, March 21, 2016). He also validated the sentiment that the systems foster a sense of safety simply through their presence.

The C-term team proposed a beta testing of the blue light emergency systems. They suggested placing these systems in dangerous areas and recording its effects on crime in that location. If successful, the blue light systems could then be installed throughout the city (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

Improved Urban Lighting

Springfield has many dark streets due to a lack of street lighting and a poor upkeep of the existing systems. Whether or not lighting effects crime is a highly debated topic. In Fitchburg, Massachusetts, a large number of streetlights were turned off in

order to save money. Former Mayor, Lisa Wong, stated that crime went down in the six months after she turned sixty percent of Fitchburg's street lights off. The police chief of Fitchburg also reported that the department received fewer calls reporting drug dealing activity compared to the previous year when the lights were on (Devlin, 2009).

A 2002 study done in London suggests that turning on street lights reduces crime. The study communicated two theories for why this happens. The first is that the increased lighting allows for more surveillance of offenders, and thus they are deterred from committing the crime. The second theory suggests that improving lighting increases community morale and allows residents to take more pride and control of their city. The study went on to evaluate a total of thirteen studies done on the subject in both the United States and in Britain. The crime rates of the areas in question were measured before and after streetlights were turned on. Of the eight American studies, four showed that lighting was effective in reducing crime, while the other four showed that lighting was ineffective. These eight studies taken together showed only a 7% decrease in crime. However, the five more recent British studies showed that all five studies were effective and reduced crime by 30%. Additionally, two of the studies showed that the money saved from crime reduction surpassed the money needed to improve the lighting systems. An analysis of all thirteen studies combined showed a total 20% reduction of crime (Farrington & Welsh, 2002).

Many cities are now choosing to replace current street lights with light emitting diode (LED) lights. A case study in Portland, Oregon estimates that this replacement will

have a three to ten year return-on-investment period, depending on the cost and number of fixtures. Unlike the commonly used high pressure sodium (HPS) lights, LED lights have a broader and more uniform white light, which helps to reduce wasted light and energy. While the initial costs of LEDs are more expensive than their counterparts ($155 vs $110 per bulb), these lights see a 75% decrease in maintenance costs on average and last two to three times longer than standard lights. In addition to these benefits, LEDs are also energy-efficient and will help cities to reduce their carbon footprint ("City of Portland Green Purchasing Case Study," 2016).

The C-term team evaluated areas that would benefit most from increased lighting. They observed that the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway was a very dangerous place to walk at night due to its lack of lighting and, thus, a good area to test the effects of better lighting. They also suggested placing more lights along Main Street to encourage foot traffic to local businesses after five o'clock. Many residents have stated that the businesses in the area close up when it starts to get dark and the city becomes a ghost-town. If businesses were to stay open longer, people would be encouraged to be out on the street more and crime could potentially decrease (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

Beautification

Beautification involves improving the visual aspects of a person, place, or thing. In relation to cities, beautification most often involves planting trees and flowers, repaving roads, and performing general city clean-up. These types of projects are most

often taken on by the city council as a means of increasing tourism and commerce (Thompson, 2014).

Beautification of the city was recommended in order to create a more positive community environment and foster a sense of pride towards the neighborhood and city in general. Specifically, the team recommended creating community spaces for people to gather, revitalizing local parks, and adding park benches along certain streets. Another suggestion was to have community artists and children use their skills to paint murals on underpasses or blank sides of buildings as a way to give residents ownership of their community. By making these places look nicer, the perception of Springfield could be altered from an unsafe, rundown area to a beautiful and friendly place to live (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

For the South End only, the team proposed creating a 'themed path' that connects the Hall of Fame and the new MGM casino. They theorized that this would help bring more tourism to the two hallmark locations of the South End and increase attendance at local businesses alongside the path (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016). This idea was not pursued by our team, as we felt that it was outside the scope of what we would be able to complete in a seven week term.

Community Center

The C-Term team did some preliminary research into the idea of a new community center. They suggested that the space could host businesses and offices,

specifically those for the police so that they could build a stronger relationship with the community (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

Several community centers already exist in Springfield, such as the YMCA and the Boys & Girls Club. In the South End, plans to build a new community center are being undertaken, as the 2011 tornado destroyed the city's previous center. The North End has expressed a considerable need for a community space to gather and hold community meetings and conferences. In the existing community centers, residents must pay in order to participate, something that the majority of a poverty-stricken city like Springfield cannot afford.

Community Outreach

Workforce development is a crucial part of getting Springfield out of poverty and providing stable and well-paying jobs for its residents. As described in the "Low Income Levels and Lack of Jobs" section above, the majority of the city's residents do not possess a degree higher than a high school diploma and, as a result, are stuck in low-paying, menial jobs. Job training in the area oftentimes does not lead to a successful job for most of those who attend. A Trade Initiative, which would start in middle or high school, just like a regular vocational program, could be what the younger generations needs to secure an interest in the trades and eventually be able to pursue a career in whatever the individual has taken interest in.

The C-term team evaluated this problem and recommended increasing community outreach. Through pamphlets and social media, people can be more well-informed of opportunities available to them in the community (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

Additional research by our team found that a major issue in community outreach is simply finding a way to reach the entire populace. The cultural divides of the city often keep those of differing ethnicities from interacting, and thus there is a large knowledge gap about events taking place. Additionally, many activities that are already present in the area require fees to participate and many residents do not have the money needed to get involved at their disposal.

Parking

Survey results indicated that a lack of parking is currently a prevalent issue in the South End of Springfield. The C-term team suggested three possible multipurpose parking garage models that could be adopted to combat this problem. The first was an adaptation of a structure that is currently in use at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, where a rooftop field sits atop the parking structure. Not only does this provide additional parking, it also addresses the South End's desire for more recreational land. For the second structure idea, the team drew inspiration from the '11 11' parking garage in Miami, Florida. Described as a "unique shopping, dining, residential and parking experience," the garage features a collection of retailers and restaurants along its base ("11 11," 2016). This provides a way for the city to increase its consumer base,

while at the same time combatting one of its expressed problems. The final idea generated by the team was based on Kansas City's Public Library, where the sides of the garage are designed to look like a bookshelf. The titles were chosen based on input from the local community, allowing residents to take ownership of the structure and find a unifying way to represent their city (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

Although parking is currently a prevalent issue in the South End of Springfield, the team recognized that the creation of the MGM Casino is expected to bring in a large parking garage that is open for residents to use. If additional parking is still a need for the community, then the team suggested adopting any of these three multifunctional parking structures (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016). Due to this possible resolution to the problem, our team did not consider this to be an area where we should focus our efforts.

Springfield Pride Campaign

The final C-term team recommendation was to enact a 'Springfield Pride Campaign' as a way to increase community pride, promote the cultures of the city, and bring in tourism. They stated that this could additionally function as a way to bring together the conflicting cultures of Springfield and bridge some of the ethnicity gaps that are highly prevalent in the community. A specific suggestion that they made was to create a YouTube video with residents detailing what they love about their neighborhoods in order to foster a more positive image of the city (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

This idea was not heavily researched by the D-term team. We felt it best that members closer to the community look more into this idea, as they would be able to better decide if this was a worthwhile way to increase community pride. We did not feel that we had enough of a personal connection to the community to pursue this idea.

Additional Proposals by the D-term Team

Through research and interaction with Springfield residents, we recognized the need for several smaller projects that could greatly help the city to flourish. These proposals include: a mentoring program, the Adopt-A-Plant project, and youth community clean-up.

Mentoring Program

Mentoring programs can be used for a variety of goals, including promoting youth development or preparing for education and employment. Most often, these programs provide the greatest number of benefits to 'at-risk' youth (DuBois, Holloway, Valentine, & Cooper, 2002). In Springfield, 64% of children are forced to grow up in single parent homes (Zill, 2015). Oftentimes, this means that they are forced to grow up without an important role model in their lives. With the already high level of poverty and low school completion rate, Springfield is a prime location for a mentoring program.

Several programs already exist in the city. One is Project Coach, an organization that works "to bridge the economic, educational and social divisions facing Springfield

youth by empowering and employing inner-city teens to coach, teach, and mentor elementary school students in their neighborhood" (Project Coach, 2014). Smith College undergraduates tutor and give homework help to struggling students, in addition to providing after-school fitness and health programs. Additionally, there is also the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization, which provides a one-on-one relationship between mentor and mentee.

While these mentoring programs are in place, there is often a long wait to find a mentor. Other times, heavy fees are involved with the clubs, something that the under-privileged youth who are most in need of a mentor are not capable of affording.

Adopt-A-Plant Program

This program was first proposed at a New North Citizens' Council meeting that we attended. Sayan Sengupta, a graduate student on our team, shared his experience of this type of program from his home country of India. Launched by the World Wildlife Fund, this program hands out donated plants to residents who want them, as a way "to bring urban people closer to conservation and establish a moral link between nurturing and protection" ("WWF launches an adopt-a-plant campaign in India," 2016). Former prime minister Shri I K Gujral commended the program, saying "Respect for life begins with a tree... If one has respect for trees, one will also develop respect for others. This kind of initiative should be taken up by each one of us" ("WWF launches an adopt-a-plant campaign in India," 2016).

The people present at the meeting had a positive reaction to the idea, saying that it would not only beautify the city, but also give residents a stake in the wellness and cleanliness of their community.

Youth Community Cleanup

Community cleanup is a type of program that is commonly used in the schooling systems of countries such as India as a way for the youth to get involved in their community and learn about the impact of their actions. Students are assigned a certain area in the community that they are required to keep clean as part of their grade. Most often, this is a part of their science curriculum, as it provides a novel method for students to learn about the environment.

As a low-income and under-beautified city, Springfield is the type of area that could benefit from this type of program. Additionally, students will learn to take ownership of their actions and pride in their city.

Our Sponsor

DevelopSpringfield is a non-profit organization which was founded in 2008. It is dedicated to making the city of Springfield a more stable and economically sound city. DevelopSpringfield does this by taking on projects that directly contribute to rebuilding and redevelopment within the city. A few of the projects currently underway include the Mason Square Supermarket Project and the Springfield Innovation Center (DevelopSpringfield, 2016). Jay Minkarah, the CEO of DevelopSpringfield, acted as the

team's contact and direct connection to the company throughout this project.

DevelopSpringfield has asked WPI students to, first, identify the areas most in need of

improvement and, second, generate viable solutions for those areas of need. They

expect to be presented with a white paper of several solutions that can be further

pursued and implemented in the future.

3. Methodology

The overall goal of this project was to identify the top problems facing the residents of Springfield and provide our sponsor, DevelopSpringfield, with a comprehensive set of solutions to combat each. We used a hands-on approach in order to involve the residents of Springfield and ensure that our analysis of the problems and solutions were an accurate portrayal of their everyday struggles. In order to accomplish this, we adhered to the following list of objectives:

1. Critically analyze the interviews and surveys of the C-term students in order to ensure that we had a full understanding of our purpose for this project.
2. Attend community meetings and introduce ourselves to the community.
3. Perform in-person surveys with residents to get honest feedback on different areas of interest for Springfield.
4. Conduct focus groups with residents and business owners to get feedback on in-depth solutions to problems that they had identified.

This chapter further explains the steps taken to achieve these four objectives.

Critical Analysis of Previous Work

Since this project was largely based on the work done by the team in the previous term, we spent a majority of the first week introducing ourselves to their work

and the project in general. We did this through a critical analysis of their submitted IQP paper, as well as our own background research on the city of Springfield.

The main findings of the C-term paper were culminated through an anecdotal survey that they conducted on the streets of Springfield with residents, employees, business owners, and visitors. From a list of the top 14 problems in Springfield, survey respondents were asked to identify and rate the top 5 problems they encountered. Both Ends identified the top problems as substance abuse, crime, and low income level. The differences came only with the fourth and fifth highest rated answers, with the North End listing lack of jobs and housing and the South End listing parking and access to groceries (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

Through our analysis of this work, we discovered that the survey's respondents may not have provided a full representation of the Springfield population. The team did not record ethnicities, ages, or any other defining characteristics, and thus we have no way of verifying that the sample population matches that of the North and South Ends. The team recorded surveys from only 36 members from the North End and 45 from the South (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016).

The team obtained a total of 81 respondents, which is not a high enough number to be statistically significant for a population the size of Springfield. However, this was not overly concerning for us because the survey was meant to be anecdotal. This type of evidence "may be used as basis for a hypotheses rather than providing a proof" and

serves as a way to give "information that cannot be scientifically measured and validated but which may aid in pursuing research studies" ("What are the different kinds of Anecdotal Evidence?," 2013). Additionally, our analysis of their survey data showed that 17.6% of respondents in the North and 25% of those in the South were non-Springfield residents visiting. Because of the already small number of respondents, this large portion of visitors may have skewed the results from what we were looking for. While how visitors view the city of Springfield is a facet of improving the city, for this project, we are more interested in how we can help its residents. For these reasons, we were a bit hesitant about fully relying on the results that we were given. As a result, we researched more about the city of Springfield and also relied on our first hand results from meetings and surveys to gather our own list of problems that we thought more effectively represented the city. Although we were unsure of the accuracy of the results that we were given, we still went on to analyze the proposed solutions from the C-term team based on their practicality, financial feasibility, and the expected benefit to the community.

Meeting the Community

Trust between communities and researchers is a necessary facet of a successful project. Many times, residents are suspicious of unfamiliar individuals who come into their community for fear of being analyzed or exploited. Other times, they will only offer a more lackluster version of their reality for fear of a negative perception of their lives or the worry of offending researchers or other community members (Christopher,

Watts, McCormick, & Young, 2008). As outsiders to the city of Springfield, we felt it necessary to familiarize ourselves with the city, its members, and its challenges. On top of our background research into Springfield, we also attended several different community meetings to gather insight into the work already being done and the community reaction to this work. We felt that this was an important step to establish ourselves within the community and acquaint ourselves with the best way to interact with residents.

Our entire group attended the New North Citizens' Council monthly meeting for the urban planning grant on March 24, 2016. At this meeting, participants described their goals for the planning process and established a list of important stakeholders and available funds. Participants got a chance to interact in a hands-on activity, where they discussed the areas of interest of safety, community engagement, beautification, health, economic development, and workforce education and how all of these areas were intertwined. This was helpful in establishing background information for us, as many of these areas are also focuses of our project. In addition to information gathering, this meeting also served as a way for us to introduce ourselves to important members of the community and opened up the possibility for us to reach out to them in the future.

On March 31, 2016 we attended a Spanish dream session with NNCC Executive Director Maria Ligus, Assistant Superintendent Lydia Martinez, and Springfield Bilingual Organizer Luz Lopez. This gathering served as an open discussion for participants, where they were able to share their feelings about the struggles that come

from looking for jobs. Not only did we gain valuable information from residents of the North End, but we were also able to get a general idea of how we should format our focus groups. From this session, we were able to identify several important aspects of having a successful focus group, including making flyers for the community to establish a greater turnout, providing refreshments, and supplying a list of ground rules for participants to follow. Overall, the dream session contributed to the success of our focus groups.

The final meeting, hosted by City Councilor Adam Gomez on April 6th, outlined the upcoming construction taking place on Main Street. In attendance were local business owners from the North End, as well as Jose Claudio, a member of the New North Citizens' Council. The meeting went over the upcoming $6 million renovation, which is expected to have a large impact on residents and business owners in the area. The new face for Ward 1 of Springfield is being designed to help prepare the community for the influx of MGM Casino visitors upon completion of the project. This meeting provided us with multiple contacts for our focus groups, two-thirds of which attended.

Surveying Community Members

On reviewing feedback about the survey that was conducted by the C-Term Pioneer Valley IQP team, it was discovered that there were various objections from the community, in particular the attendees of the New North Citizens' Council meeting. One of these objections was that the survey asked "What are the top five challenges in the North [or South] End?" Many attendees at the meeting felt that this question focused

only on the negatives of the community. Another issue with the previous survey was the diversity of the people who participated, as the team did not keep records of the ethnicities of all respondents. It cannot be proven that the first survey was given to a diverse enough group of participants; however, it also cannot be verified. The second survey contains a much more robust demographics section so as to mitigate future discrepancies of this sort.

The primary goal of our follow-up survey was to ask more neutral questions, as opposed to the negatively focused survey by the C-Term team. This neutral survey asked "Could you rate the North [or South] End on these following qualities?" so that we could gather both the positives and negatives of the community. Additionally, we wanted to conduct a survey that was a more representative sample of the North and South End populations. The survey consisted of two parts: a collection of demographic questions and a rating of certain aspects of Springfield. This first set of questions would later allow us to divide the responses based on region, ethnicity, age, and affiliation in Springfield, which would enable us to investigate trends between these groups. Participants were asked the region of Springfield that they most identify with (North End, South End, or neither), followed by if they were a resident, business owner, visitor, or employee of Springfield. The next two questions about ethnicity and age were optional, as we did not want to make any participants feel uncomfortable.

Figure 1: Demographic Portion of the Survey

The second portion of the survey asked the respondent to rate the following

criterion:

- Safety

- Cleanliness

- Access to community space

- Job search resources

- Night-time lighting

- Available parking

- Access to job training

- Quality of public schools

- Substance abuse programs

The ratings available for the user were poor, fair, average, very good, excellent, and not applicable. If the user rated any aspect as either poor or excellent, a follow-up question would ask them to elaborate on their response as an open-response fill-in. We used this as a way for us to learn what the city was doing either very well or poorly so that we could either take ideas from past initiatives or know where to focus our efforts.

WPI

Please rate the North End on these following qualities.

	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable
Safety	O	O	O	O	O	O
Cleanliness	O	O	O	O	O	O
Access to Community Space	O	O	O	O	O	O
Job Search Resources	O	O	O	O	O	O
Well Lit at Night	O	O	O	O	O	O
Available Parking	O	O	O	O	O	O
Job Training	O	O	O	O	O	O
Quality of Public Schools	O	O	O	O	O	O
Substance Abuse Programs	O	O	O	O	O	O

Figure 2: Rating Portion of the Survey

Surveys were conducted both on the streets of Springfield and on the campus of

Springfield Technical Community College. We divided ourselves into groups of two or

three, so as to not overwhelm potential participants with our large group, and also to

get as many survey answers as possible. We engaged possible participants by first

introducing ourselves and then asking if they had a few minutes to take a survey that

could potentially serve to better their city. If they were willing to take the survey, we

then provided a more in-depth explanation of our project. After surveying for hours and

only getting a few responses, we realized that if we wanted to accomplish our goal of

getting a more representative sample of the population, we would need to enlist the

help of the students from Springfield Technical Community College. Our reasoning for

this was that, as residents and students in Springfield, they would know popular places to go and how to relate more to possible participants.

Conducting Focus Groups

Focus groups are an important aspect of effective research, relying heavily on successful group interaction. A popular data collection tool, focus groups essentially work as a conversation tool, encouraging members to interact with one another and cultivate an open atmosphere for discussion (Kitzinger, 1994). Conducting focus groups allowed for us to have an organized venue to test out our ideas, while at the same time providing an air of casual conversation that kept ideas flowing freely.

Participants for our focus groups were gathered through contacts that we established when attending community meetings. These important residents and employees of the city reached out to anyone who they believed would be interested in attending these focus groups. Additionally, we worked on our own to collect participants by passing out flyers to the community.

Figure 3: Focus Group Flyer for the South End

For the North End, these flyers were translated into Spanish so as to appeal to the large Hispanic population of the area.

Our focus groups were a major information-gathering source for us. In these hour long sessions, we asked a series of ten questions specifically relating to the challenges we identified and their corresponding solutions. The focus groups were conducted separately in the North and South Ends, due to tensions between the two

areas and the presence of different problems in each region. In the South End, we held a focus group with three participants, all of whom were important community members. In the North End, we had eleven participants attend our first focus group and one attend our second. These groups contained a mix of residents and business owners.

Our group was divided in half for these focus groups, with three members running the North End focus groups and three running the South. Each group member took on a different role in the meetings - either moderator, facilitator, or note-taker. The moderator was in charge of introducing each concept and solution, in addition to keeping the conversation flowing. The facilitator's main job was to make sure each guest was comfortable and had the chance to speak up. He or she additionally verified that the moderator stayed on track and did not skip any important questions. Meeting notes were recorded by the note-taker.

We created a PowerPoint presentation to provide a visual aid during the focus groups. The PowerPoint contained a brief introduction of our team and the overall purpose of our project with DevelopSpringfield. It contained slides relating to each of our proposals, including the blue light emergency system, community lighting, beautification, community space, resources, elementary school clean-up, the adopt-a-plant project, and a mentoring program. Each slide also contained a picture to provide a visual representation of our overall goal for each solution. To ensure that we gathered all information discussed in the focus groups, we used an audio recorder to document

the conversations and then later transcribed them. These transcriptions can be found in

the appendix of our paper.

4. North End Findings

We obtained a total of 109 survey responses. Out of these responses, 71 (65%) identified with the North End, 25 (23%) with the South End, and 13 (12%) with neither. We chose to divide our findings between the North and South Ends. In this section, we will analyze our North End results based on the neighborhood response.

From the 71 North End respondents, 61 were residents, 1 was a business owner, 6 were visitors, and 3 were employees. All of our participants identified themselves as either white, Hispanic, or African American, as shown in the figure below.
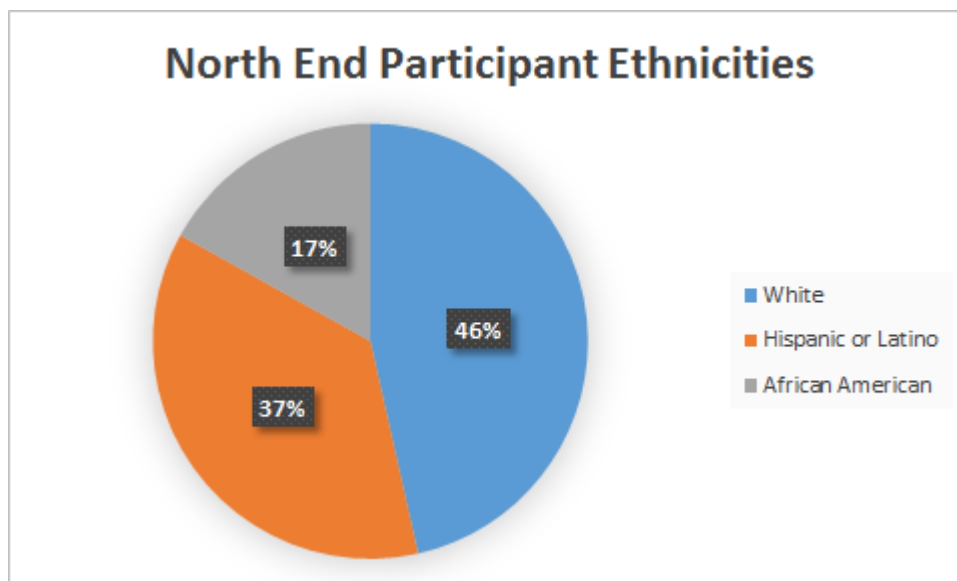
Figure 4: Graphic representation of North End survey respondents' ethnicities.

In a population that is over 80% Hispanic, we found the proportions of our survey participants' ethnicities a bit surprising. We think that this discrepancy between our survey population and that of the North End exists because of the language barrier

between our team members, who do not speak Spanish, and Hispanic participants, who

only speak Spanish.

The age range of participants was the next factor that we asked about. We

succeeded in getting a considerable assortment of ages, which were very similar to the

age makeup of the city. Our survey did not address those under the age of 18, which

skews the actual population percentage that applies to each age range.

North End Participant Ages
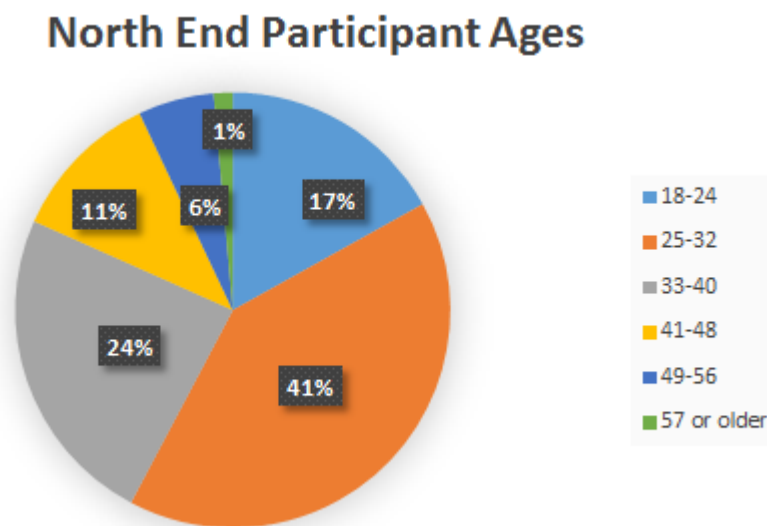
Figure 5: Graphic Representation of North End survey respondents' age ranges.

By recording each person's age and ethnicity, we were able to avoid the pitfalls

of the C-term team's survey. These two questions allowed us to ensure that our results

were representative of the general population, in addition to making sure that we did

not miss the opinions of any significant portion of the community.

The "Surveying the Community" section of our Methodology goes into detail about the questions that we asked and the way that we went about brainstorming these questions. The figure below shows a summary of the responses to our survey.
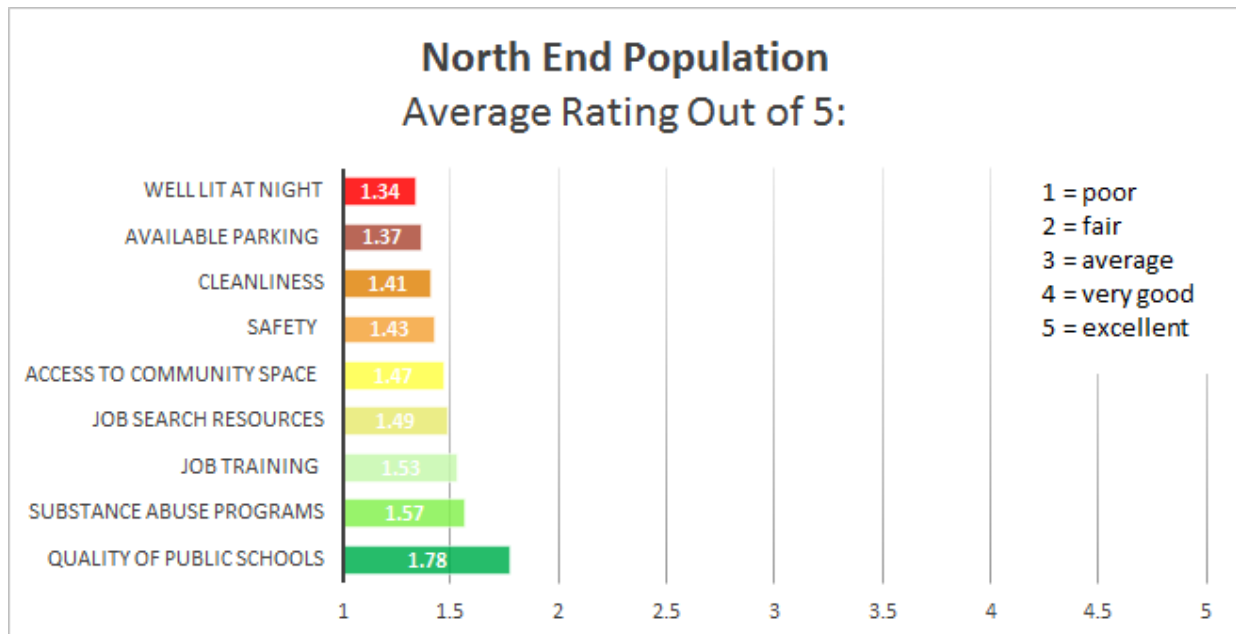
Figure 6: Representation of our North End data in the form of mathematical averages.

In order to mathematically sum up our answers as shown above, we attributed a number to each possible rating: 1-poor, 2-fair, 3-average, 4-very good, and 5-excellent.

As can be seen in the graphic above, the top five problems of Springfield were determined to be lighting, parking, cleanliness, safety, and access to community spaces. This data is a representation of the total mean rankings for each of the qualities.

However, it is important to also look at discrepancies among the responses from different ethnicities. When looking at just Hispanic or Latino responses, the data shows that their top five problems are the same as the total North End. The highest rating was "quality of public schools" for both the North End and the Hispanic populations.

Interestingly, the Hispanic population rated this factor more than 0.8 higher than the

North End did. Even the lowest rated quality, how well-lit at night the neighborhood is,

rated higher among the Hispanic population (1.58 vs 1.34).

#	Question	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable	Total Responses	Mean ▲
8	Quality of Public Schools	7	4	9	4	2	0	26	2.62
9	Substance Abuse Programs	11	2	11	2	0	0	26	2.15
7	Job Training	12	3	10	1	0	0	26	2.00
4	Job Search Resources	11	7	7	1	0	0	26	1.92
3	Access to Community Space	11	7	7	1	0	0	26	1.92
2	Cleanliness	11	9	6	0	0	0	26	1.81
1	Safety	15	4	5	2	0	0	26	1.77
6	Available Parking	14	7	4	1	0	0	26	1.69
5	Well Lit at Night	15	7	4	0	0	0	26	1.58

Figure 7: Summary of Hispanic population responses from the North End.

African American or Black participants felt that cleanliness, parking, job search

resources, community space, and lighting were the top five challenges. These

participants rated each quality much lower than their Hispanic counterparts, having a

range of only 0.36. The highest rating by this ethnic group was a 1.45, which was less

than the lowest rating for the Hispanic community. Additionally, the quality of public

schools was once again the highest rated quality in the neighborhood, achieving a rating

of 1.45. This was significantly less than the 2.62 rating of the Hispanic population. Thus,

while these top challenges did differ from those of the general North End, we did not

view this discrepancy to be significant since the total range of ratings was so small.

#	Question	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable	Total Responses	Mean ▲
8	Quality of Public Schools	8	1	2	0	0	0	11	1.45
9	Substance Abuse Programs	8	1	2	0	0	0	11	1.45
7	Job Training	8	2	1	0	0	0	11	1.36
1	Safety	8	2	1	0	0	0	11	1.36
5	Well Lit at Night	9	1	1	0	0	0	11	1.27
3	Access to Community Space	10	0	1	0	0	0	11	1.18
4	Job Search Resources	10	0	1	0	0	0	11	1.18
6	Available Parking	9	2	0	0	0	0	11	1.18
2	Cleanliness	10	1	0	0	0	0	11	1.09

Figure 8: Summary of Black population responses from the North End.

The White population data shows that those surveyed believe substance abuse programs, safety, parking, lighting, and job training resources are the top 5 problems in the North End. These results differed the most from the general population answers. The most surprising part of this data set was simply how low each rating was, obtaining a highest rating of only 1.23. Once again, all of the ratings for this ethnic group were below the lowest rating for the Hispanic population. Once again, even though the top challenges did differ from those of the general North End, we did not view this discrepancy to be significant since the total range of ratings was so small.

#	Question	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable	Total Responses	Mean ▲
4	Job Search Resources	27	2	1	1	0	0	31	1.23
8	Quality of Public Schools	28	1	1	1	0	0	31	1.19
3	Access to Community Space	28	1	1	1	0	0	31	1.19
2	Cleanliness	28	0	3	0	0	0	31	1.19
7	Job Training	27	3	0	1	0	0	31	1.19
5	Well Lit at Night	29	0	1	1	0	0	31	1.16
6	Available Parking	28	2	0	1	0	0	31	1.16
1	Safety	27	3	1	0	0	0	31	1.16
9	Substance Abuse Programs	28	2	1	0	0	0	31	1.13

Figure 9: Summary of White population responses from the North End.

All three of these demographics believe that safety, lighting, parking, and access to a community space are significant problems in Springfield. In addition, cleanliness was in the top five in both African American or Black and Hispanic or Latino opinions, as well as the 6th most important in White participant's opinion. Therefore, we believe it is valid to consider it one of the top five overall perceived problems and to conclude that the total North End Population ranking distribution diagram is representative of all opinions among the three ethnicities provided.

Another interesting trend that we established through our analyses was the relationship between age and rating. Within every ethnic group, as the age of the participants increased, so did their rating, sometimes achieving a rating of almost 0.5 higher than their younger counterparts. We attributed this difference to the possibility that the older population holds a different view of the city, perhaps thinking of how the city used to be when they were younger. On the other hand, our older respondents may simply just accept the state of the neighborhood, while the younger respondents are more critical and looking for change.

Overall Analysis

These results are remarkably consistent with our background research, and that of the C-term team. Safety and how well-lit at night the city is has been one of our top concerns, and is why we looked into the blue light emergency system and increasing the city's lighting. The low ratings for both of these areas corroborate that these are concerns of the city. The cleanliness of the city, which has the third lowest rating, relates

to our proposals for beautification, the Adopt-A-Plant Program, and the youth-oriented cleanup. Our research into community spaces and resources corresponds to the "access to community space" and "job search resources" aspects. Substance abuse programs seem to rate decently in comparison to other aspects in the North End. This was a bit surprising to us, as substance abuse is a major issue in the city. We believe that this discrepancy simply means that all of those who are struggling with addiction do not reach out for help, but those that do rate the systems fairly well. However, we still hope that this area will improve more as others areas of the city, like cleanliness and job search resources, improve. While available parking does seem to be a problem in the city, it is not something that we addressed in this project. As we described in the Background chapter, the MGM Casino, upon its completion, will house a parking structure that is open to residents. This should hopefully ease the parking concerns of the city. Job training and the quality of public school are the two areas of this survey that we did not do extensive research into. We hope that these areas will improve as the result of other factors of the city improving, like the addition of mentoring programs and job search resources.

While the survey did not give us any surprising results, it did help to corroborate that our research into the city and our proposals are on track for dealing with the actual problems of the city. Additionally, these results helped to give us a definite rating of how severe these issues are and how important dealing with them is in comparison to others.

Solution Development:

By analyzing information gathered through community meetings, survey results, and focus groups, we developed the following findings concerning the improvement of the North End community and the factors that may affect their success:

Blue Light Emergency System

Community members agreed that the blue light emergency systems could be an effective method for quick police response, but that there are a plethora of challenges that could come as a result.

Focus group participants expressed that the quick response of police would be an appealing facet of these systems. Additionally, they responded well to the possibility of the systems also having a 311 button that could report and transmit non-emergency issues.

The residents also offered insight to the possible problems that could be encountered when implementing a system like this. The most commonly expressed concern was the potential for prank calls as a means to waste valuable police time. An additional follow-up concern was the chance of vandalism to the machines. One participant suggested adding some sort of feature to hold pranksters accountable, such as a video feed or flash photography. A smaller consideration that a participant divulged was the chance of an aesthetic objection, which could be fixed by, as he suggested, integrating them into the light posts on the road so that they are more discrete.

Participants communicated that they would be willing to see the blue light systems in well-trafficked and high crime areas. The locations which were suggested included Main Street and along the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway.

Improved Urban Lighting

Improved lighting was unanimously agreed upon as a much-needed area of improvement for the city.

Focus groups participants and survey respondents agreed that the city rated poorly in terms of keeping the region well-lit. Not only did residents agree that many areas were lacking necessary lighting, but they also elaborated on the generally poor upkeep of the existing lighting systems. One participant explained how, despite numerous calls to the city, several of the largest lights in the city had been burnt out for several weeks and nobody made any effort to fix them. This makes the area look aesthetically displeasing, in addition to making these places more dangerous to traverse. One participant said that "women … [are] scared to walk at night because there's no lights down there." By expanding the city's lighting system, the amount of pedestrian traffic at night would increase and make it safer to be out on the street. Residents identified Main Street and Jefferson Street as areas that desperately need more lighting.

Beautification

Community members generally expressed a positive reaction to the idea of beautifying their city, but communicated concerns about general upkeep and vandalism.

Surveys and focus group conversations revealed that many residents and business owners are dissatisfied with the appearance of their city. Most residents desired that more flowers and trees be planted as a simple way to brighten the landscape. Additionally, focus group participants suggested artwork be done in public spaces by and for the local community. This provides a piece of artwork that the community is proud of and feels represented by. One of our participants stated, "We want it to represent who we are and represent Springfield." Issues arose when participants began to question who would maintain these improvements. Overall, the general message received from the focus groups was that the community must take ownership of their city and be willing to collaborate if any lasting changes are to be made.

Community Space

Residents expressed that a new community space is a much-needed resource, but that it must be affordable and placed in a convenient location.

In the North End, survey and focus group participants expressed that there is some amount of space available to gather. The focus group participants did not elaborate much on the actual programs currently available.

The focus group community mainly concentrated on what resources they would like available, as well as problems with transportation. While the North End does have a conveniently located YMCA, the price of admission is quite high, and thus is typically not used by low income families. There exists the desire for a new community space that is located within walking distance of the downtown residents. They also expressed a desire for a center with both indoor and outdoor spaces for the winter and summer. Overall, they wanted a place where they could gather as a community in a local, easily accessible location.

Community Resources

Community resources are lacking in means of advertisement and in addressing the basic needs of the city.

Participants expressed that they felt resources were too far away. One participant shared his opinion by saying, "Nobody has transportation. People don't want to travel too long for it… So there's a lot of resources but there's nothing here, nothing around the neighborhood." The general consensus was that resources should be consolidated into one building that is located much closer to the Main Street area.

Citizens that attended the focus groups were very adamant on how the means of advertisement currently used are not convenient for most of the populace, and that many individuals are not able to view advertised material until it is too late, or even not at all. Other residents thought that the city should concentrate on the more basic needs of the city. One of the attendees at the North End Focus Group, explained that, "it has to start with basic needs, like child care and walk in clinics, counseling, gun buyback programs, needle exchanges, condom programs. Really elemental, front line, facing the problem." He elaborated, saying that people have "a natural hierarchy of needs," that those desperately struggling to feed their family will not be interested in attending city council meetings or participating in park clean-up. By starting a dialogue with the community and paying attention to their needs, the city will begin to make the improvements that it requires.

Mentoring Program

Mentoring is an important way to develop the youth of the city and get involvement from all levels of residents.

From the focus groups, we found that there is a strong need for mentors for the younger generation. Many children in Springfield are forced to grow up without an important role model in their lives, and this makes them more likely to have behavioral issues and fall behind in their schooling. A participant from the North End agreed with the need for better guidance throughout the city. He stated, "If I were to design a mentoring program, I would start with athletes. Start with successful athletes who have

gotten out of the hood and are interested in helping kids do the same. The next level would probably be people that are entrepreneurs." By involving those who have been in similar positions but overcame their struggles, children in these positions can see that they have the chance to better themselves and keep their lives on track. This participant was especially enthusiastic about talking to younger children about college to instill a sense of excitement and possibility in the youth. A common viewpoint in the community is that those who go to college are privileged or rich. It is important that we eradicate this viewpoint in order to get a higher college attendance rate. As the participant stated, "That's going to help everyone. It's going to help that student, it's going to help the community, and it's going to help the city."

While the need for mentoring the youth of the city has been well-established through community feedback, our research into the programs of the city showed that there is not a lack of programs, but rather a lack of willing mentors. We have established that this type of initiative is outside of the scope of our project, as we do not feel as though we have the type of community involvement in order inspire participation in these programs.

Youth Community Cleanup

Youth community cleanup has the potential to be a dangerous and misperceived project.

From the focus groups, it became evident that this program would not work. A participant told us that the city's school system is not in shape to have students be focusing on things other than their academics. Other points drawn from the focus groups concentrated on the types of trash that the students would encounter while cleaning up, such as needles, drugs, and weapons. Not only are these dangerous materials for children to be interacting with, but they also serve the possibility of influencing the children to use them.

One recommendation from the focus group was to try and incorporate the cleanup idea into a more community-oriented activity. Adults could be required to perform the more dangerous part of the project of cleaning up the garbage in the city. Then, students could have the opportunity to do safer activities like planting a garden or helping to paint. This way, students could still help to beautify their community, but are not put in any danger by doing so.

Adopt-A-Plant

The Adopt-A-Plant Project has the potential to turn itself into a major beautification effort for the city.

Focus group members were hesitant of the potential success of this program as a means of helping the entire community. One participant stated, "I think the people who don't need it would love it." He held the viewpoint that those who are living in poverty or struggling to provide for their family will likely not participate in this program, "as

having the time to go somewhere to pick up a free plant might be fairly low on the list of things to do with what free time you have."

A particular focus group participant took a different approach with this project. He told us, "I think that's the kind of program that could be a feeder into a bigger issue. Like, hey, look at the success we had with free plants. We want a grant to build a community garden and the reason we think it will work is because 85 families in this 4 block radius all took a free plant." In this way, a tiny plant adoption project could easily turn into a large way to beautify and improve the community.

Additionally, this focus group participant mentioned the potential success of giving out fruit and vegetable plants in place of flowers. In a city where roughly 30% live in poverty, residents would welcome the chance for a free food source.

Analysis of Information Gathering Techniques

This project was largely a learning experience for our group. As a result, many of our processes revolved around a system of trial-and-error. We have taken this chance to look back and critically analyze our information gathering techniques of surveying and conducting focus groups to address our learning process throughout the project.

Surveying

There is a lot to be learned about the surveying process from our experiences. The first lesson was that the survey developed to validate the C-Term results took too long for respondents to fill out, and so we lost the chance to get the answers of those

who did not have five to ten minutes to spare. A survey with fewer fine-tuned questions is more likely to receive adequate responses because it can more efficiently hold the participant's attention. It was also found that surveying is most successful on warmer days, as people are more willing to stop and talk when the weather is nice. Finally, we believe that we would have had more survey participation if we had offered an incentive, such as a raffle or free refreshments. Participants' time is valuable; therefore, it is best to have some compensation for taking some.

Focus Groups

There are many things to be learned from the experience of organizing focus groups in Springfield. The most important aspect of planning is spreading awareness of the event very early, preferably more than a week before the event is scheduled to occur. Email is not the best way to invite community members, as it is not personal and many are simply inclined to treat the invitation as spam and delete it. It is much better to go to community meetings and make one-on-one connections, or go on the streets and hand out flyers. Another crucial element is having a translator if there is going to be a large amount of people who do not speak English. It is important that the translator is a trusted collaborator with the team so they can be prepared to act as an effective and impartial moderator. Lastly, it is essential to use an audio recording device to be able to transcribe the conversations at a later date. Additionally, the device should be centrally located so that it can pick up all of the participants' voices, not just those in front.

5. South End Findings

We obtained a total of 109 survey responses. Out of these responses, 71 (65%) identified with the North End, 25 (23%) with the South End, and 13 (12%) with neither. We chose to divide our findings between the North and South Ends. In this section, we will analyze our South End results based on the neighborhood response.

From the 25 South End respondents, 22 were residents, 1 was a business owner, 1 was a visitor and employee, and 1 was a resident and business owner. All of our participants identified themselves as either White, Hispanic, or African American, with one choosing not to identify his or her race.
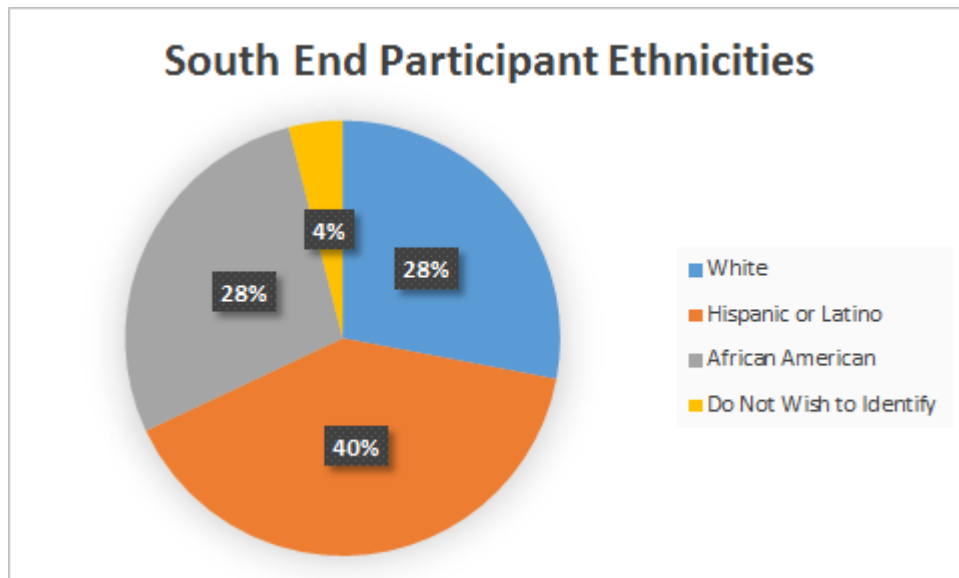
Figure 10: Graphic representation of South End survey respondents' ethnicities.

In the South End, roughly 47% of the population is of Hispanic descent, which is pretty similar to the 40% that we obtained. About 17% of the population is African American, 12% is White, and 4% identify as both African American and White.

Additionally, 17% identify as some other race than the three that we have listed. This was the major area of discrepancy in our results, mainly because we did not have participants who identified as any other race.

The age range of participants was the next factor that we asked about. We succeeded in getting a considerable assortment of ages fairly similar to the age makeup of the city, excluding those under the age of 18.
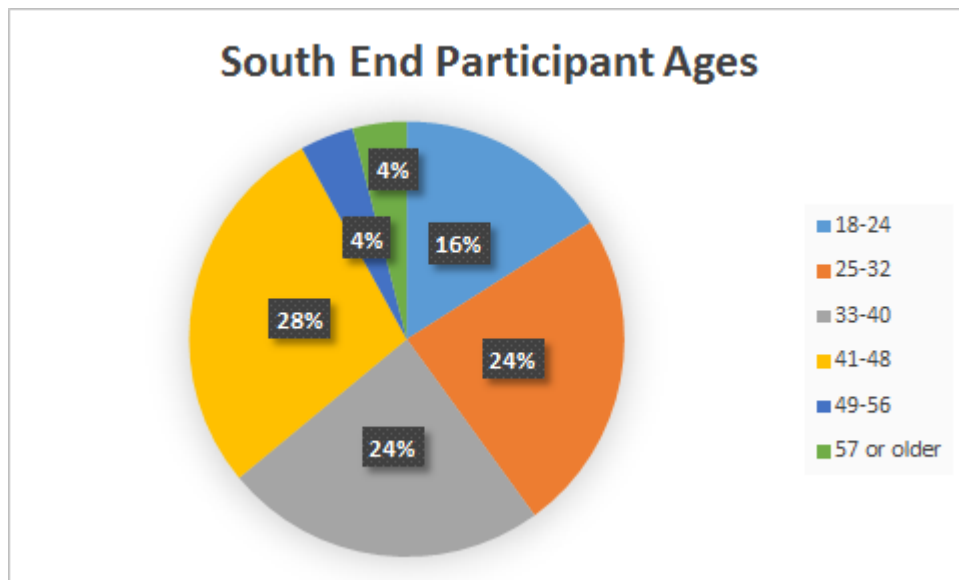
Figure 11: Graphic Representation of South End survey respondents' age ranges.

By recording each person's age and ethnicity, we were able to avoid the pitfalls of the C-term team's survey. These two questions allowed us to ensure that our results were representative of the general population, in addition to making sure that we did not miss the opinions of any significant portion of the community.

The next portion of our survey allowed respondents to rate a variety of features of the South End on a scale from poor to average. We analyzed these results in the same

way that we did for the North End, by attributing a number to each score and then calculating the average of all responses. The "Surveying the Community" section of our Methodology goes into detail about the questions that we asked and the way that we went about brainstorming these questions. The figure below shows a summary of the responses to our survey.
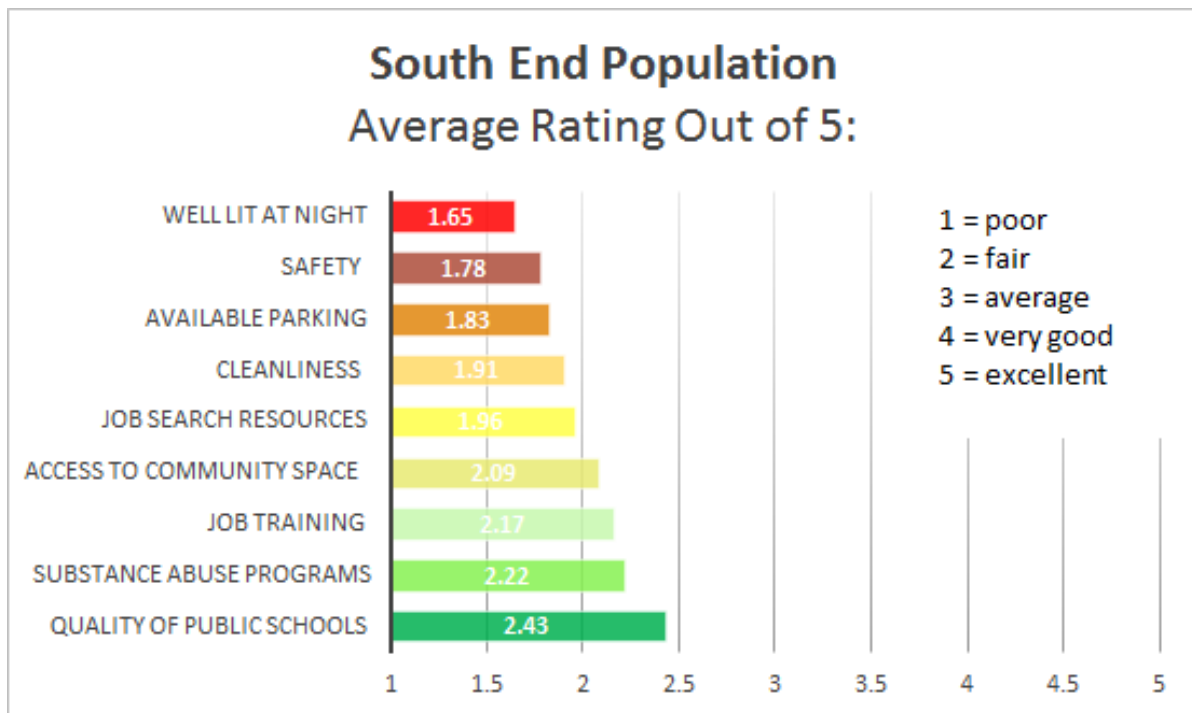
Figure 12: Representation of our South End data in the form of mathematical averages.

In order to mathematically sum up our answers as shown above, we attributed a number to each possible rating: 1-poor, 2-fair, 3-average, 4-very good, and 5-excellent.

As can be seen in the graphic above, the top five problems, when taking into account all South End responses, are lighting, safety, parking, cleanliness, and job search resources. This data is a representation of the total mean rankings for each of the qualities.

When looking at just Hispanic responses in the South End, the top five problems of the South End can be seen to be parking, safety, lighting, job training, and job search resources. The lowest ratings were very similar between the Hispanic population and the general South End, with ratings of 1.67 and 1.65 respectively. However, the highest rating for both groups, quality of public schools, was rated nearly 0.6 higher by the Hispanic respondents.

#	Question	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable	Total Responses	Mean ▲
8	Quality of Public Schools	1	1	4	3	0	0	9	3.00
3	Access to Community Space	1	3	5	0	0	0	9	2.44
2	Cleanliness	2	2 ·	4	1	0	0	9	2.44
9	Substance Abuse Programs	2	2	5	0	0	0	9	2.33
4	Job Search Resources	2	4	2	1	0	0	9	2.22
7	Job Training	1	6	2	0	0	0	9	2.11
5	Well Lit at Night	3	4	2	0	0	0	9	1.89
1	Safety	5	1	2	1	0	0	9	1.89
6	Available Parking	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	1.67

Figure 13: Summary of Hispanic population responses from the South End.

African American or Black respondents held the opinion that cleanliness, parking, job search resources, access to community space, and lighting are the top five problems. The most surprising part of this data set was simply how low each rating was, obtaining a highest rating of only 1.58. These participants rated each quality much lower than their Hispanic counterparts, having a range of only 0.41. The highest rating by this ethnic group was a 1.58, which was less than the lowest rating for the Hispanic community. Additionally, the highest rated quality in the African American neighborhood, a 1.58 rating for job training, was over 1.40 below the highest rating for the Hispanic neighborhood. Thus, while these top challenges did differ from those of the

general South End, we did not view this discrepancy to be significant since the total

range of ratings was so small.

#	Question	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable	Total Responses	Mean ▲
7	Job Training	8	2	1	1	0	0	12	1.58
9	Substance Abuse Programs	8	1	3	0	0	0	12	1.58
8	Quality of Public Schools	8	2	2	0	0	0	12	1.50
1	Safety	8	3	1	0	0	0	12	1.42
5	Well Lit at Night	9	2	1	0	0	0	12	1.33
3	Access to Community Space	10	0	2	0	0	0	12	1.33
4	Job Search Resources	10	0	2	0	0	0	12	1.33
6	Available Parking	9	3	0	0	0	0	12	1.25
2	Cleanliness	10	2	0	0	0	0	12	1.17

Figure 14: Summary of Black population responses from the South End.

And lastly, the South End participants who identified as White believe the top

five problem in the South End are cleanliness, access to community space, safety,

lighting, and parking. These results were remarkably similar to the overall South End

population, with the only discrepancy being a switch from "job search resources" to

"access to community space." Overall, the severity of the White population's ratings

were less severe than African American respondents and more severe than Hispanic

populations.

#	Question	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable	Total Responses	Mean ▲
7	Job Training	2	1	2	1	0	0	6	2.33
4	Job Search Resources	2	2	2	0	0	0	6	2.00
8	Quality of Public Schools	3	1	1	1	0	0	6	2.00
9	Substance Abuse Programs	2	2	2	0	0	0	6	2.00
6	Available Parking	3	2	1	0	0	0	6	1.67
5	Well Lit at Night	3	2	1	0	0	0	6	1.67
1	Safety	3	2	1	0	0	0	6	1.67
3	Access to Community Space	3	2	1	0	0	0	6	1.67
2	Cleanliness	3	3	0	0	0	0	6	1.50

Figure 15: Summary of White population responses from the South End.

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Parking and lighting were the only two unanimously agreed upon areas of concern. However, cleanliness, access to community space, job resources, and safety were lowly rated by at least two of the three demographics. Therefore, we believe that the most problematic issues as shown in the total South End Population diagram is representative of all opinions.

Another interesting trend that we established through our analyses was the relationship between age and rating. Within every ethnic group, as the age of the participants increased, so did their rating, sometimes achieving a rating of almost 0.5 higher than their younger counterparts. We attributed this difference to the possibility that older populations hold a different view of the city, perhaps thinking of how the city used to be when they were younger. On the other hand, our older respondents may simply just accept the state of the neighborhood, while the younger respondents are more critical and looking for change.

Overall Analysis

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the "access to community space" and "job search resources" aspects. Substance abuse

programs seem to rate decently in comparison to other aspects in the South End,

obtaining the second highest rating. This was a bit surprising to us, as substance abuse

is a major issue in the city. We believe that this discrepancy simply means that all of

those struggling with addiction do not reach out for help, but those that do rate the

systems fairly well. However, we still hope that this area will improve more as others

areas of the city, like cleanliness and job search resources, improve. While available

parking does seem to be a problem in the city, it is not something that we addressed in

this project. As we described in the Background chapter, the MGM Casino, upon its

completion, will house a parking structure that is open to residents. This should

hopefully ease the parking concerns of the city. Job training and the quality of public

school are the two areas of this survey that we did not do extensive research into. We

hope that these areas will improve as the result of other factors of the city improving,

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Community members agreed that the blue light emergency systems could be an effective method for quick police response, but that there are a plethora of challenges that could come as a result.

South End focus group participants expressed that the quick response of the police would be an appealing facet of these systems. However, they did express concerns with the system affecting the perception of the city.

The residents offered insight to the possible problems that could be encountered when implementing a system like this. The most commonly expressed concern was the potential for prank calls as a means to waste valuable police time. Several of the contributors brought up that simply the institution of these systems would convey a negative view of the city. One stated, "What message are we giving people that live there or even passing by throughout the community… that this is such a high crime area that we needed to do this." Even without knowing anything about Springfield, visitors could easily form judgements of the danger level of the city just through seeing the blue light systems.

Participants divulged that they would be willing to see the blue light systems in recreational rather than residential areas. The locations which were suggested included along main roads and the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway "because it's a confluence of foot traffic, bike traffic, and... crime."

Improved Urban Lighting

Improved lighting was unanimously agreed upon as a much needed area of improvement for the city.

Focus groups participants and survey respondents agreed that the city rated poorly in terms of keeping the region well-lit. Not only did residents agree that many areas were lacking necessary lighting, but they also elaborated on the generally poor upkeep of the existing lighting systems. One participant explained how, despite numerous call to the city, several of the largest lights in the city had been burnt out for several weeks and nobody made any effort to fix them. This makes the area look aesthetically displeasing, in addition to making these places more dangerous to traverse. By expanding the city's lighting system, the amount of pedestrian traffic at night would increase and make it safer to be out on the street.

Beautification

Community members generally expressed a positive reaction to the idea of beautifying their city, but communicated concerns about general upkeep and vandalism.

Survey and focus group conversations revealed that many residents and business owners are dissatisfied with the appearance of their city. Most residents desired that more flowers and trees be planted as a simple way to brighten the landscape. Additionally, focus group participants commended the idea of 'good graffiti,' or artwork done in public spaces by and for the local community. This provides a piece of artwork that the community is proud of and feels represented by. One of our participants stated, "We want it to represent who we are and represent Springfield." Issues arose when participants began to question who would maintain these improvements. A member of the South End group recounted a situation where a local organization planted a group of trees in the area and, within a month, all were either dead or torn up. Another participant followed up by saying that "people with good intentions go in there to provide for the community without really working with the community. They do some clean-up and they walk away, wondering why trees die, why the park is now littered again." Overall, the general message received from the focus groups was that the community must take ownership of their city and be willing to collaborate if any lasting changes are to be made.

Community Space

Residents expressed that a new community space is a much-needed resource, but that it must be affordable and placed in a more convenient location.

In the South End, survey and focus group participants expressed that there is some amount of space available to gather, but usually at a price. This puts a boundary

between those who can afford to spend money on such luxuries and those who cannot. During the South End focus group, when the topic of the current community center came up, one participant stated, "There are barriers of affordability that exist. They haven't been as open to the average resident as people expected them to be." This thought was shared by the other participants in the room, that the community center is there and is being rebuilt, but the community does not feel it does the job. Another participant expanded on this idea by stating, "We're all crossing our fingers that the new place will be different." The South End was not as concerned with what the community center provided, but to whom and at what cost.

The focus group participants did not elaborate much on the actual programs currently available. One participant did express his concerns for what is available to the children, citing that often children's parents do not have the resources to be able to send them to locations that provide activities such as a boys' club. Even with a low cost of entry, most children would probably be unable to actively utilize these resources due to their costs of access. Most often, this limits participation from children from low income families, and these are often the ones that need the most help in terms of places to go after school and keep busy.

Bringing all of this feedback from the South End together, a clear picture of the communities concerns has been seen. The key things wanted in a community center are: low cost or free programs, public access to things like bathrooms, and more activities for children.

Community Resources

Community resources are lacking in means of advertisement and in addressing the basic needs of the city.

Some residents that were able to attend our South End focus group cited the cultural divides of the population as a reason for the lack of community engagement. Their thoughts focused on the opinion that specific racial groups do not wish to work together because of social, economic, and demographic differences. This makes it extremely difficult to plan events and for individuals to be dynamic with each other in a group setting.

Participants additionally expressed that they felt resources were too far away. One participant shared their opinion by saying, "Nobody has transportation. People don't want to travel too long for it... So there's a lot of resources but there's nothing here, nothing around the neighborhood." The general consensus was that resources should be consolidated into one building that is located much closer to the Main Street area.

Citizens that attended the focus groups were very adamant on how the means of advertisement currently used are not convenient for most of the populace, and that many individuals are not able to view advertised material until it is too late, or even not at all. Other residents thought that the city should concentrate on the more basic needs of the city.

Mentoring Program

Mentoring is an important way to develop the youth of the city and get involvement from all levels of residents.

From the South End focus group, we found that there is a strong need for mentors for the younger generation. One participant noted that there is a seven year wait for male mentors. Another commented that "when you look at the makeup of the families in the community, there are a lot of single headed households. There are a lot of single moms raising one, two, [or even] multiple children and what happens is that the absence of the male role models in the community has an impact on how especially younger males develop." Many children in Springfield are forced to grow up without an important role model in their lives, and this makes them more likely to have behavioral issues and fall behind in their schooling. One participant suggested instituting more programs similar to Project Coach, which gives college undergraduates the opportunity to mentor high school students, who in turn mentor their elementary level peers. This provides student with the chance to both receive guidance and also return the favor by mentoring younger students.

While the need for mentoring the youth of the city has been well-established through community feedback, our research into the programs of the city showed us that there is not a lack of programs, but rather a lack of willing mentors. We have established that this type of initiative is outside of the scope of our project, as we do not feel as

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Youth Community Cleanup

Youth community cleanup has the potential to be a dangerous and misperceived project.

From our focus group conversations, it became evident that this program would not work. As a city with a school system, "which is already failing," several of the participants noted that younger children should be focusing on their academics and not a cleaning program. Many believed that it would be seen as more of a punishment, that the children are being forced to perform this task simply because of the state of the community that they live in, which is not something that they can control. Other points drawn from the focus group concentrated on the types of trash that the students would encounter while cleaning up, such as needles, drugs, and weapons. Not only are these dangerous materials for children to be interacting with, but they also serve the possibility of influencing the children to use them.

One recommendation from the focus group was to try and incorporate the cleanup idea into a more community-oriented activity. Adults could be required to perform the more dangerous part of the project of cleaning up the garbage in the city. Then, students could have the opportunity to do safer activities like planting a garden or

helping to paint. This way, students could still help to beautify their community, but are not put in any danger by doing so.

Adopt-A-Plant

The Adopt-A-Plant Project has the potential to turn itself into a major beautification effort for the city.

Focus group members were hesitant of the potential success of this program. The South End group mentioned previous attempts of organizations planting trees. Residents did not take responsibility for caring for the trees and, as result, the garden was dead within a month. Another member in the focus group expressed that a lot of her neighbors would not be able to take care of the plants very well, stating "I know a lot of my neighbors, [and] their plants would be dead." The group concluded that instead of giving families individual plants to care for, community gardens could be created and each family could have a designated plot.

Analysis of Information Gathering Techniques

This project was largely a learning experience for our group. As a result, many of our processes revolved around a system of trial-and-error. We have taken this chance to look back and critically analyze our information gathering techniques of surveying and conducting focus groups to address our learning process throughout the project.

Surveying

There is a lot to be learned about the surveying process from our experiences. The first lesson was that the survey developed to validate the C-Term results took too long for respondents to fill out, and so we lost the chance to get the answers of those who did not have five to ten minutes to spare. A survey with fewer fine-tuned questions is more likely to receive adequate responses because it can more efficiently hold the participant's attention. It was also found that surveying is most successful on warmer days, as people are more willing to stop and talk when the weather is nice. Finally, we believe that we would have had more survey participation if we had offered an incentive, such as a raffle or free refreshments. Participants' time is valuable; therefore, it is best to have some compensation for taking some.

Focus Groups

There are many things to be learned from the experience of organizing focus groups in Springfield. The most important aspect of planning is spreading awareness of the event very early, preferably more than a week before the event is scheduled to occur. Email is not the best way to invite community members, as it is not personal and many are simply inclined to treat the invitation as spam and delete it. It is much better to go to community meetings and make one-on-one connections, or go on the streets and hand out flyers. Another crucial element is having a translator if there is going to be a large amount of people who do not speak English. It is important that the translator is a trusted collaborator with the team so they can be prepared to act as an effective and

impartial moderator. Lastly, it is essential to use an audio recording device to be able to

transcribe the conversations at a later date. Additionally, the device should be centrally

located so that it can pick up all of the participants' voices, not just those in front.

6. Conclusion & Recommendations

In this chapter, we provide readers with a summary of our key findings and an analysis of the challenges and limitations of our methodology. Based on this evaluation, we make recommendations for further research and implementation by DevelopSpringfield. These suggestions are derived from our experiences through background research, our survey, and the focus group responses. Other options for improved methodology and recommendations may exist. We believe that these suggestions will help to facilitate a dialogue with the community and put Springfield on the track to improvement.

Summary of Key Findings

The purpose of this project was to provide our sponsor, DevelopSpringfield, with a comprehensive set of solutions designed to promote economic growth and improvement in the North and South Ends of Springfield. We devised our methodology through a combination of background research, an analysis of previous project work, survey responses, and focus group conversations.

Our observations and analyses have determined the following areas as the main obstacles preventing improvement and growth in Springfield: community interest, cultural divisions, and the economic state of the city.

Community Interest and Divisions

We concluded that many of the problems in Springfield exist due to a lack of community involvement and cultural divisions. The largest obstacle to city improvement is getting residents to take interest in and ownership of existing and future projects. With this issue, even ideal and perfect improvement projects will be ineffective at instituting change. Additionally, cultural divisions between differing ethnicities can cause an absence of community bonding. Without a concrete base of solidarity and understanding within the neighborhood, a true and unified community is not possible. As a result, it will be much more difficult for the community to improve as a whole unless these issues are resolved.

The City's Economy

Aside from a lack of community interest and cultural divisions, a lack of funding availability is a major factor that has contributed to the current state of the city. A large portion of the city is impoverished and, as a result, do not have the economic means to help to improve their city. Most are so focused on their basic needs and providing for their family that they do not have the time, money, or energy to be able to focus on community improvement. Methods to improve education and job availability should be undertaken to help advance the city and the people that reside there. As a result of this, needs beyond the most basic, such as food and housing, can be addressed.

Assessment of the Methodology

Challenges

Throughout the project, our team faced a few challenges that proved difficult to overcome. The first one that we faced was with our survey. Even though this was an anecdotal survey, and so we did not have to achieve statistical significance with our population size, we would have preferred to get more than 109 respondents simply to ensure that our data represented the population as a whole. Had we had longer than a term to complete this project, it would have been more likely that we could have collected a larger number of results that would be more fitting for the city. Our survey results were mainly collected through stopping people on the street or outside of businesses. On average, our survey took about five minutes to complete, and many people simply did not have the time to stop and take the survey. However, allowing the Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) students to perform the survey as well allowed us to get a lot more results than expected, as they knew the city better and could more easily find people willing to take the survey. Additionally, the STCC students had an easier time surveying because the majority of them are bilingual. This was particularly helpful in the North End, where a large portion of the population is Hispanic and Latino.

In addition to the struggles with our survey, we also faced some trouble when trying to get attendees for our focus groups. We reached out to several important members of the community who gave us contacts to get in touch with. The majority of

these contacts either did not respond or were unable to find participants willing to attend. The participants that did attend were a result of the few contacts that were acquired through mutual acquaintances. In addition to these contacts, we also made flyers for the community that detailed the purpose of our focus group, as well as the time and location of all sessions. Despite these flyers being passed out to residents, none showed up as a result of them.

Limitations

We acknowledge that there are limitations to the effectiveness of our work. With only seven weeks to complete this project, we were unable to perform as in-depth of an analysis as we had hoped for a project of this scope. This was particularly evident with our number of survey respondents. Had we had the time, we would have obtained a greater sample population to provide a higher confidence level for the accuracy of our results. Additionally, conducting focus groups was a new experience for all of us, and thus a learning process. We are hopeful that our work is still a good source of information for our sponsor, DevelopSpringfield, and provides them with the necessary information to make the needed changes in Springfield.

North End Recommendations for Future Initiatives

Based on our findings, we have created recommendations addressing the areas of concern in the city. Although the root issues are far deeper than what simple project initiatives can resolve, we provide practical suggestions that can begin to improve the economic growth and development of the North End.

Blue Light Emergency System

We recommend that the city use a beta testing method to evaluate the potential success of the blue light emergency systems.

From the information and community feedback received, we feel that the blue light emergency system is a technology worth pursuing. Due to the heavy financial investment needed to institute these systems, we recommend first conducting a beta test in a busy, recreational area. Depending on the success of this test, the systems could later go on to be implemented in other heavily trafficked areas.

While these systems have had considerable success on college campuses, they have not yet been tested in cities. The functionality of the system and how well it would work in a city like Springfield could be determined using the beta testing. Through a small localized test, the city would be able to identify any serious problems before application was carried out on a larger scale.

Further exploration into the implementation of this product in terms of cost and functionality is recommended. On average, the nine foot tall towers cost about $2,000 and the phones about $500, with additional maintenance and installation costs (Newsom, 2014). Depending on how many systems the city decides to implement, this could add up to a considerable amount of money. Therefore, an analysis of the cost strain it may cause on the city should be done to determine if it outweighs the benefits that the system would provide. Since there is no existing research on city

implementation, there is no way to exactly know how the costs and benefits will play

out, which is why we recommend the beta testing model.

The feedback received from focus groups suggested that the blue light systems

be placed in recreational, not residential, areas. One commonly suggested location was

the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway. The path is a high-crime and largely secluded

area, with dead ends on both sides and only two entry and exit points. This is the perfect

place to perform the pilot test. The city will have to perform data analysis of crime rates

before and after the institution of the systems, in addition to surveying the level of

safety and satisfaction of visitors.

The team believes that, if it is economically feasible and if the beta test is

successful, the city should work to institute the blue light emergency systems

throughout public areas in Springfield to make it a safer place to live and visit.

Improved Urban Lighting

**We recommend that the city increases its amount of lighting through the
institution of LED lights and structures that light both the streets and sidewalks.**

Because the citizens of both Ends of Springfield feel that it is unsafe to go out at

night due to a lack of lighting, we suggest that this problem be treated with high

importance and priority. When choosing which light fixtures to install, we recommend

exchanging current street light bulbs with light emitting diode (LED) lights. Oftentimes,

this type of change only requires replacing the bulbs, and not the actual streetlight

fixture. The city will have to specifically look into the type of fixtures that they currently use in order to verify that this is true for their city. As described in the Background chapter, LEDs boast a three to ten year return-on-investment period, a broader and more uniform white light, and a lifetime that is two to three times longer than standard lights. In addition to these benefits, LEDs are also energy-efficient and will help Springfield to reduce its carbon footprint ("City of Portland Green Purchasing Case Study," 2016).

An additional proposal that we suggest is that when they city looks into installing new fixtures, they utilize double-headed models, which have a second light about halfway down the fixture that shines directly onto the sidewalk. Some of our focus group participants expressed that they would feel safer if sidewalk lighting was improved, and this will help to combat that problem. Specific financials for this type of lighting have been hard to come by, and so the city will have to research more into the potential cost strain of these systems.

Residents had many areas that they wished to see more lighting. In the North End, this included Main Street, Jefferson Street, and Morgan Street. In addition to streets, parks were also brought up as areas that need to be brightened as a way to increase safety for pedestrian traffic.

Beautification

**We recommend that future beautification initiatives primarily utilize residents'
ideas to promote ownership of their efforts and that local organizations head up
these efforts in order to ensure that there is both funding and upkeep.**

Through focus group conversations, we found that the most agreed upon
beautification efforts focused on planting flowers and trees. A past attempt by the city of
adding planters along sidewalks ended in the theft and vandalism of all of the flowers.
Therefore, we suggest that the city use hanging planters that can be attached to street
lights so as to circumvent these issues. In order to institute this project, the city will
need to design a draft detailing the maintenance plan, mounting system structure, and
liability insurance (San Francisco Planning, 2015). This type of project has already been
undertaken in San Francisco, and the city can look to their website for more guidance
(http://www.sfbetterstreets.org).

We found that, despite a positive reaction to the idea of increased beautification,
this positivity did not necessarily carry over into prolonged efforts to carry out these
initiatives. Through focus group participation, we observed that past planting projects
by the city often failed within a few weeks due to a lack of ownership and poor upkeep.

To overcome this problem, we first recommend that the city holds a community
meeting to discuss the changes that residents would most like to see. By doing this, they
will be able to take control of the city and ensure that their opinions have a chance to

make a difference. Secondly, we suggest that the city either forms a planning committee to recruit volunteers or works with existing organizations in order to safeguard the preservation of the projects. An organization that city council could look to for this is "Keep Springfield Beautiful," a nonprofit organization whose mission is "to unite and engage all sectors of the community in the creation, execution, and promotion of intelligent, sustainable solutions to fight urban blight." Projects of this organization include litter and graffiti prevention, recycling, and the beautification of Springfield (Keep Springfield Beautiful, 2015). Additionally, there is the organization ReGreen Springfield, which collaborates "with businesses, community organizations, educational partners and government agencies to promote the reforestation of Springfield, improve growing conditions for trees and engage new allies in tree care and monitoring, education and citizen science" (ReGreen Springfield, 2016). Since this is a volunteer-based institution, citizens who have a passion for gardening and reforestation can easily get involved and beautify their city at the same time.

Community Space

We recommend the addition of a centrally-located community center in the North End that is capable of holding large events and meetings, providing activities for the community, and putting on free programs for the less-privileged in the neighborhood.

The North End focus group participants and survey respondents expressed the need for a community space that is located within walking distance of downtown.

Currently, the New North Citizens' Council has plans to create a community center that would help this problem. We recommend that their plans include several features that were brought up through our focus groups. The first feature is a large banquet hall or meeting space that is capable of holding several hundred people. Right now, there is no place in the North End that can hold this many people for events like weddings or conferences, and the addition of this will bring more business into the area. Secondly, we suggest a combination of indoor and outdoor recreational space. We found that many residents feel as though the number of safe and available sports fields and parks in the North End are lacking. Thus, the addition of features such as a basketball court, playing field, and sitting area will be heavily appreciated. As most residents know, the winters in Massachusetts can often be brutal, and so the inclusion of an indoor space with similar features is also necessary in order to allow utilization during the colder months. The final aspect that we suggest the community center include is more free programs catered to the youth of the area. Children from lower-income families are often incapable of using resources already in place, such as the Boys & Girls Club, because they require fees that their families are incapable of affording. These are often the children most in need of extra help and a place to go after school, so catering to them should be an important facet of the new center. Other resources available should cater to the basic needs of the population, such as daycare, health and fitness programs, and education.

Adopt-A-Plant

We recommend using the Adopt-A-Plant program as the first test for evaluating the potential success of a community garden.

A focus group participant gave us the idea of using this smaller program to feed into a larger initiative for the city, a community garden. We first recommend that the city reach out to local nurseries and gardening stores for flower and plant donations. Past attempts by the city at this type of program have shown that local stores are willing to provide these donations.

Depending on the success of the plant adoption program, we believe that this will show if residents are capable and interested in caring for a city-wide garden. City officials should keep track of the residents who take advantage of this program in order to evaluate this interest. Areas with high levels of participation should be given the highest priority for getting a garden. We believe that this will make participants take ownership of the garden and, as a result, it will be a prolonged and beneficial effort by the city.

A community garden would allow those who want to participate to be given a specific plot within the garden to do as they wish. This will help build ties within the community and be a potential source of home grown food. A potential negative reason against this solution would be that during the winter there would be an unattractive,

empty plot of land in the neighborhood. We believe the potential positives of a community garden would outweigh the negatives.

Community Resources

We recommend consolidating available community resources into one weekly newsletter, testing multiple other advertisement methods, and providing incentives to attend the less popular resources.

With the broad range of community resources already available, we recommend improving the communication between these programs and the community. Different means of advertisement must be explored in a controlled manner. Specifically, we recommend continuing the efforts through social media in order to engage the youth of the area, but at the same time creating a weekly community events and resources newsletter. This newsletter would contain free ad space for community events and resources, as well as paid ad space for local businesses. The use of paid ad space will help with the cost of producing the newsletter, while promoting local businesses at the same time. The word "Newsletter" is being used to describe this idea, but it should be formatted more like a collection of colorful flyers as a way to catch the eye of residents. These programs could either be managed by the community center or a non-profit organization willing to take on the task.

Along with introducing new methods of advertisement, we recommend polling those at key community resource locations about the specific resources they utilize, as

well as their basic demographics. This data will drive what mediums future

advertisements are distributed on, and help improve knowledge of these programs.

Collecting this information will also provide the possibility of ad targeting based on

various demographics.

We also recommend adding some incentives to less popular programs by

offering free raffle entries or gift cards sponsored by local businesses or large box-

stores. This would spread word of these programs and improve participation.

Youth Community Cleanup

We do not recommend carrying out the elementary school cleanup program

because of the danger associated with it.

This program is not recommended as a viable program for Springfield. While it

may work in other safer communities, the city is too dangerous of a place for kids to be

out on the streets cleaning. There is too much of a potential for the children to be hurt

or forced to interact with dangerous materials, such as knives, needles, and weapons.

We instead recommend that the students participate in a gardening or

beautification initiative. The parents or teachers could go into certain areas and clean

up the trash and the children could plant flowers or a small school garden. This would

be tied into their education on environmental awareness and responsibility. We believe

that this new recommendation would still teach students about respecting their

environment and the value of keeping it clean without putting them in danger.

South End Recommendations for Future Initiatives

Based on our findings, we have created recommendations addressing the areas of concern in the city. Although the root issues are far deeper than what simple project initiatives can resolve, we provide practical suggestions that can begin to improve the economic growth and development of the South End.

Blue Light Emergency System

We recommend that the city use a beta testing method to evaluate the potential success of the blue light emergency systems.

From the information and community feedback received, we feel that the blue light emergency system is a technology worth pursuing. Due to the heavy financial investment needed to institute these systems, we recommend first conducting a beta test in a busy, recreational area. Depending on the success of this test, the systems could later go on to be implemented in other heavily trafficked areas.

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The feedback received from focus groups suggested that the blue light systems be placed in recreational, not residential, areas. One commonly suggested location was the Connecticut Riverwalk and Bikeway. The path is a high-crime and largely secluded area, with dead ends on both sides and only two entry and exit points. This is the perfect place to perform the pilot test. The city will have to perform data analysis of crime rates before and after the institution of the systems, in addition to surveying the level of safety and satisfaction of visitors.

The team believes that, if it is economically feasible and if the beta test is successful, the city should work to institute the blue light emergency systems throughout Springfield to make it a safer place to live and visit.

Improved Urban Lighting

We recommend that the city increases its amount of lighting through the institution of LED lights and structures that light both the streets and sidewalks.

Because the citizens of both Ends of Springfield feel that it is unsafe to go out at night due to a lack of lighting, we suggest that this problem be treated with high importance and priority. When choosing which light fixtures to install, we recommend exchanging current street light bulbs with light emitting diode (LED) lights. Oftentimes, this type of change only requires replacing the bulbs, and not the actual streetlight fixture. The city will have to specifically look into the type of fixtures that they currently use in order to verify that this is true for their city. As described in the Background chapter, LEDs boast a three to ten year return-on-investment period, a broader and more uniform white light, and a lifetime that is two to three times longer than standard lights. In addition to these benefits, LEDs are also energy-efficient and will help Springfield to reduce its carbon footprint ("City of Portland Green Purchasing Case Study," 2016).

An additional proposal that we suggest is that when they city looks into installing new fixtures, they utilize double-headed models, which have a second light about halfway down the fixture that shines directly onto the sidewalk. Some of our focus group participants expressed that they would feel safer if sidewalk lighting was improved, and this will help to combat that problem. Specific financials for this type of lighting have been hard to come by, and so the city will have to research more into the potential cost strain of these systems.

In the South End, residents suggested more lighting be implemented on Adams Street, Morris Street, Ashmun Street, Dale Street, Palmer Ave, Richelieu Street, Mill

Street, Lumbard Street, and Arlington Court. In addition to streets, parks were also brought up as areas that need to be brightened as a way to increase safety for pedestrian traffic.

Beautification

We recommend that future beautification initiatives primarily utilize residents' ideas to promote ownership of their efforts and that local organizations head up these efforts in order to ensure that there is both funding and upkeep.

Through focus group conversations, we found that the most agreed upon beautification efforts focused on planting flowers and trees. A past attempt by the city of adding planters along sidewalks ended in the theft and vandalism of all of the flowers. Therefore, we suggest that the city use hanging planters that can be attached to street lights so as to circumvent these issues. In order to institute this project, the city will need to design a draft detailing the maintenance plan, mounting system structure, and liability insurance (San Francisco Planning, 2015). This type of project has already been undertaken in San Francisco, and the city can look to their website for more guidance (http://www.sfbetterstreets.org).

We found that, despite a positive reaction to the idea of increased beautification, this positivity did not necessarily carry over into prolonged efforts to carry out these initiatives. Through focus group participation, we observed that past planting projects by the city often failed within a few weeks due to a lack of ownership and poor upkeep.

To overcome this problem, we first recommend that the city holds a community meeting to discuss the changes that residents would most like to see. By doing this, they will be able to take control of the city and ensure that their opinions have a chance to make a difference. Secondly, we suggest that the city either forms a planning committee to recruit volunteers or works with existing organizations in order to safeguard the preservation of the projects. An organization that city council could look to for this is "Keep Springfield Beautiful," a nonprofit organization whose mission is "to unite and engage all sectors of the community in the creation, execution, and promotion of intelligent, sustainable solutions to fight urban blight." Projects of this organization include litter and graffiti prevention, recycling, and the beautification of Springfield (Keep Springfield Beautiful, 2015). Additionally, there is the organization ReGreen Springfield, which collaborates "with businesses, community organizations, educational partners and government agencies to promote the reforestation of Springfield, improve growing conditions for trees and engage new allies in tree care and monitoring, education and citizen science" (ReGreen Springfield, 2016). Since this is a volunteer-based institution, citizens who have a passion for gardening and reforestation can easily get involved and beautify their city at the same time.

Community Space

We recommend that the South End look into the possibility of using multiple smaller community spaces that provide basic needs spread throughout the city.

In the South End, we recommend that, in addition to the community center currently being built, the region looks into building multiple smaller community spaces in different locations. These spaces need to be centrally located, so that the community can feel their impact and have easy access to them without transportation. They need to be free for those in need and inexpensive to everyone else. The spaces would need open areas for medium to large events, as well as an outdoor space for the summer. Other resources available should be catering to basic needs, such as daycare, health and fitness programs and education. In each location, they should have a restaurant leasing a section in order to provide catering and income. Depending on the budget, other things like recreational facilities and casual gathering locations could also be added.

Using all of the feedback received, it is evident that large community centers do not satisfy most of the community, especially when there is a large fee for each service. By spreading out multiple smaller community spaces, the impact will have a much broader range instead of falling off in the surrounding areas. This can also help with social, economic, and demographic differences in the communities. Some may not wish to attend events at certain center because of these boundaries, but will hopefully still participate in their own local community space.

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Appendix A: Qualtrics Survey

Which region of Springfield do you identify with?

○ North End
○ South End
○ Neither

Do you identify as:

☐ Resident
☐ Business Owner
☐ Visitor
☐ Employee in Springfield

What is your Ethnicity?

○ Hispanic or Latino
○ Black or African American
○ Native American or American Indian
○ Asian/Pacific Islanders
○ White
○ Do not wish to identify
○ Other: [_____]

Age:

○ 18-24
○ 25-32
○ 33-40
○ 41-48
○ 49-56
○ 57 or older

Springfield Qualities

Could you rate Springfield as a whole on these following qualities?

	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable
Safety	○	○	○	○	○	○
Cleanliness	○	○	○	○	○	○
Access to Community Space	○	○	○	○	○	○
Job Search Resources	○	○	○	○	○	○
Well Lit at Night	○	○	○	○	○	○
Available Parking	○	○	○	○	○	○
Job Training	○	○	○	○	○	○
Quality of Public Schools	○	○	○	○	○	○
Substance Abuse Programs	○	○	○	○	○	○

Could you elaborate on why you feel safety is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/1}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel cleanliness is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/2}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel access to community space is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/3}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job search resources are
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/4}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel lighting at night is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/5}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel parking availability is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/6}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job training is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/7}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the quality of public schools are
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/8}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the substance abuse programs are
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/9}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel safety is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/1}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel cleanliness is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/2}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel access to community space is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/3}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job search resources are
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/4}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel lighting at night is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/5}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel parking availability is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/6}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job training is
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/7}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the quality of public schools are
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/8}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the substance abuse programs are
${q://QID34/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/9}?

Community Qualities

Please rate the ${q://QID1/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices} on these following qualities.

	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable
Safety	O	O	O	O	O	O
Cleanliness	O	O	O	O	O	O
Access to Community Space	O	O	O	O	O	O
Job Search Resources	O	O	O	O	O	O
Well Lit at Night	O	O	O	O	O	O
Available Parking	O	O	O	O	O	O
Job Training	O	O	O	O	O	O
Quality of Public Schools	O	O	O	O	O	O
Substance Abuse Programs	O	O	O	O	O	O

Could you elaborate on why you feel safety is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/1}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel cleanliness is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/2}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel access to community space is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/3}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job search resources are
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/4}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel lighting at night is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/5}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel parking availability is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/6}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job training is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/7}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the quality of public schools are
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/8}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the substance abuse programs are
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/9}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel safety is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/1}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel cleanliness is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/2}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel access to community space is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/3}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job search resources are
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/4}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel lighting at night is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/5}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel parking availability is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/6}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job training is
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/7}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the quality of public schools are
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/8}?

Could you elaborate on why you feel the substance abuse programs are
${q://QID24/ChoiceGroup/SelectedAnswers/9}?

Open Response

What can be done to improve your community?

What can be done to improve this community?

Appendix B: Focus Group

Presentations

North

Our Team | *Nuestro Equipo*

Lindsey Andrews
Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Yahel Nachum
Computer Science
Junior

Katie Curran
Actuarial Mathematics
Junior

Cameron DeWallace
Mechanical Engineering
Senior

Patrick Bemben
Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Nick Porter
Math & Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Our Sponsors | *Nuestros Patrocinadores*

Our Project | *Nuestro Proyecto*

- Working with DevelopSpringfield

- Prior work of other students

- Significant problems in Springfield

- Implementing our solutions

Focus Group

Duration: 1 hour

All audio will be recorded

None of the names or audio will be published

Process

This is an information gathering meeting.

We will ask questions, and let everyone have a chance to respond.

Please respect all opinions.

Once all ideas are shared, we will move onto the next question.

Grupo de enfoque

Duración: 60 minutos
Se grabará todo el audio
Ninguno de los nombres o de audio se publicará

Proceso
Se trata de una reunión de la recopilación de información.

Vamos a hacer preguntas y a permitir que todas las personas responden.

Por favor, respetar todas las opiniones.

Una vez que todas las ideas se comparten, vamos a pasar a la siguiente pregunta.

Blue Light Emergency System
Sistema de emergencia de color azul claro

Benefits?	*¿Beneficios?*
Concerns?	*¿Preocupaciones?*
Issues?	*¿Cuestiones?*
Locations?	*¿Ubicaciones?*

Community Lighting
Iluminación comunidad

Benefits?	*¿Beneficios?*
Types?	*¿Tipos?*
Challenges?	*¿Retos?*

Beautification
Embellecimiento

Benefits?   *¿Beneficios?*
Concerns?   *¿Preocupaciones?*
Locations?   ¿Ubicaciones?

Community Space
Espacio de la Comunidad

Beneficial?   *¿Beneficioso?*
Location?   ¿Ubicacione?
Type of space?   *¿Tipo de espacio?*

Community Resources
Recursos de la Comunidad

Awareness?
Types of media?

¿Conciencia?
¿Tipos de medios de comunicación?

Elementary School Clean-Up
Niños de Primaria Limpiar la Ciudad

Opinions?   *¿Opiniones?*

Beneficial?   *¿Beneficioso?*

Adopt-a-Plant
Adoptar una planta

Benefits?   *¿Beneficios?*
Concerns?   *¿Preocupaciones?*
Impactful?   *¿Impactante?*

Mentoring Program
Programa de tutoría

Participation? *¿Participación?*

Helpful?   *¿Útil?*

Suggestions?   *¿Sugerencias?*

General Inquiry | *Consulta general*

What do you think could be a major improvement to the community?

¿Qué se parece que sería una mejora importante para la comunidad?

Thank you!
¡Gracias!

Our Sponsors

WPI

DEVELOP springfield

Our Project

Working with DevelopSpringfield

Prior work of other students

Significant problems in Springfield

Implementing our solutions

Focus Group

Duration: 1 hour

All audio will be recorded

None of the names or audio will be published

Process

This is an information gathering meeting.

We will ask questions, and let everyone have a chance to respond.

Please respect all opinions.

Once all ideas are shared, we will move on to the next question.

Blue Light Emergency System

Benefits?
Concerns?
Locations?

Community Lighting

Benefits?
Types of lighting?
Challenges?

Beautification

Benefits?
Concerns?
Locations?

Community Space

Beneficial?
Location?
Type of space?

Community Resources

Awareness?
Types of media?

Elementary School Clean-Up

Opinions?

Beneficial?

Adopt-a-Plant

Benefits?
Concerns?
Impactful?

Mentoring Program

Participation?

Helpful?

Suggestions?

New Community Center

Thoughts?

General Inquiry

What do you think could be a major improvement to the community?

Thank you!

Flyers

North

Date: 04/14/16
Times: 11:00 - 12:00
12:30 - 01:30

Refreshments and snacks will be provided

RSVP Link

http://goo.gl/forms/92JW IyHb00

DevelopSpringfield Sponsored

Community Focus Group Invite

Please join us for our community focus group Thursday April 14th at the New North Citizens Council Office. This focus group will brainstorm ideas and opinions about current problems in the local community, as well as proposed solutions. All residents and business owners in the North End community are welcome!

This is a great opportunity to have an impact in your community and have your opinions heard. We are creating a presentation that is sponsored by DevelopSpringfield, and we want your thoughts and ideas to help improve the community.

Please RSVP through link, email or phone if you intend to come.

Hope to see you there!

Location
Gerena German School
Springfield, MA 01107

Main Street Entrance
NNCC Office

Near 3000 Main St.

Please contact us for detailed directions

Contact
Phone: 845 - 392 - 2452 (*Nick*)
Email: pioneer@wpi.edu

Fecha: 04/14/16
Horas: 11:00 - 12:00
12:30 - 01:30

Tendremos refrescos y aperitivos

RSVP Enlazar

http://goo.gl/forms/92JW IyHb00

DevelopSpringfield Sponsored

Invitación a un Grupo de Enfoque Comunitario

Por favor, únase a nosotros para nuestro grupo de enfoque en la comunidad este Jueves, 14 de abril en la Oficina del Concilio de Ciudadanos del Nuevo Norte (NNCC). Este grupo de enfoque se concentrara en ideas y opiniones acerca de los problemas actuales de la comunidad local y tambien así como las soluciones propuestas. Todos los residentes y propietarios de negocios en la comunidad del North End son bienvenidos!

Esta es una gran oportunidad de tener un impacto en su comunidad y que sus opiniones sean escuchadas. Estamos creando una presentación que está patrocinado por DevelopSpringfield, y queremos que sus pensamientos e ideas para ayudar a mejorar la comunidad. Por favor confirmar su asistencia a través de correo electrónico o por teléfono si va a venir.
¡Esperamos verle!

Lugar
Escuela Germán Gerena
Springfield, MA 01107
La entrada por la calle Main (entrada del túnel)
Oficina del Concilio de Ciudadanos del Nuevo Norte (NNCC)
Cerca de 3000 Main St.
Por favor, póngase en contacto con nosotros para obtener instrucciones detalladas

Comuníquese con Nick al
(845) 392-2452
Pioneer@wpi.edu

South

Date: 04/14/16
Times: 11:00 - 12:00
12:30 - 01:30

Refreshments and snacks will be provided

RSVP Link

http://goo.gl/forms/mHPZ FrRgaR

DevelopSpringfield Sponsored

Community Focus Group Invite

Please join us for our community focus group Thursday April 14th at Sweeney Strategic Consulting. This focus group will brainstorm ideas and opinions about current problems in the local community, as well as proposed solutions. All residents and business owners in the South End community are welcome!

This is a great opportunity to have an impact in your community and have your opinions heard. We are creating a presentation that is sponsored by DevelopSpringfield, and we want your thoughts and ideas to help improve the community.

Please RSVP through email or phone if you intend to come.

Hope to see you there!

Location
Sweeney Strategic Consulting
1 Federal Street
Springfield, MA 01107

Please contact us for detailed directions

Contact
Phone: 845 - 392 - 2452 (*Nick*)
Email: pioneer@wpi.edu

DEVELOPspringfield

WPI
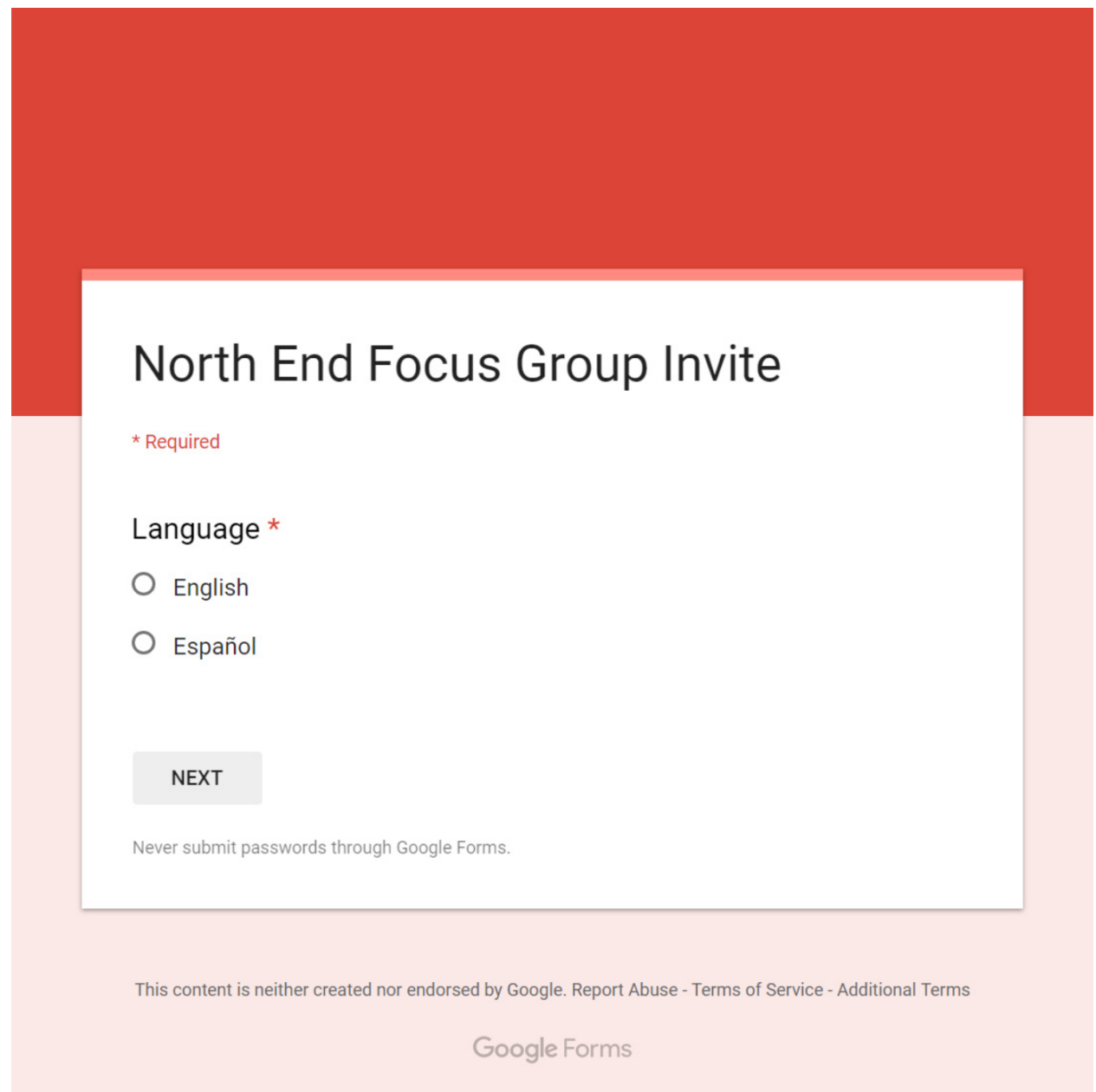
RSVP Forms

North

North End Focus Group Invite

North End Focus Group

Please join us for our community focus group Thursday April 14th at the New North Citizens Council Office. This focus group will brainstorm ideas and opinions about current problems in the local community, as well as proposed solutions. All residents and business owners in the North End community are welcome!
This is a great opportunity to have an impact in your community and have your opinions heard. We are creating a presentation that is sponsored by DevelopSpringfield, and we want your thoughts and ideas to help improve the community.
Please RSVP through email or phone if you intend to come.
Hope to see you there!

First Name *

Your answer

Last Name *

Your answer

Available Time for focus group *

○ Thursday, April 14th, 11:00AM-12:00PM

○ Thursday, April 14th, 12:30-1:30PM

Do you identify as *

○ North End Resident

○ North End Business Owner

○ North End Resident and Business Owner

○ Other :

BACK   NEXT

130

North End Focus Group Invite

Groupo de Enfoque

Por favor, únase a nosotros para nuestro grupo de enfoque en la comunidad este Jueves, 14 de abril en la Oficina del Concilio de Ciudadanos del Nuevo Norte (NNCC). Este grupo de enfoque se concentrara en ideas y opiniones acerca de los problemas actuales de la comunidad local y tambien así como las soluciones propuestas. Todos los residentes y propietarios de negocios en la comunidad del North End son bienvenidos!

Esta es una gran oportunidad de tener un impacto en su comunidad y que sus opiniones sean escuchadas. Estamos creando una presentación que está patrocinado por DevelopSpringfield, y queremos que sus pensamientos e ideas para ayudar a mejorar la comunidad. Por favor confirmar su asistencia a través de correo electrónico o por teléfono si va a venir.

¡Esperamos verle!

Nombre de Pila *

Your answer

Apellido *

Your answer

¿A qué hora disponibles? *

○ Jueves, 14 de abril a 11:00 AM-12:00 PM

○ Jueves, 14 de abril a 12:30 PM-1:30 PM

¿Cómo se identifica? *

○ Un residente de Springfield

○ Un dueño del negocio de Springfield

○ Un residente y un dueño del negocio de Springfield

BACK   SUBMIT

North End Focus Group Invite

Your response has been recorded.

[Submit another response](#)

This form was created using Google Forms. Create your own

Google Forms

South End Focus Group Invite

Please join us for our community focus group Thursday April 14th at Sweeney Strategic Consulting. This focus group will brainstorm ideas and opinions about current problems in the local community, as well as proposed solutions. All residents and business owners in the South End community are welcome!

This is a great opportunity to have an impact in your community and have your opinions heard. We are creating a presentation that is sponsored by DevelopSpringfield, and we want your thoughts and ideas to help improve the community.

Please RSVP through email or phone if you intend to come.

Hope to see you there!

* Required

First Name *

Your answer

Last Name *

Your answer

Available Time for focus group *

○ Thursday, April 14th, 11:00AM-12:00PM

○ Thursday, April 14th, 12:30-1:30PM

Do you identify as

○ South End Resident

○ South End Business Owner

○ South End Resident and Business Owner

SUBMIT

South End Focus Group Invite

Your response has been recorded.

Submit another response

This form was created using Google Forms. Create your own

Google Forms

Transcripts

North End Group 1

Italics indicate dialogue that has been translated from Spanish to English.

<u>Introduction</u>

L: Hi so my name is Lindsey, I'll be asking the questions. This is Cameron, he will just be helping facilitate and this is Katie she'll be taking notes. This is the rest of our team, the other half of us is right now in the South End of Springfield also doing the same kind of thing with residents from that end. We're WPI students working with DevelopSpringfield on this project.

P1: I'm sorry what was it? You're here for what?

L: We are students from WPI, but we are being sponsored by DevelopSpringfield to do this project but this project started last term. A group of students surveyed the community and found a group of problems that Springfield is facing like crime, substance abuse, low income housing and our job is to look at those problems and find solutions for them and approach the community and see how they react to those different solutions.

L: So this will take about an hour. Audio will be recorded but none of your names will be published and also the recording will not be in public use. So this is just to get your input on our solutions. We'll ask questions, let everyone answer and then once we're done answering, we'll move on to the next question.

Blue Light Emergency Systems

L: So our first idea is the blue light system. I don't know if you are familiar with it, but it's used on a lot of college campuses. They're blue pillars with a LED on top and an emergency push button at the base. So if you have an emergency and you don't have a phone or it would just take too long to pull it out, you can just run up to one of the systems, press the buttons and a dispatcher will be automatically connected to you through the pillar. So our question for you is whether you think there are benefits to this or if you have any concerns about whether the system could be implemented in certain regions of Springfield.

P: So I think it's a benefit but what are the possibilities of them bringing it here?

L: Yeah so, we would have to do like a Beta testing in like a certain area and see if it's worthwhile for the police to... Like if there's a lot of pranks or if it's just if it's not working they won't do it as widespread, but right now we're just looking at perhaps bringing it in as a test to see if it'll work. We're just wondering if you think it's a good idea to even pursue.

P: I think it is.

L: Do you think people would use them?

P: Yeah, yeah I think so.

L: Even if … with cell phones, they would still push the button?

P: Yeah I mean that's quicker. I mean if I'm next to it, I'll press that before calling.

P: *If you put this in, do you think that you are going to use it first or use your phone to call 911? They are asking if you have an emergency, will you use this? If you have to push the button or use the cell phone?*

P: *I think … the button.*

[General sound of agreement]

P: They say it's faster. If that's here, they'd just press the button

L: What do you think? [referring directly to one of the participants]

P: Definitely.

L: Yeah? What locations in Springfield do you think would be best for this sort of system?

P: *Where do you think, in the city, where would you put it?*

[Participant responds in Spanish. However it is unclear what they say.]

P: She says like in the main streets like on Main Street, Jefferson like in those main areas

L: Do you have any ideas?

P: *Where do you think they could put this system?*

P: *All of Main Street.*

P: They say all up and down Main Street, like Jefferson because you know like a lot of things happen up and down those streets.

Community Lighting

L: Okay. Our next idea is increasing community lighting to increase safety and also beautification. Do you think that would benefit or do you think it wouldn't really help and why?

P: *Do you think that putting in more lights would be beneficial?*

P: *Beneficial, mhm. I think yes.*

P: *More lights.*

P: Yeah because if there is more light... I mean, people are...

C: Did you mention sidewalk lighting?

P: *The North End doesn't have any light.*

P: I mean we all think there aren't any lights down here so that you know a lot of crime happens because you know there's a lot of areas.

P: *She says she almost got hit by a car because there isn't a lot of light.*

P: So, like in Chestnut there's no lights like down on the streets. There are a lot of dark areas, like women... women walk down, they're scared to walk at night because there's no lights down there.

L: Is it mostly on the sidewalks or on the road, too?

P: Mostly on Jefferson. That whole street like from Main Street to Chestnut.

P: *She says that in Jefferson there is a lot of criminal activity because it's not well lit.*

P: She says that there is a lot of, uh, bad things happen, crime stuff and like the Jefferson Park because there's no lights there and that's where most of the crime starts.

L: Do you think if there were more lighting you would go into those areas? Would that help you feel safer?

P: I think if there's more lights more people are going to be hanging out there, so it'll be safer to go to.

P: *Yes.*

P: They say yeah.

Beautification

L: Our next idea is general beautification of the city, where that would be community artwork or cleaning up the streets, the trash, putting benches or statues or flower pots. So do you think that would be helpful to Springfield or do you not think that would be and why?

P: *Do you guys think that if we put in flowers, portraits, and clean the places that are really dirty... do you think it would be good?*

P: Yeah, yeah.

L: What kinds of beautification do you think would be most helpful to making Springfield more beautiful?

P: *What are the things that you guys think that you would like to see down here? To see like flowers or pictures? What do you guys think?*

P: *Flowers, trees.*

L: What do you think? What do you think would help Springfield look more beautiful?

P: *What do you think?*

P: More lights, definitely. More illumination. Especially in Main Street. More illumination. There is places that the women, the little kids, that they can't go through because illumination is too poor. More illumination is going to be great, yeah.

L: Are there any specific locations where you would like to see like statues or flowers other than just along the main streets?

P: *Are there any other places that you think we could put flowers other than the Main Street?*

P: All up and down Main Street. I mean the whole, from the Mobile all the way down to the Cruz Street. All the way, that whole area needs to be lit up, cleaned up, the roads need to be paved over. I mean the whole North End needs a whole makeover I think.

L: Are there any parks or anything that would need it? Any statues or beautification?

P: Like Jefferson, right? Jefferson, Main Street.

P: *Jefferson, bigger.*

P: Part of the Jefferson is going to be great. Main Street.

P: And Morgan.

Community Space

L: So it's been expressed to us that there isn't a good place for the community to gather and become closer. So we were wondering if you also feel that need and you think that creating a space would be beneficial to the community.

P: What was the question again? I know creating the space but...

L: If you think that creating a space would help the community become closer and a more tight knit, safe environment.

P: *Okay, so she's asking if creating a space like...* like parks and stuff like that?

P: *No, no. She is asking if there was a bigger space that we can all go to talk and better the community.*

P: *Like a community center? If it could be secure.*

P: Yeah, they say yes.

L: What kind of a space would you like to see? Like a banquet hall or a recreational sports center or just any community center?

P: *What kind of space would you like to see? A sports center or a place where you can play sports?*

P: *Sports.*

P: Yeah a sport center would be nice. It would keep them occupied.

L: Where do you think a good place would be to put it so it would be centrally located so that everyone could have access to it?

P: I think, I think I mean it depends in like the summer everyone wants to be outside. Nobody wants to be in here, you know, so it depends on what time of year. If it's winter, then obviously they want to be in a warm place but if it's summer and we're in here, no one is going to want to come and talk about the problems. They're going to want to be outside and be comfortable and that way there would be more people who show up.

P: *It can be a place for the summer and winter.*

P: It can be a place that can be for summers and winters. Like, it can be a place with a pool and it can be a place where you can do something inside for winter time, you know, something like a gym, a sport…

P: A place where they can go outside.

P: Yeah to play ball or…

Community Resources

L: So a big thing is we felt that there isn't a good knowledge of the community resources that are out there, just by hearing what people need. But we were at a New North Citizens' Council meeting and the amount of resources that were available were just lists upon lists of them in various different sectors so we were wondering if you feel there is a lack of awareness and what could be done to fix that.

P: *She went to a New North meeting and she saw that there were many … how do you say… Resources… place…*

P: *There are many resources but do you think that many of the people know about all of the things they can use?*

P: *Also, what's happening … the resources aren't here, in this area …*

P: Okay, yeah. She says yes, it can be better for the people in the area… all the resources if you can see… they are not in this area. They are like in the far away.

P: Nobody has transportation.

P: Nobody has transportation. People don't want to travel too long for it, you know.

P: Transportation, housing, domestic violence.

P: So there's a lot of resources, but there's nothing here.

P: Nothing around the neighborhood.

P: If there's, you know, just to use a women for an example, comes in and she's a battered woman and she needs help right now, you know, they gotta tell her…

P: Go to this place…

P: You gotta make a phone call and then you gotta go here and they'll help you out.

P: Call 911…

P: Right, you know.

P: That's not, that's not… No you gotta go to a place where you can get the counselor. That you can, if your kids are boarding at the house, go send the kids over there. They're gonna be safe, they're gonna travel safe by the area if it's at night, there gotta be a lot of light, a lot of illumination in the street, you know, so the people feel comfortable.

L: Do you think that's a transportation issue or do you think that those businesses should be just in this area in general? That they should be moved?

P: I think they should be moved. We need something around the neighborhood that we can use…that we feel belongs to us, to the people who live in this area.

P: Yeah a lot of people here on Main Street, over on the other side of the highway, the majority of the Hispanic people, I mean we need a lot of help. You know, being illiterate.

P: People don't know how to read, don't know how to write. You know, they don't know how to use a computer. A lot of people, you know it's incredible to see in this time, you know. Some place that we can be willing to help. That's the main idea.

<u>Youth Cleanup Program</u>

L: So one of our ideas is that we have a monthly, elementary school clean-up and have the kids be responsible for a certain part of the city and they walk around, they pick up trash, they could maybe plant flowers. So…our…we just want your opinion on that idea.

P: I don't. [shakes his head]

L: You don't think that's a good idea?

P: I mean, just depending on the area. I mean you got needles, you got, you know…

P: You got everything, you know. Some people leave the drugs on the street, some people fallen down.

P: I mean, it's a good idea but depending on the area.

P: And I think the sheriff department, every two days, they got a group cleaning all the street.

P: Yeah we see it every now and again. They come through and clean. I mean, it's a good idea but depending on if it's supervised.

P: Yeah and see what the kids pick up.

P: You're right, yeah.

[Translator explains the idea and then discusses with the group that the kids are too young and they are not for working on the streets with the drugs]

P: I explain to them, the kids… not for work.

[In Spanish the group discusses that they would rather see a kid planting a tree than cleaning up]

P: To plant the tree… no, no that's going to be a good idea.

P: They say that they'd rather see a group of adults come in and do the cleanup and then the elementary school kids maybe coming in after and doing the painting, planting. You know the cleanup, let the adults do it.

P: That's a good idea, yeah.

P: Because in this area, there's a lot of drugs and, you know, not just drugs. I mean, old houses, they can fall like he said, you know, and get cut.

Adopt-A-Plant Program

L: Thank you. Another idea is that we would have an Adopt-A-Plant thing. We would have someone, like maybe Lowe's or Home Depot, donate plants, like small potted plants and we would leave them on the sidewalk or somewhere central to the community and you could come pick one up and bring it home and plant it in your own yard. Just for free.

P: Yeah that's a good idea.

L: Do you think people would participate in something like that?

P: *She says they have an idea that they can have … with the Home Depot to donate plants that can be put in the center of the community or on the sidewalk that a person can take a plant to plant.*

P: Yes, it's a good idea.

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L: What do you think? [She nodded in response to my question]

[More Spanish in the background but the audio was unclear.]

P: She said if they could have something for the disability people. That something they could teach to those kinds of person. How to do something with their hands.

P: Like the disabled people where there could be somewhere where they can have somewhere to go because they got a lot of time on their hands. Arts, crafts, things like that.

L: That could maybe tie into a mentoring program.

P: Mmhmm.

Mentoring Program

L: We were thinking of having maybe STCC students at the community college or trade professionals or Baystate workers come and be paired with a younger kid and teach them either their trade if they're… if that's where they come from or just like show them a good example of a work ethic and kind of, like, be a model for them. Do you think we could get people to participate on both sides of that?

P: Yeah it's a good idea. The people, that's an example, that's an example of the grown people that the kids can follow. You know, and it's a good idea. It's not a bad… Especially from the college, from the university, they can come, teach the little kids and the people how to do their homework, how to do the… It's not bad.

C: What type of programs they'd like to see?

L: What? You can just ask.

C: Oh, so do you guys have any specific types of programs like mentoring programs?

P: It's like tutoring. Like tutoring for the people, for those kids. Especially for if they need help with math. People that are from, that are going to study the math in the college. And that's going to be good for the students from the college, too, because they can teach something. They can learn from both sides. The kids are going to learn and the students from the college are going to learn.

P: Get the kid out of the house for us for a while.

P: And the second, they said the kids are learning and then we get the kid out of the house for a little while. No eating and drinking and playing Nintendo.

General Inquiry

L: Is there anything else you thought that we didn't mention that could be beneficial for us to know about ways to improve Springfield?

P: More housing, transportation. Especially this. This is important. Help for the kids outside on the street. Cause I can see lately that it's a lot of kids. Homeless. Asking for 25 cents, asking for 50 cents out on the street. That we need some help with these kids because that's going to be the grown in the future. It's going to be the adults in the future. And if we don't do nothing now they gonna be the next crackhead, the next needle, you know. And then we need help. Definitely, we need help in the North End with the kids.

P: She said that people, they are in shelters in the morning. In the daytime, they gotta be on the street. They only go to have sleep. If they can have something that can be beneficial to them… something that can teach them how to use a computer. They can send email for work, looking for the job. Some place … that's maybe going to go together with the place for the kids. Something that they can … employ their time in a good way.

P: I mean, I see the problem. The problem is there is no transportation.

P: They barely know how to read and write. They dropped out at seven, eighth grade. So they need somewhere where they can start.

P: Yeah, some counselor, some advisor. Strong advisor that they can start. Because it's hard for that kind of kids, that kinds of adults. They're on the streets. They got nothing. What are they doing? Stealing… or doing something wrong.

P: The thing that we missed, the biggest thing is the security. You know, there's not enough police presence. I mean you see them drive by once maybe every 20 minutes, half hour. You would think that they would be around here all the time. It's a high crime.

P: Yeah but it's … you remember … you remember …

[Spanish is spoken and translated.]

P: They're saying that there should be, you know, cops walking, another one on bikes and just overlapping each other. You know, this one went down once and this one's coming up this way. They did it for a couple of weeks and it worked out. It was good but then as soon as the crime went down a little bit, they stopped doing it. So that's one of our biggest concerns. That would alleviate a lot of the problems.

L: It's been shown to us that there's sometimes a mistrust when it comes to the police. Do you think that that's true to this community?

P: That there's what?

L: That there's a mistrust in the community towards police. That people don't want to talk to them. Is that true?

P: *She say that … that we don't trust the police. If you think that's true?*

P: *I think what happened …*

P: You know what happen? This … the neighborhood on this side, in the North End … they see the drug dealers on the street. They don't want to see the police around. The people, we got family. We got kids that want to raise kids in a good way. We want to see the police around. Everyone wants to see the city implement good things for the community. But those kind of people, they don't care, if we send the drug to the fourteen years old, to the thirteen years old. That's the kind of people, they don't want to see the police around. But that's something that we need, more patrols on the street.

L: Let me see if I missed anything…

P: Is anybody going to hear any of these? You know any of this stuff?

C: Any of what you're saying? Yeah …

[Participants speak in Spanish about how they want someone to hear what they're saying]

C: Yeah so we'll be doing a presentation and a report will be submitted to DevelopSpringfield, as well as we'll be doing a presentation in front of … we're going to be doing one in front of the New North Citizens. I think we're going to be doing one in front of the New North Citizens big meeting. As well as we're going to be doing one for the South End. Who was that going to be with again? (to Lindsey)

L: I think it's going to be with Jay Minkarah and …

P: One more thing, there is 900 million for this ... for the development of Springfield so that when you do the presentation to them, they're going to be funds for that. Because I think there is … [He says that we will be meeting with people to discuss this and it important for them to help to get the funds for it]

P: Like 900 million, no?

L: For Springfield?

P: Yeah Springfield

L: DevelopSpringfield?

P: For DevelopSpringfield, yeah.

L: I think … I don't know how much it is, but it's definitely high.

C: It's in the millions.

P: Yeah.

P: I say that you have a good project on your hands. And that the city have funds. Yeah, you're definitely, going to present to the different kind of people like in the city hall, that they can approve the funds but if we don't help you … yeah, you need the help, you need the help for the community to go to the fund.

C: Yeah, and all of the data that we get from the in-person experience, all goes into a stronger report. They ask us, you know, like how many people did you talk to and who did you talk to, where did you talk to them. All of these things that go into whether they believe what we're trying to tell them so it's good that we go so many people here. We weren't sure how many people were going to come in. So it's good.

P: Yeah, this is the problem. That there is only a handful of us.

C: Well it's more than we thought and at the meeting last week or … it was last week, right? We only got like three or so people, right?

P: Yeah, we got like maybe four or so people last week. Maybe, the next time…the meeting is at 12:30 again, no?

C: I don't … which one? For?

P: Today.

C: Yeah so there's one at 12:30 … we know that [participant name] is going to be coming down there. We're not sure who else is going to be coming so it might just be an interview at that point.

P: It's going to be good if you're going to do something going through the streets and asking the people.

C: Yeah we got surveys going out. We got the STCC students up at the community college, they're doing some on the street surveys so…

P: But definitely, the people that are here, I think we're going to help you all that we can. [Repeats in Spanish]

P: You going to do a next meeting? There's going to be another meeting?

C: Which one? For today?

P: No, not for today. In the future.

L: No… this is our…

C: Focus group meetings? Oh, we're not going to have any more focus group meetings. Not that we have planned right now, no.

L: It's just this and then our final presentation.

P: Okay, in the case that you're going to do another focus meeting, let us know and they'll bring somebody with them.

P: He says that there needs to be more awareness like … that you guys … if more people knew that you were having this meeting, like myself. I just found out today and I came last minute but she says there needs to be people who are going out there saying that there's a meeting here you need to attend. When they were doing it, they were going everywhere handing out flyers for meetings that the NNCC is doing. And people were showing up because they were prepared. But the last minute thing is hard.

P: He's saying that, you know, that we need to get all different kinds of people from the community, you know, from the church, workers from the young kids to the older people. You know, a lot of us together. Trying to make a change.

P: Trying to make a change in the North End, in the South End. Springfield is our community, we live out here.

L: Okay, I just have two more questions. The first question is: do you think that by beautifying and making the city more safe that it would invite more outside people to come in and patronize businesses?

[Repeats question in Spanish]

P: *They will see the change.*

P: They say yeah, because they're going to see the change. You know, people come here and they see the way it looks now and the first thing they say is no …

P: She says that everybody says they're gonna change this, change that but nobody ever does it, so nobody ever wants to set up shop here because they're not doing anything.

L: Do you think that there is a high risk that if we do beautify and we do work towards making this city safer that there would be a lot of push-back with vandalism towards the new structures?

P: I don't think so.

P: No, I don't think so. People are going to like seeing the neighborhood nice and they're going to keep it nice. And you can see in this side, in this area, we got bad people, but we don't see graffiti. You can see … you can see that all around, you don't see graffiti. They respect.

P: No, they don't think so. If we do a good job, they going to stay like that. They going to preserve the city.

P: Did we talk about lighting?

L: Yeah we did.

P: That's a big, big problem down on this end over here. You can see downtown is bright all the time, even the South End, and they come to the North End and it's horrible.

North End Group 2

Blue Light Emergency Systems

Beneficial? Hmm....to me it would be a cost-benefit thing. If each station costs like $20,000 or something, I'd be like "I think that money could be spent in better ways." If each station cost, you know, 1000 bucks, I think it's closer to being a good solution. Part and parcel, though, the places where these could be used the highest are the places where crime is the highest and that would mean vandalism could be an issue. I mean, how horrible do you think it would be if you pushed a button for help and it doesn't work. So I would be very interested in who maintains them. And it seems like if you're going to put that kind of data gathering point, you could do more things than just make it a voice-making call. Cause I know Springfield has invested heavily in Shotspotter, which is a technology that tells police immediately when a gunshot goes off and they respond like immediately. If you go to a C3 meeting, where Cameron and I - were you at the C3 meeting?

C: We were at the meeting on Wednesday here.

Oh right. So I just came from a C3 meeting which is where community police and residents get together and they record every shot fired. So I would think that these data point, these stations could be gathering tons of great information, not just "ok hit the blue button so I can make a phone call."

L: There's also systems where you hit a 311 button and it will tell you about like situations going on. Do you think that would be helpful too?

Uh you know I just called 311 actually because the walk signal at the crossing area right by my facilities isn't working. So kids playing frogger because the walk sign never turns green. So yeah, you know, when trash cans aren't being emptied or you see syringes on the ground. Yeah, I think that 311 vs 911, it's probably a good idea.

L: are there any specific locations you think it would be better - like along Main Street or in the park?

Um, so I would imagine some people would have an aesthetic objection to them. Right? In the historic district people aren't going to – it's not going to be as welcomed. If you could just find a way to disguise them, make them statues of William Pynchon or something, founder of Springfield. Um my thought is yes of course parks. And places, um park was, my thinking was with parks, I use the Springfield parks. My thought was are we in a part where it would be more reported like loose dogs or litter or broken street lights, things like that. But, it would be great to have one. I'll tell you, we had to call 911 the other day and the ambulance couldn't find us cause we have a bizarre street address. We're – we have a fairly unique location because our address is 121 west street and it's right across – I forget have any of you been there? Have any of you seen our boat house?

C: I think we drove near it one time. We drove past at some point

So there's 3 bridges in Springfield. Memorial Bridge is the big one. The one southbound is the South End Bridge, the one northbound is the North End Bridge. It's route 20. And we are at the base of the North End Bridge in Springfield. There's a bike path there, there's the street, and there's a huge gas station next door that is just a problem magnet. Every night the cops are there. So between the fact that there's a bike path there, that there's my boathouse is there, that we have, you know, 70 kids coming every day after school. They don't stay late and, um, there's an exercise station being constructed right now. It seems like that would be a pretty good place for one of these because it's a confluence of foot traffic, bike traffic, and there's crime and there's garbage. There's a vacant lot next to us that we just end up telling kids "you got to not walk through it." But it's a shortcut. You walk right through it to get to the subway.

C: Ok. So what do you think about like down the – there's a path that goes all the way through, right? So just kinda like on the path itself?

There's a bike path, yeah. It's a connected bike-river walkway. It's actually pretty cool cause it's, uh, 4 miles long. There's like 2 places where the path is interrupted. So normally like on a bike path so every three – like you have to stop and look for traffic. This only has 2 crossings. One is where we are and one is downtown Springfield. Um yes, I would think that'd be a great place to have them. I don't – it's probably not the top of the list though. People on that path are moving. Now there is an issue with crime on that path. Now mainly it's like drug abuse problems, it's not like you're being jumped. I don't think that drug abuse and prostitution is going to be fixed by the emergency poles. But certainly north, certainly Riverfront Park and North Riverfront Park – those are the two big parks on the river. Yeah, uh, I think that'd be great. And if there was some kind of way to do video, some surveillance. You know, I'm not sure if there are some privacy issues but someone calls 911, it'd be great if the person on the monitor could just look at what's happening, not just, ok send a police car who's currently chasing a bad guy down to a possible prank. Cause how do you prevent abuse of those things? I mean, it's a big shiny button. You know, the anecdotal amount of petty vandalism that I see around the

city – that would also be my concern. People will just mess with our stuff cause they can. They're not there to be malicious, you know, it's just idle stupidity. Weather gets warmer, it's going to happen more. At least that's been my observation.

L: Right, ok.

I think if you put it in some of the worst areas, it'll be seen as a joke. Like "oh, let's waste the police's time. Let's hit every blue button. Get all the cops to come then we'll go, you know, do drugs on the other side of town."

C: Ok. That's interesting.

Do they get used a lot on campus do you think?

L: I think they do. We talked with our campus police and they said that a lot of times they're not real emergency calls but when they have had real emergencies they're pretty useful.

C: And on those locations, safety is like a huge priority so even if they're used like a hundred times falsely, the parents still want them so they'll still invest in them.

Campuses, yeah I'm sure they're great. They'd rather take the precaution.

C: And I think you said, like on campuses they're just – they said it's supposed to be like from one you can always see another one. So there's a lot of them too.

I would think almost if you have them, if the things themselves can't have video, maybe if there was some video on it. So if the button gets pushed, maybe it could take a flash picture. Kinda like fire alarms, you know, when you pull the thing and there's like an ink blob or picture or something, you know? That might be a little extreme but...

L: holding people accountable for pushing it?

Could be.

<u>Community Lighting</u>

I think it's a great idea. Bizarrely, we have a kind of community watch in our neighborhood – I live in Springfield. And uh, this one person who's just like the street light police person, she take it on her personal shoulders to report every out street light. And a lot of us keep our porch lights on very similarly, thinking someone, if they're going to do something stupid, it's going to be to the house with the lights off. But yes, I would love to have that bike path illuminated. People would use it more. So, the chicken and egg, right? Do you put lights where it's not being used but people are afraid or do you to light the places people are going to be and they can be safer? The irony in Springfield right now is 4 of the biggest lights in Springfield are out right now. If you... the Memorial Bridge, the picture that's been on our logo, right? Memorial Bridge has 4

pillars on it to commemorate 4 acts of war. It was built in 1922, so World War II. There's a light on top of each of them – 3 are out, there's only 1 on still. We've been calling everyone who will listen to us and it doesn't look like that good. I'm not saying it prevents any crime but it just doesn't look good. Um so yeah, I think that, yeah. I'm a big fan of lighting. I can't think of a downside. I think that some people on our street do object to some of those really bright orange lights and it shines in their windows. But then the neighbors have spotlights shining on our house cause she wants it to look pretty at Christmastime. So yeah, you know.

C: so what do you think about the color tone? Do you like the more yellow or the new LED, kinda like very white light?

I think different things have different purposes. Like the Pride parking lot should have the brightest, whitest lights you can make. The bike path, probably similar. I think as you get more residential, you want to tone it down, just aesthetically. Yeah I mean, Springfield, the city has a lot of interesting lighting and lamps. I do notice dark streets and it's terrible, it's horrible. Again there's a cost-benefit part. The electric bills are going to go up, the bulbs are going to be more expensive. And again, maybe it could be multifunction, something they could do besides provide lights, some other benefit in the community.

L: Yeah, one of the ideas that Jay had, Jay from DevelopSpringfield, is putting the planters, the flowers, to make them look more pretty.

C: Yeah they hang them from the lamp posts. So they found that the ones on the ground were being vandalized and just stolen for no reason. So they hang them – people can't reach them.

But someone's got to water them.

C: Well they found – I think they give like tools to the businesses in the area, right? And they can water the ones out front.

Banners to do advertising or community service type stuff. Holiday related. Or, you know, I know Springfield has talked about the free Wi-Fi initiative, what a great vehicle to get free Wi-Fi in the parks or on the bike paths.

Beautification

I think you need to keep the climate in mind. Like my mom lives in Washington D.C. and they do a great job of garden pots and green spaces. Here, well you know, the winters can be brutal. All that salt and sand can make a flower bed into a mud spot. Um, you know and planting trees is something I know the city currently does and I think they probably could do more. Although they talk about taking down trees in other areas where they obscure the light as a security measure. It would be great if there was a way to get – I think that would – I think the beautification would only work if you got some

community behind it. Like the city is yours and you can use some of it as a community garden, some of the strips could be aesthetic. But someone would have to step and say "yeah I'll water this" or make sure people don't throw trash in there. Cause like at the C3 meeting I was just at the police were talking about how a lot of drug activity we can't break up but we can take away hiding places. So they'll watch drug activity and they show up and people scatter but they can see where the stash was. Could be a downside to more planting space – more places to hide things.

L: That's true.

But murals? Oh yeah. In fact, we're vying for a mural. We have a gorgeous spot that badly needs a mural. On the down low, I've talked to a few people about how to approach this. Should I talk to art teachers in schools? Should I talk to artists? Does the city have someone? We don't want it to be – we want it to represent who we are and represent Springfield, not some fantasy picture of you know unicorns and rainbows.

Community Space

I do think – I think it could solve a lot of problems creating a community space. It would be great if that kind of space happened in buildings that are being underutilized. You know, rather than building something new, unless you're bulldozing an eyesore. So it could be a great way to do some sort of clean up. And there are plenty of buildings in Springfield which… In fact our boathouse was actually looked at as an opportunity for a community space cause of this gorgeous, huge banquet room that's completely unfinished. It's a disaster but it dates back to 1901. It could be beautiful. Every politician or councilor has seen it and gone "oh we've got to turn this into a banquet hall." Well you guys own it. We're the tenants. Yes I think the places for kids after school with nowhere to go cause problems. And to have programs and the spaces to have these programs. Like there's this gorgeous boathouse on Forest Park Ave, right next to a public school building and it's beautiful. It looks like it belongs to Lee George and it's a classic space. And again, this could be a place for, you know, again for people who may not be able to afford internet access to get internet access – there's so much that's online now. I have to get my programs – some don't even have a telephone. Needless to say getting an email is so not even on their spectrum.

C: So access to technology?

Access to technology, I think that would be a part of that. Like jobs. We call the city now, they say "please visit our website," they don't want to take a phone call.

L: Where do you think putting those – would just like in places where there isn't a lot of nice buildings?

I think that would be a great way to attract – I mean it has to be somewhere that people can walk if it's a poor neighborhood. I think ideally in a historic building. Look,

construction isn't what it used to be. You build a new building now it's going to look pretty sterile and modern, whereas you have all these historic buildings that are empty or could use that cash infusion. I think that'd be a really cool project. A lot of people would buy in on that, you know, turning a historic building into a community center.

C: In terms of downtown area, kinda like high-value real estate vs. the low value real estate kinda out to the side, which one do you think would impact the community and be better and the pros and cons of each one?

I think it'd be great to keep the high value real estate for commercial businesses. You know, they've got the money for it, it creates a tax base. But there should be like a – well Springfield has neighborhoods, people know what they're called, you know. North End and South End has some specific challenges. 16 acres is very residential and wouldn't benefit by a community center because the people have churches and synagogues, stuff like that. You know, even if the intended use is not what the place gets built for, you could turn an eyesore into something nice. And you're going to get critics saying, "oh that money could've been spent on something else." And you just say "oh really, like what? Let's talk about what. You just got a brand new building in your neighborhood you get to use. You get free internet, technology access. Go find a job."

C: One more question on that one... do you think it would help like bring business in to the local community from outside? So like a lot of Baystate employees don't necessarily come in and do businesses so...

You know I think you're right, they don't. They just sort of stay in their offices, go to some restaurants, and then skedaddle. Look, I will say one good thing about big companies like Baystate and MassMutual. Most of the employees understand that civic responsibility is one of their duties, you know. They're not there to just extract from the community and take off. So, that said, people are part of organizations and nonprofits and everyone wants a good space to gather and if they knew they could use this then it would put less of a strain on asking their office "oh can we stay open late? I need a conference room" Yeah I could see if properly done being a great thing. Access would be key. You know obviously you can't have it locked up and oh the guy who has the key needs 48 hour notice or you have to book it 4 weeks out. It should be some – maybe part of it is more structured, part of it is more ad hoc and see how it goes.

L: flexibility?

Yeah.

Community Resources

Well, I think there's a knowledge gap but there's also a natural hierarchy of needs. If you're trying to feed your family, who cares that there's a community meeting down the street where they'll talk about riverfront cleanup or something. If your kids

don't have shoes or you need to spend your free time going to Savers or Goodwill, who cares that the city's got a cool website or that the park is having a petting zoo opening. So I don't think – I wouldn't say there's an access problem, but there might be a disconnect between people who are doing it and the people who would or would not utilize it. My wife and I pretty much know about all of the stuff going on in Springfield cause we pay attention and we engage and we have friends and we talk. The people who aren't connected, I don't think that a media connection, I don't think that it's going to solve the problem. I don't think that you're going to reach more, or a lot more people, by having an increased social media presence.

L: Do you think that the events should be more catered to those people, the things that they might need?

I would think so. I would think that they have a lot more going on. I think that one thing we do well is that we have small events, just like bike week events, Earth day events. Just come down, it's free. We're not gonna do a media list, spread the word, tell a friend. Maybe 20 or 30 people will show up, it's perfect. But that's very neighborhood-centric. You're not going to drive across Springfield to ride a free bike on the bike trail. But it probably has to be …it has to start with basic needs, like child care and walk in clinics, counseling, gun buy-back programs, needle exchanges, condom programs. Really elemental, front line facing the problem. I don't know, that's my thought. But everyone will take something and turn it around and say "oh that's not for me. You're making a judgement. We shouldn't be helping drug addicts." But it'd be nice to at least start a dialogue instead of doing nothing.

L: do you think that this local community has good access to the help that they may need? Like a counseling center?

I don't know, really. I don't hear a lot of complaints. I think this initiative with the police and the community is certainly moving in the right direction. People trust cops more and don't see them as…yeah, that kind of thing can only help. So yeah, I don't know for sure.

C: Do you have any ideas for what specifically….cause you talked about how there's a disconnect between the people who need the programs and the ones who would go and whether or not they know about them? Do you think there's a better way of getting them to attend? Like do you have any ideas on that?

Well we actually struggled with a program that we ran and some of the ideas to get higher attendance were to dangle a carrot, see how the-

C: offer a reward?

Like a $50 gift card to Stop & Shop. If you complete the program, you get a gift card to Foot Locker.

C: And how did that work?

I think, you know, it worked. It got people to stick with it. People were a bit suspicious. Like really, no, this is free.

<u>Youth Cleanup Program</u>

I think it could be misperceived. There's a hazard with cleaning up waste, broken glass and needles. A lot of people object to that, like how thick are the gloves, what happens if....kids are kids. But I do think....this is kind of a different issue but gardening schools is a huge positive. It gives kids a sense of accomplishment, a project that they have ownership for.

C: At like the elementary level?

Yeah I think as long as they have the teachers guiding them. Planting a plant, it's a good little thing. Some of these kids just have nothing to focus on. Their role models are focusing on other stuff. A lot of the new to the country cultures came from places where they grew up growing plants. I mean farming was a thing for a lot of them, so why disassociate it? Maybe tie it in to the community center. Have an incubator thing where you could actually do gardening during the winter.

C: Kinda like a community garden?

Yeah like a community garden. Maybe an indoor one.

L: Do you see a community garden as a good way like during class time, would they give that up?

Yeah that'd be great. Unfortunately, a lot of Springfield schools are under various degrees of observance where they've cut art and music because they have to have 2 math classes cause they have to make up some of the deficiencies that they have. That's the way that they do it – just cut the arts, which kinda sucks. And of course, we're in a very litigious state right now. There are lawyers right now who comb the courthouse looking for parents with kids and they'll approach them and say, "is your kid being underserved? Are there things going on at your school that you're not happy about? Join our class action lawsuit." And I would love someone.....my wife's a school nurse so I hear about all of this. And I tell her, "you've got to have someone leak this to the press or something." "ah they don't care." Because get this – in a classroom right now, you can't....I don't know what they did for you guys when you were in school but when I was in school, when you're in trouble you get sent to the principal's office or the guidance office or someone. Now they can't do that in Springfield because you're depriving that child of education. They have to stay in the classroom or the lawyers are all over that. They'll say "you're depriving this child of education by taking him out of the classroom. Oh the fact that he threw a desk across the room? Sorry, you have to fix that part." In fact, it's come full circle. What's happening is if you have a disruptive

student in the classroom, the teacher takes the rest of the class outside cause she can do that and keep teaching them and the one who stays never left the classroom. So in theory he or she is still receiving instruction. How messed up is that? So while I think gardening in schools would be awesome, I think the reality is probably slim to none replacing classroom time with that. You'd have to get some major buy-in from some important counselors and psychologists.

L: Is that at all levels of school, elementary and middle?

I'm pretty sure. My wife teaches in middle school. The elementary school she taught at when she was a nurse before tried to pilot a gardening program and the kids who did it loved it. But it didn't have the critical mass to continue. It ended up being all the teachers paying out of pocket, buying tools, doing the work, learning how to garden then teaching the kids how to garden. You know, reading a chapter ahead.

C: So you think it would be more like an afterschool program?

Well, after school or maybe before school. Kids would show up early to do it. All Springfield kids get free lunch cause the city is like 80% impoverished so how can we….you know only 20% of the kids….just give them lunch. But the nurses are an interesting resource. My wife has always said they're highly underutilized. They're educated, health professionals with a lot of time on their hands. They should be running wellness programs. They should be promoting classroom gardening or a school gardening program. They could be the….and if they were against it, they should be looked at seriously because they shouldn't be a healthcare professional. You're being given an opportunity to promote wellness in your students. What are you here for?

My wife and the gym teacher were the ones who did that. They were the ones who piloted the gardening issue. They got the custodian to buy in and he brought in some tomato plants. These were kids who were high risk. They were kids who were drug addicted or homeless. You take a starving cat and you give it anything to eat and it's going to be so grateful, you know, and that's what they experienced. It got to the point where she had a bowl of fruit on her desk and kids were crazy about the fruit, loved the fruit. And then they took a fieldtrip and the teacher said, "oh for a treat we're going to go to McDonald's." what do you think the kids said? "aw not again. I had that for breakfast, lunch, and dinner yesterday." So there's a misperception of what people want vs. what they need. Sometimes you'd be surprised. She can't keep tangerines on her desk; they'd just be gone in a moment.

Adopt-A-Plant Program

I think the people who don't need it would love it. I'd be all over that. I'd come get some plants. I think that, again, people are…..like one of the kids in our program, he comes so loyally. And he hasn't got any money, he had to be given some sneakers. And I said, "can I meet your family some time? I'd like to invite them…" and his name's Gus

and he said "oh, no." and I said why not, and he said his mom works every day. I said "but they're still invited." So having the time to go somewhere to pick up a free plant might be fairly low on the list of things to do with what free time you have.

L: Do you think if they're fruit plants? Or if you could grow a tomato cucumbers, do you think they would want that?

I think that might go over a little better. Much more than just hanging potted plants. If nothing else, it would sort of be like, ok we're trying to bridge some gaps and remove some excuses. This is a free resource for food. If you really don't want this, we'd love to know why. I could see that.

L: Do you think for the people that would pick up the potted plants, that in coming into the community, outsiders would see that people garden and it would make it look more approachable?

Yeah, I could see that. Although our climate doesn't always allow for stuff outside. There'd be a lot of stuff hanging on porches. And it could have the opposite effect and be like flower pots everywhere. Hopefully they'd be recyclable. I think that's the kind of program that could be a feeder into a bigger issue. Like, hey look at the success we had with free plants. We want a grant to build a community garden and the reason we think it will work is because 85 families in this 4 block radius all took a free plant. Sounds to me like this is a fertile ground, every pun intended, for a community garden. And that's when you get someone to pay for bulldozing that crack house and replacing the soil with good soil and, boom, you've taken an eyesore and turned it into a nice area. Yeah, that could be the real juice here, to do real-life data collection, not just surveys. You could measure where it's popular and where it's not. Let's put a community garden here. And you can tell people, "the payoff is if this is popular enough, we'll tear down that vacant building with the big red X on it that says 'no lives should be risked to save this thing' and no one's tearing it down. This is owned by some absentee landlord. You want that to go away? Take your free plant."

L: Incentive.

Yeah well, you can't make people want something, but you can make them want...... You can't make people do something but you can make them want something. So what do you want? What's in this for you? Besides, you know, free tomatoes.

Mentoring Program

It's something we've actually tried to model too because our boathouse we have about 150 members, ranging from retired professionals to kids with no shoes. And it's very rare to get all those demographics under one building doing the same activity. It's really quite powerful. So yes, we're big believers in mentoring. You know, people with resources are stretched really thin. It's hard to know who's got the time to mentor and

some may decide their work may be done better elsewhere. But yes, mentoring, yes, in any way possible. We even ran a how to get into college talk. An admissions official talked about the admissions process. We had 8th graders asking the best questions. You know, cause they were tearing down misperceptions. These kids were asking like, "if my SAT scores aren't high enough, do I have to pay more for college?" You could see how somebody could get told that, right? If your SAT scores are really high you may get a scholarship, so if they're low you don't. They think they're getting penalties. It was great. Their questions were awesome.

And maybe that could be the underlying message of mentoring is….The main takeaway from this for me from this talk was that you can't start talking about college soon enough. Just make it part of their lexicon. Pointing out that you don't have to be from a privileged background to go to college. Mentoring is like….ok what is mentoring? Someone who's had a life experience sharing it with someone who doesn't. The mission is talking about college. That's going to help everyone. It's going to help that student, it's going to help the community, it's going to help the city. And we, you know…. The athletic aspect, a nice crossover into that. I'm sure some kids…. "If I have to do this instead of that, what am I missing out on if I'm doing this mentoring thing?" You'd have to find some way to balance that, to keep them from feeling like they were missing out. And probably the kids who need it the most are going to be the hardest to find. Cause one of our kids, his permission slip was signed by his step-grandfather. That's who he lives with, his step-grandparents. Yeah, no parents, no grandparents. Like how do you reach those people?

C: do you have any idea of who could be reached out to be a mentor? Like who do you think would be the best….who exactly should be the mentors? Cause we mentioned possibly like STCC students, but they're college students. They're not necessarily the best mentors cause they're still pretty young.

I think when you're in college, mentoring is more like "I don't have time for that. I need to work. Do my schoolwork and try to make some money." Who would be the best mentors? I think you'd want some criteria. You'd want to have people who live in the city or at least closely connected. You don't want someone driving in here or coming in from their job at Baystate one day a week after work to do some mentoring and feel better about themselves. There's going to be a disconnect. I think you need to find people who are probably….. If I were to design a mentoring program, I would start with athletes. Start with successful athletes who have gotten out of the hood and are interested in helping kids do the same. The next level would probably be people that are entrepreneurs, you know. Not the people who work at Baystate, but the people who started the car repair shop, you know, the electronics shop, the pawn shop…you know, I don't know. People who are entrepreneurs.

C: Like local business owners?

Local business owners. Small-time. You know, this mentoring could be more like internship/mentorship things. And then at some level, you could do a higher level of the big-shot big companies, who are willing to open their minds to hungry people. You know, in my life, you meet successful people and they're happy to share their story but it's rare that they'll broadcast it.

Yeah, great. Those are great ideas. I'd love to see any one of them.

General Inquiry

You know, it may not be solvable but we have pretty stark neighborhood borders that are culturally….you know, those lines don't get crossed. And I don't have the answer but, unfortunately, you know some people are brought together by a common enemy. I don't know that we have one of those right now besides poverty and crime and drugs. It'd be nice to see more true multicultural stuff going on, not just talk. You know, the Puerto Rican Parade – awesome. Does this mean it's just for Puerto Ricans? Does that mean if you're not Puerto Rican you can't go? I'm not invited? I can't play?

And I think… kind of an issue. People look past the 10 beautiful buildings and see the one rundown. I think someone should adopt that project and just get rid of the stuff that is just so horrible that it's a threat to the safety of people and their neighborhood.

C: Now when you say you have these stark disconnects between 2 different neighborhoods is that cultural or kinda like violent crime?

Both. It's cultural and it's gangs. My wife tells me that there's kids….She's been approached by 7th graders saying "I'd love to get out of a gang but I can't because I'm afraid I'll get killed." I mean, it's hyperbole some of it, but some of it is real. I don't know how you can stop gangs. Turn them in to positive gangs. I think it's true to say that most of the violence in Springfield is gang on gang. If that was gone, the metrics of the city would change drastically. And I think there's a little bit of….some of the larger companies are a little jaded on how much good can really be done here. They need to be reminded that you are here, you exist here. Like, yeah you could leave, no one is stopping you, but you have to be a better member of the community besides putting a big fence around your building.

L: It's definitely a mentality that nothing you do is going to help

Right. It's something like we get a grant and nothing comes of it or results aren't what you expected. See that didn't work. So the 800 pound elephant in the room is the casino, right? Pretty much everyone has an opinion about it. No one knows what the truth of the matter will be. People who were negative about it see that the project's been downgraded cause it's getting more and more expensive and taking longer to get done. So some people it's the last straw. Others want to see how it goes. It's certainly going to create problems and solve some problems

C: What do you mean by it was downsized?

Well it's purely a perception thing. And the city screwed up the communication on this. Because the original plan showed this like 20 story glass tower. Well the revised plan is a 4 story hotel with just as many rooms, just not vertical because the vertical is very expensive. The number of rooms didn't change. Actually the casino floor space got reduced a little bit but people see, "oh so you're already not delivering what you promised. You were going to make us a destination icon and now you're not going to be able to tell there's a casino." There's going to be a huge marquee on the highway saying what tonight's show is. But there's a perception issue, the city bungled that.

I tell my kids "those are going to be your jobs some day when you come home from college. That's a punishment. You're going to work at the casino."

We could use a new boathouse. I think that'd be awesome for the city. Seriously. We're on the river. Obviously this is our focus, but if you ask people from Springfield, "hey have you ever been on the river?" 90 out of 100 are going to say "no, it's polluted, it's dangerous." We're on it every day. It's an asset, it's an underutilized asset, the river. People fish there. "I heard signs are going to go up telling people not to eat more than 2 fish a month that they pull out of the river." Really? Migratory fish, the ones that don't…..anyway. And there used to be 5 boathouses in Springfield. When it was founded, boating was this huge sport. Like 80,000 people would show up for a boat race. There were 5 boathouses, now there's one. And it's the only public access to the river in Springfield. And it gets people away from…..just when you're on the river, the riverbanks are lined with trees. You can't see the city. You're like "wow I could be in the middle of Vermont." It's really quite amazing. Except for one or two buildings that poke over the top. It really is a release and an escape. Actually there was a plan for a big boathouse in Springfield, I think it was like 20 years ago. And just because no one could agree on it, it just got pulled apart. No one executed it, but they had a plan. It was gorgeous, I've seen the drawings.

C: So for more community spaces, you think that a boathouse would be a possibility?

Yeah the boathouses, when we go to other places, they rent themselves out for weddings, they do special events, they open it up to city council meetings, like "come on down use our boathouse." It's huge. We have 70 foot long boats we have to store in the basement, gotta have something above it. And beautiful views. Look out our windows. I mean, it's an escape. And it runs right through the heart of Springfield. It's there; everyone knows how to get to it. It's an enormous ….. 10 years ago I would have….nobody wanted a casino. We're knocking on MGM's door. They've been beaten up by the city a lot, they're not in a giving mood right now unfortunately. I'm surprised I didn't talk about that more.

Blue Light Emergency Systems

P1: I think they are a great idea, but you got to look at the bigger picture. What kind of traffic? If it's a bunch of kids, it's going to be pushed all the time. And you're going to be getting false calls, and when there's a real call what are they going to do so "oh it's a hoax again?"

P2: My opinion, it's a great idea. How bad would private owners want them for their own businesses or around the area? I've seen that in different areas, not too much in the South. Would it be... like she said?

P: Where are the best locations to put them?

P1: Riverfront Park during the track. You can't see it from anywhere and when you get to the end of the track, it's just woods. I can see it there or in the smaller housing complexes. Where it's not on the corner of Main Street where anybody can push it just because they want to.

P3: I would say that for me the concern is I immediately have is what are we saying by erecting these push buttons? What message are we giving people that live there or even passing by throughout the community when we are creating an environment... without even saying that this is such a high crime area that we needed to do this. So it's almost like you're creating an environment where residents are now living with tons of surveillance cameras. And in addition to that you are erecting these push button things…what type of an environment are we creating when in the end of the day is a community, is a neighborhood? I agree with [P1] the Riverfront bike trail is not necessarily a community; it's an asset, a recreational place where it feels more like a college campus. But within the South End, anywhere, my concern would be we are continuing the message of "this is a bad place to live so much so that we have to erect these emergency push buttons."

P2: Like in a park there's no phone. I don't even think there's a pay phone anywhere.

P3: Well even the park it's visible, it's open. The track make sense because there's no line of sight. There's houses that lie in the Magazine Park, which is the park in the South End. I mean there's eyes on. It's horrible but if something happens... but the mess we are all trying to create a better place to live.

P1: Just going back to the Riverfront. That goes from the South End to the North End. There's so many ins and outs; that's something to look into.

P3: And the concern about the Riverfront and that community asset is that it is a dead end. And there is no points of access and entry once you get to a certain point in

the end, where you get to that cul de sac there. So people are not using the asset as much as the city thought because there's just a public safety concern. There's nowhere to run, only jumping into the river and that still takes some time to get to. The bush...

P1: No seriously and the big stone thing that there. Well I take my kids and we go all the time, but I wouldn't go in the South.

P3: And it does give people a sense of safety to have that available, but I think it's different when you live there. I think for the passerby or the people who do reports or focus groups, and people who are coming in, businesses and other places that don't really live there may go "oh I feel better like walking around here at 8 o'clock in the morning," but for residents I would say it's really not for them.

Community Lighting

P1: As a resident I know that the last time that we had the meeting with WW and all those other people, that was one thing that was mentioned was the lights. If you're going down like Adams Street, there's a path where it's dark. It's just no lamp, never been there. You know "oh we're going to tear that up anyways." I can name off streets if you want. Ok: Morris Street, Dale Street, Adams Street, Ashmun, Palmer in the ends, parts of Richelieu, Richelieu place. Down Mill Street, Lumbard Street, and Arlington Court. There's no fixture for that.

P3: Yea that the limitations that the residents have had on getting them there... because it's not like they are replacing a bulb, they're actually putting them up poles with stakes. There's also I've heard many times from residents say that it's not only about the lighting fixture but the lumens. And also the light pollution. Forest Park Middle School recently did a rehab and they put these cool, like fixtures where it really targets toward the area it's intending to light. I think it's in the South End. It's just like this ray of sunshine in places. Lighting has been a thing that residents have been concerned about in the past. Along Main Street they did invest substantially in the historic lighting into the street. It's like the old post.

P1: That's what I'm saying. On Morris Street, there are those old, old posts that they are just like, it looks like a 5 watt.

P3: Yeah, so it's like really ancient like I remember when we were kids those were the same stuff. Yeah, Emerson needs lighting too.

P1: But at like dusk the lights go off because the parks are closed and you're not supposed to be there anyways.

Beautification

P2: I was thinking like, on my street, there's only two building and the rest of the block there's houses but there's a lot of empty space where you could put flowers. A lot

of places would benefit but I don't know how long they would last if people need to take care of them.

P1: All throughout Springfield, there's big huge pots filled with dirt that used to have plants. They died. I don't know if they could replant. From the light posts they used to have the hanging plants all down the South End. This was 2 years ago then they just suddenly stopped.

P2: They used to... do you remember... down by Main Street they used to have beautiful plants. They stopped doing it.

P3: Main Street along the South End (for some history) was 2-3 years ago substantially rehabbed. There was a lot of cut outs that were put in. You could see crosswalks with more detail. They actually had embedded paintings. So the city invested a couple of years' worth of funds through the c3bg process to replant and that happened a couple of years. But then they are not allocating money to that anymore so what we see is empty urns/ planters. Huge ones- they're empty. I know SEBA has attempted to take on some responsibility and there are some businesses that take on responsibility for the ones that are directly in front of them and that's when they start saying that they are stealing them. And they come up with innovative ways to change their plan style but most of the time they always get stolen. So what you see as a result is empty pots. But in general there is an overall cleanliness that we see on State Street. The sheriff's department just the other day in the morning was going down again cleaning up the trash on Main Street. First Resource, which is a big management company, they have their office on Saratoga Street, they've invested a lot of their personal equity into the maintenance of that area. So if you drive in there it feels a lot cleaner and nicer. But you could see the skeletons of what was Main Street.

P2: Cleaning up blocks is always welcomed in any community. There's always concerns to is it going to last?

P3: (Why should Baystate be the only beautifying place?) So yes we would hope that is, but even there people still throw trash on the ground. The big dog park, nobody picks up after their pet. So there is still a need for more of a cultural shift.

P1: I know that ReGreen Springfield they came and they planted by the old gemini site. They planted, I think, 8 small trees. So you have these companies that come and put them in, but then who takes care of them? It's kind of like "hey remember that tree you put in?" Well it's dead. Like a month later. And they're like "oh well people were messing with it" and you're like "no." "What can we do they just come and put it in" and I am like "who do I call?"

P2: When they do stuff like that for the community, who's the one responsible for the upkeep? Is it the community? A couple of people involved? But people really have to get together and keep it beautiful.

P3: If anything, it highlights the need for collaboration. I think often times for the South End, people with good intentions go in there to provide for the community without really working with the community. They do some clean up and they walk away wondering why trees die, why the park is now littered again. It now makes us think how do we engage and make sure the community there is collaborating. You have to build allies for all of that to stay maintained.

P1: Well it's like, could you talk to your landlord? And I said "you can talk to them." Because you know as a tenant saying, "Hey I need to water these 8 trees every day for you know." And they'll say "uh no. Yeah we gave them approval to do it on our property but it's not our problem." And I'm just like "wow."

P2: And possible creating those 4' trees that are blooming. Also to create a safety net around it. So you could add maybe vitamins and minerals.

P1: Artwork is always welcomed. In my culture, growing up you saw graffiti. You didn't see the bad graffiti, you saw the good one where someone spent a month drawing this mural. Something like that would be good. Especially if the artist is from the community. A lot of people might not tell you but they appreciate something nice. A new piece of artwork is a conversation piece.

P2: I think the artwork should symbolize a piece of the community. They would appreciate it more.

P3: There's two murals now that you can see.

P1: When they did that piece, I think it was done by the church, it was a conversation piece. It was like "wow what do you see?" And you're at a bus stop talking to a complete stranger about this art.

P3: Anything when it comes to art, what we have now isn't culturally connected to the community because it was traditionally an Italian neighborhood. So there's a big, old statue in front of McDonald's with an Italian flag hanging off of it and almost 80% of the people that live there are Latinos. Then there's the Shebelle face statue in front of McDonald's. The community does not necessarily relate to that anymore. It's changed. Thinking about art... then the community should be culturally connected to it.

P2: The Buckeye is a smoke shop. When they did that piece of artwork they had cameras there and little drinks and stuff. It was a big thing for a couple of months.

P1: You would have conversations around these. You can look at it and someone could come over a complete stranger. You could have a complete conversation.

P2: Spreading the world about art. Appreciating it. Learning how to respect the different cultures.

P3: The places that could benefit from beautification. The first one I think about is the dollar store. It's just so sad.

P1: The old Shay Cleaners at the corner of Mount Pilliard Street and Main Street. The old Micnere printer, the one that caught on fire, their old building if they're going to be bordered up, then border it up with some...

P3: And also there are a couple of churches on the corner of Main and Lumbard. There are a couple of churches that are always locked up because they primarily operate in the evenings. I think engagement with them, with artists, they would buy into it. It is just a locked up.... They still have a big empty facade that you can see as you walk and drive down Main Street.

Community Space

P2: I focus on children. Whatever they go through life, it leaves an impact and their imprinted. Sometimes they don't have the resources to go to the location to have something like boys clubs. Giving them an option as to where in their age they could reach out to.

P1: So in the next 2 years, we should have a new community center. It's going to be that recreational, something to host events. I can tell you that we've had a community center but you haven't been able to do anything in there. It's like, "ok you're going to pay 5 bucks whenever you come and you're going to the basketball." And you're like "what else is there to do, I've just paid 5 dollars." They've always charged. You're kind of like "well oh..."

P3: It's a trigger for them. It is for a majority of the people who live there who aren't connected in some way, shape, or form with the South End community center non-profit organization. They've rented space from the city for a dollar a year at the old armory, which was damaged from the tornado. Now they're getting rebuilt. That building is still owned by the city. So what's happened is that because it's a non-profit, they have to have a business model in place that is actually really exclusionary for the people that actually live there. There are barriers of affordability that exist. They haven't been as open to the average resident as people expected them to be. So the community space is a trigger. I just wanted to make sure that I mentioned that.

P1: So yea it's like, "ok we're going to have a Zumba." Ok cool well that's an extra 10 dollars. I just paid 5 dollars to get in here and then to go upstairs, another 10 dollars? To do what? It's really sad. Were all crossing our fingers that the new place will be different.

P3: There's no bathrooms at the park which is the key gathering/ green space of the community. Even today you'll see tons of people there. They're going there, they're going to take a corner piece and put in the South End community space there. They have

promised to have the facility open to the general public if they ever need to use the restroom. That's what the agreement has been, but there is history. People have been saying "I don't believe you" and "I don't buy it." In 6 months, when they see mud tracks in through the bathroom, they're going to stop that, further perpetuating this divide.

P1: Same way when they were at the armory and there was a pocket park next to them. They were like you can't use the bathroom here. It's like, "uh this is a city building. If you call 311 yes you can." "Oh no, our director said no." So then there's people that go into the old armory or you go into Red Rose. So every time you go to that park, you're spending 25 dollars at Red Rose to use the bathroom.

P3: We're putting a lot of pressure to make sure the small gathering space available to the residents of the South End is open and transparent.

Community Resources

P1: So I'm aware of all of the community resources. Just about.

P3: But we're in a very unique situation.

P1: I'm the type of person that, even before she got involved, she looks out and she knows everything. So we got this and this going on. Oh ok I guess I'll go do that and this. Where I tell my neighbor, "how do you know about this?" "Go outside read a sign, read a flyer. There's so much going on. They're doing this they're doing that." It could all be the same thing but nobody wants to come together. Ok, let's say community resources. Square One has this event. Square One calls will call myself, "hey, we're doing this and we're posting this up." And then let's say the South End Citizens Council, did you know there was a South End Citizens Council? See. Right. So there's a South End Citizen Council that will say, "Hey we're having a focus group." And you reach out to a couple of people, this one, that one, and the person that is getting back to you is ____. Because other groups are like, "oh my people don't want to do that." Or "oh I don't know who, we don't service a lot of people in the South End." You know what I mean. There are so many resources out there that you're like… well how do I get. I don't know.

P3: I guess for the benefit of the discussion maybe I could provide a little bit of content where [P1] is framing her conversation from. So we're involved with the South End through the C3 effort. We do meetings where neighborhood resources come together, residents come together to have conversations on the basis about all the stuff that is available to people. [P1], [P2], and six other residents are part of a team that is trying to take that information and get the community to hear about it. So when [P1] talks about their frustrations, they have the intent and the team has the intent to work together and collaborate but there are barriers that exist in the community, both regarding demographic divides, social economic divides. There are a lot of divisions that exist that it makes our work a little more difficult than we would like. But I will say when it comes to community resources, because of the C3 effort, there is a gathering

place about this information. I send out emails each week about what is happening in the community. There are organizations that are trying to build up and collaborate. The fact that the casino is coming in and the MGM folks are really needing for us to collaborate more in order for their business to be safe because the community next door is an investment. So they're a part of it and as soon as they become a part of it, all of a sudden the people out of the woodwork come out. "Ahh, how have you been? I haven't seen you in years." You know, because MGM for some reason represents money for a lot of people. So there's a lot of stuff that is happening in terms of community resources and awareness and stuff like that. I would say that we're looking at your questions at type of media. Unfortunately we have done a bad job on promoting what we have done. And I think that unfortunately our media outlets that control the message in our city tend to focus on the negative more than the positive. If they focused more on the positive there would be too many stories to report. Even the work we're doing... they are right now planning on a whole neighborfest which is a community festival on anyone, but the residents are planning that. If someone gets mugged or someone gets run over, there'll be five stories in the newspaper about it making sure that they'll post the mugshots. Stuff like that.

P1: I think any form of media... I have to remember you're not from here. Years ago like on the radio 94.7. The local 6 station they used to do like weekly calendars. I don't know if you remember. They were like, "hey, on Tuesday there's going to be a farmer's market open on certain square," or whatever it may be. And everybody knew about it. Now that you're on Facebook, you know it's like ok. Around here it's like mass, if you don't go on MassLive once a day, like everybody goes on MassLive. Everybody goes on MassLive at least once a day. Either via Facebook, Twitter, their app, or they even have a snapchat. Now the younger kids... Literally younger kids you know are like "what's MassLive?" Oh my goodness what's going on? Oh what happened? And they're getting the middle schoolers through...

P3: What's worked well for us has been... is flyers and sometimes...

P1: Door knocking.

P3: Newsletters, and social media to an extent.

P2: I've also have been working with parnon, I've been a resident... what I'm saying is that I've seen that they... they have, especially moninas, the promotoras. They do like work that... I've heard so many good things about them and I see the efforts and I'm trying to learn and get involved in stuff like that. I believe the medium should go into their South End community and give them more... how would you say it?

P3: Coverage.

P2: More coverage. That would really spread the word.

P3: More positive media.

P2: Because you have like [P1] said Twitter, Facebook, and everybody... you know but sometimes that can tend to speak about the negativity. They focus about the negativity.

P1: We've just started using Facebook / Twitter. We have a lot of friends, but we need more residents. More people that live... like if I'm on our Facebook page I'm like, "oh I'm going to invite every one of my neighbors. I'm going to do it." You know? And it's like the same thing on our Facebook, "you know what let me add ____ from the reporters. I'm going to add all the key people that I know that just don't focus on the negatives or the numbers." You know what I mean. They just want to put a story about "oh my goodness did you see that guy? He walked that old lady across the street." Like that was a month ago. It was literally a blurb, but still it was cool. It was something with 1000 comments on something nice... oh he didn't rob her? Oh well, that's what's up.

P2: It's just like the casino. When you hear of that certain community. There's a casino coming. A lot of people are going to say "oh my god more crime. oh my god I'm going to move out. I'm leaving the country I don't want to deal with it." You know it has to do with... we had a bad tornado and a hurricane and it really depleted, especially that area. It did a lot of damage there still was... there's still damage. A lot of people are dealing with that impact and just the job that...but they put so much effort so they need to be back at nans. They need some type of medium.

P1: I just know that every... let's say we're doing neighborfest. Okay, we did the cleanup. On my Twitter I went... excuse my French, ape-$#*! crazy tweeting at every reporter that works for the Republican News... I still call it Union News. That works for them to remind them, hey, something positive is going on. We had 2 people show up and they were there for 20 minutes and they were like click, click, click, bye. And it was like a little blurb. I said, "That's fine." Little things... if we can get stuff like that once a month, then we're on the right page.

Youth Cleanup Program

P1: As a parent of children in elementary school, I think it's a great idea, but there are bigger things that the kids at that level of schooling need to focus on. If you put it in the middle school, then absolutely. Like if you put it as kind of like an elective or like, uh, special in a middle school. If you added in like a piece of half an hour a week of community cleanup. They go outside and they go around and clean up. Maybe, but you would have to kind of like incorporate it with some element of learning. Like I can understand... uh yea I can't see it in an elementary school I'm sorry.

P3: Yeah I'm actually having a reaction to even that picture. Right so then really my immediate reaction is, I mean, would we ever talk about having this program in the East Long Meadow school system? So I know... I'll be the first to admit that there is litter

in Emerson White Park, but are we now going to engage the educational system which is already failing to make kids look like the sheriff's departments, people that clean the streets? So just like I mentioned, earlier the other day I saw guys in neon shirts that were doing their community service picking up trash. And is that the pathway that we are telling them that they are going? So even this idea of even having a school cleanup in any other grade in our educational system, again that is already failing most of our kids, is a little bit of insulting. That's my take.

P2: I was a little like… I couldn't really…

P1: I was trying to find a positive and I couldn't.

How can we show the environment matters?

P3: So that's more like gardening. That's different

P1: That's more like, they're all on…

P3: And I would hate to… I know if I ever drove by a school and they were like that I would stop and find out who was in charge and make sure I wrote to the next school committee meeting. But there are schools like Brookings, for example, that does incorporate elements of cleanliness. Because what they are doing… they're investing in gardening and trash blows in so you have to maintain it, you have to weed it. That's different than a school cleanup.

P1: Like with the gardening, the community gardens that they have at Brookings is a community garden. That's everything you just mentioned. It's not like going around with a pitchfork picking up stuff. You know, it's learning about the environment and healthy… not healthy living but just everything.

P3: So the picture might have done you a disservice.

P1: Take a picture of a community garden.

P2: They could approach this in different ways. Maybe they could teach them, they can talk more about decisions instead of making them.

P1: Can I say something else? Like this picture… you could have a picture like this but have different ethnicities. Just to…

P2: I see a Puerto Rican there…

P3: That picture should just be shredded. Visually and physically.

P1: So I'm trying to see the bright side of everything.

P2: It's good to try thinking about the positive. Also in certain schools, it's safe. You know how people go in their area and can litter. Are they going to be picking up

safe things? You are going to have to think about that. Are the parents going to sign off on that?

P3: Needles. I mean that's really what we experience.

P2: It depends on... and you can encounter that in any region, in any area. But let's be realistic here.

P3: And they'll be cleaning up used needles, dirty condoms. They'll be cleaning up dirty diapers. That's what they'll be cleaning up.

P2: The parents are going to say my son got something and they're going to go to court.

P3: So I was... I think the intent isn't lost so I get that we already talked about the need for making sure that the community buys into the place they are living in. And there are going to be ways that we are going to be communicating with our youth about that, when obviously the systems that have traditionally taught that, which is the home, that sort of a bit fractured and that's a whole bigger picture conversation about why that is. But the reality is... and I get the intent. But it's more about weaving in educational components that's much more than you need to take control of your community by cleaning it up and more than you deserve this and that because you are a human being. So let's work on how to programmatically think about that.

Lots of apologies saying we did not mean to offend anybody.

P3: But I understand it wasn't intentional. So it's good.

Adopt-A-Plant Program

P1: I don't want to speak for my entire community but I know I would do something like that. But I wouldn't want to do... I'm not like a green thumb. I don't have a green thumb so my plant would probably die and I know a lot of my neighbors, their plants would be dead. And then it's going to be like, "what did we do this for again?" Unless there was... it was in like a community space where each family has a little plot, not for vegetables or food, but plants. Grow a spider plant really quick and you can bring it inside once it's mature enough that you can't kill it.

P3: You know for me... um... that's great. We are always looking for ideas about what to implement in the community. It is predominantly a Latino community and there are roots in our culture that go into gardening and earth. I know that sometimes, especially the youth, forget that but this is a bridge when you talk about the outside, when you're talking about farms, when you're talking about any of that there is something that I've seen that clicks into people. It reminds them of their abuelita and it reminds them of their trips to Puerto Rico. So I think something like this in the South End, and even the North because I grew up there too, would work if done right and done

by the right people. And making sure that the whole effort was clear, but there's something to be said about how there are cultural connections with the Latino community.

P2: They could even do herbs. Plants maybe to cook. Also right?

P1: Herbs and spices and stuff like that?

P2: Yes.

P3: (Something to appreciate nature, right?) Which is an issue because I think a lot of the time we forget that. A lot of our systems make sure that you graduate high school, making sure this, this and that, and making sure that your parent has a job and if they don't they get evicted. All that pressure of our system has taken away from all of this...

P2: The nurturing and the little things like that that they teach.

Mentoring Program

P2: I personally love this slide because growing up a lot of people didn't have... this never existed. I don't know about every exact community, the mentoring program... it existed but it was limited.

P1: Even now.

P2: Certain areas and even now mentoring, whether it's from college... I used to go to college and I never... I went to STCC about a year, but I did things on my own. That's why I'm stubborn, I like to learn things on my own but mentoring helps you. It just... a lot of people need this.

P3: When you look at the makeup of the families in the community there are a lot of single headed households. There are a lot of single moms raising one, two, multiple children and what happens is that the absence of the male role models in the community has an impact on how especially younger males develop. So mentorship has always been one of those type of things we always talk about. Broken families, there's a need especially for younger men. Where does that fit in? Mentorship has always been the conversation.

P: What types of programs would you like to see?

P3: There's been Big Brother Big Sister. Right? Where they have been successful.

P1: Which there is a 7 year wait for males.

P3: Because there's a limited amount

P1: Of male role models.

P3: There's only so many males that are willing to contribute their one hour a month. Or two hours a month?

P1: It's whatever they want.

P3: So there's a need. We only have one school in the neighborhood, the South End Middle School. There's no elementary schools or high schools. So anyways, one middle school and there are programs there for mentorship. They have the ALI, they do things like that. But not everybody takes advantage. They're limited to the people that work in that school and in the meantime these elementary kids, well they are going to neighborfest without their parents. So where's your parent? "Oh I don't know." And their parent is inside of the apartment complex and the kid is six. So it's like "yikes." And they must feel safe but so I don't know. So there's a big need in our community.

P1: As a parent of children that have all had mentors, I appreciated them tremendously. Even though our mentorship was on a therapeutic piece, that's... it doesn't matter, but the thing is in Springfield, in the South End, there's one... if you look at South End as a whole there's only one company that does mentorship but it's the therapeutic needs. Like you said, not everybody will qualify for it and this and that and the insurances. Like the Big Brothers Big Sisters. They've been great for decades but to try and get your child in there it's like... uhh. It's like pulling teeth. But you know what I mean. But if there was a program against STCC, where their doing it for their...

P3: Capstone or something...

P1: Their degree... whatever degree they are going for. Early development of a child, whatever it may be, and they have six months to be a mentor. You know what I mean. And learn about what mentors do or whatever. And have the mentors have their mentees and you never know which direction that child's life will go in just by you mentoring them. And it could be, for example, my son is a stubborn little $#*!. But his mentor is like... (son) is like "I'm just going to take a hammer and break holes in the wall." "Well let's go to Lowe's and build something." And my sons like, "oh my god, I got a toolkit. Don't touch my toolkit. I'm going to go build a birdhouse." You see what I'm saying? Go build your birdhouse. I wouldn't have known that unless... so if we could have something like that in our community. So many parentless children, I don't want to say father, mother, parentless children that are just like, "oh go outside." And they don't know what to do. Oh no...I'm going with my big or whatever it may be, it's like they look forward to doing something. They have different outlook on life. That would be amazing.

P3: Not only that but I think that there's also a need for a representation of people who are professionals or have gone to college or have a good career or in a trade that is really respectable. Plumbers you know all these other folks that look like them.

P1: That's exactly what I was saying.

P3: So there's a need there as well to have an example of what they could be or strive for because right now there's a lack of... although we could find them and pull them all the time. But I think the community overall is desperate to sort of see them as reflected in people that are sort of in those positions.

P2: It's funny because I happen to see something like this where they took a whole group of minorities and they got them... it could be anybody or any color... and they put them together and they were told to grab fathers. So they built a mentoring program where there was specific role models.

P1: You know like I'm going to teach you how to tie a tie today. That one?

P2: Yeah, it was on Facebook.

P1: Yeah, it was just cute.

P2: And then they look up to them and they have different jobs, they have different uniforms and they can relate to them.

P3: Examples.

P2: Yeah.

P3: Instead of thinking about their examples, their dad's in prisons, their uncle's in prisons. That's their examples.

P2: Being exposed to different examples.

P1: So if you could get the colleges, that would be great. I don't want to say the older college students, cause there are some young ones... but some of the young ones are just like knuckleheads and they're not... they might not be mature enough to be a mentor. Even if they're going to school for it, they're still not there. But definitely look into some of the community colleges or the undergrad programs.

P3: There's also something like Project Coach. Are you familiar with Project Coach?

P1: Oh, yeah.

P3: So the North End has this initiative called Project Coach where they essentially sort of like, they try to solve the issue of lack of mentors by creating mentors within the community. So for example, elementary school students are partnered up with high school students. The high school students are the mentors of the elementary school students. The middle schools are mentored by college students and you grow in the system and you play a different role. It's sort of like a full circle where it's self-sustained in that way. We're trying to create something similar in the South End but again resources and all this other stuff... just things take time.

P1: The closest things...

P3: Project Coach is a great example of a mentorship program.

P1: I can't believe I forgot about that.

General Inquiry

P1: A major part about the community is figuring out more ways... I mean we engage with the community until we're blue in the face but... uh... to get them involved what more do we have to do? I'm not one to be "oh my god here's ten dollars for participating"... no. I wish I could change people's mindsets to say, "You live here. Come out and be a part and do something."

P3: I just wanna say because you had the lens of economic development so there are a lot of improvements that have happened or are going to be done in the community that's going to make it even more desirable to walk in and live in. Marble Street is connecting over to Central Street so we'll have some more infrastructure improvements there. That those Springfield housing authorities are knocked down to provide more space and openness there. So that's one piece and that moving forward and I think the city and other departments have done a good job on making sure they move forward. I think there is still some more work that needs to be done along the Main Street corridor regarding businesses. I think MGM is going to play a more prominent role in insuring that there's a viable Main Street business community that's alive and hopefully it represents the need of the community. So that the community can actually touch into that instead of what people are fearing, which is gentrification piece where their bringing higher end things. You can't afford to buy a gallon of milk for $8 kind of thing. The other piece when you think about the general improvement piece of the community is that I think that there needs to be, from the city side or other organizations, an improvement on the social construct, on how community does improve from the peoples' lens. Whether or not the city needs to focus more energy and resources into getting staff in designated to improving the community like they used to back in the 70s, 80s. This investment in the community from that lens has led to a lot of this discourse and disengagement because, in the past, you would have planners dedicated to neighborhoods and their jobs were to get feedback from the community, create neighborhood plans where people understood what was happening next. That this investment overall, and we're seeing the repercussions of that, now were coming trying to do that and there are issues were having trying to overcome that. I think that that construct needs to be sort of... and that might be a political piece that comes from elected politicians to move that forward. General improvements when it comes to our community, I think that's the key one, that infrastructure.

P1: That's exactly what I was trying to say.

P2: So like, who thought that the casino would be a major improvement in that specific targeted area? That was the MGM, right? So they really thought that would have an impact in the community because we have been in a recession. They're saying three years. I think it's been over but it just been hidden. It was depleting, because of all the things going on with the wars, the tornado, the hurricane, and a lot of political things going on. They think that's going to bring a major... you know what I mean, so let's see. So maybe we can get help... maybe we should think something like they're thinking but I mean you need funds, but something has to be done for the improvements. And people are trying. They're doing a great job.

Appendix C: Final Presentations

North End

Our Team

Lindsey Andrews
Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Yahel Nachum
Computer Science
Junior

Katie Curran
Actuarial Mathematics
Junior

Cameron DeWallace
Mechanical Engineering
Senior

Nick Porter
Math & Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Patrick Bemben
Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Our Graduate Students
Performing an Independent Study

Wilander Tauro
Master of Science
Information Technology

Yanling Lin
Master of Science
Marketing & Innovation

Agenda

1. Our Project & Objectives

2. Previous work of C-Term Students

3. Research, Surveys, & Focus Groups

4. Findings & Final Recommendations

Our Project

- Overall Goal: Propose in-depth solutions to challenges faced by the North and South Ends of Springfield.

- This project is a continuation of the previous team, who focused primarily on collecting data about what most needs to be improved.

- We went on to create in-depth solutions through surveys and focus groups.

- From this, we outlined a course of action for DevelopSpringfield based on our refined solutions.

Previous Work of WPI Team

Respondents were asked to choose their top 5 challenges from this list.

Please choose the top 5 challenges in the North End.

- [ ] Accessibility to Groceries
- [ ] Public Transportation
- [ ] Parking
- [ ] Housing
- [x] Crime
- [ ] Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement
- [ ] Substance Abuse
- [ ] Accessibility to Health Care/Mental Health Services
- [ ] Accessibility to Education
- [ ] Accessibility to Entertainment Places
- [ ] Low Income Level
- [ ] Lack of Land for Recreation
- [ ] Lack of Job Training
- [ ] Other

Previous Work of WPI Team

Please rate the challenge of housing in the North End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Most Severe

Please rate the challenge of crime in North End from least severe to most severe.

Least Severe ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Most Severe

They were then asked to rate each of the 5 challenges from least to most severe.

Previous Work of WPI Team

The top 5 challenges in the North End were identified as:

- substance abuse
- crime
- low income level
- lack of job training
- housing

Previous Work of WPI Team

Possible Problems with the Survey:
- Focused only on the negative aspects of the city
- Only 36 respondents in the North End
- Almost 20% of responses were from visitors
- Survey population may not have been representative of the North End

Our Follow-Up Survey

Demographics

Which region of Springfield do you identify with?

○ North End
○ South End
○ Neither

Do you identify as:

☐ Resident
☐ Business Owner
☐ Visitor
☐ Employee in Springfield

Same questions as C-term survey

Allowed us to divide between North and South opinions, as well as affiliations to the neighborhood

Our Follow-Up Survey

These questions would allow us to see if we achieved a representative sample of the population, as well as identify trends within different groups.

What is your Ethnicity?

○ Hispanic or Latino
○ Black or African American
○ Native American or American Indian
○ Asian/Pacific Islanders
○ White
○ Do not wish to identify
○ Other: [_____]

Age:

○ 18-24
○ 25-32
○ 33-40
○ 41-48
○ 49-56
○ 57 or older

Survey Results

North End Participant Ethnicities

- White
- Hispanic or Latino
- African American

Total Number of Participants: 71

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Survey Results

North End Population
Average Rating Out of 5:

Category	Rating
WELL LIT AT NIGHT	1.34
AVAILABLE PARKING	1.37
CLEANLINESS	1.41
SAFETY	1.43
ACCESS TO COMMUNITY SPACE	1.47
JOB SEARCH RESOURCES	1.49
JOB TRAINING	1.53
SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAMS	1.57
QUALITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS	1.78

1 = poor
2 = fair
3 = average
4 = very good
5 = excellent

Focus Groups

Topics
- Blue Light System
- Community Lighting
- Beautification
- Community Space
- Community Resources
- Youth Community Clean-up
- Adopt-a-Plant
- Mentoring Program
- General Inquiry

North End
- 12 participants for two interviews
  - A mix of residents and business owners
- Roughly 45 minute sessions

North End Focus Group Analysis

Hottest Topics
- Community Resources — 10.89%
  - Cater to actual needs of the community, like child care, walk in clinics, multicultural event and job training
  - Local-based & safety-considered
- Blue Light System — 10.85%
  - Collaborate with 3-1-1 or shotspotter
  - Location: Main St, Jefferson St, Bike path, Riverfront Park, etc.
- Community Space — 9.42%
  - Historic Building/ Recreation Center for both community and business

Other General Concerns
- Make full use of underutilized assets (e.g. the river).
- Higher presence of the police at the high crime area

Blue Light Emergency Systems

Findings:
- An effective method for quick police response
- A few challenges may exist

Recommendation:
- Use a beta testing method to evaluate potential success

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Lighting

Findings:
- A unanimously agreed upon area of improvement

Recommendation:
- Replace bulbs with LED lights
- Increase the amount of lighting
- Use structures that light both the streets and sidewalks

http://www.portlandoregon.gov/brfs/

Beautification

Findings:
- Received a positive reaction
- Communicated concerns about general upkeep and vandalism

Recommendation:
- Utilize residents' ideas to promote ownership
- Allow local organizations to head up these efforts

www.keepspringfieldbeautiful.org; regreenspringfield.com

Adopt-A-Plant

Findings:
* Has the potential to turn into a major beautification effort for the city

Recommendation:
* Implement this programs as a gateway to a community garden
* Have produce plants available as well as flowers

http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?22098/WWF-launches-an-adopt-a-plant-campaign-in-India

Youth Community Cleanup

Findings:
* Could be dangerous, misperceived project

Recommendation:
* Do not pursue this program due to the risks involved
* Alternate Solution: children plant gardens or flowers & learn about the environment

Community Space

Findings:
- A much-needed resource
- Should be affordable and placed in a more convenient location

Recommendation:
- Construct a centrally-located community center with:
  - A large banquet hall
  - Activities for the community
  - Free programs for the less-privileged
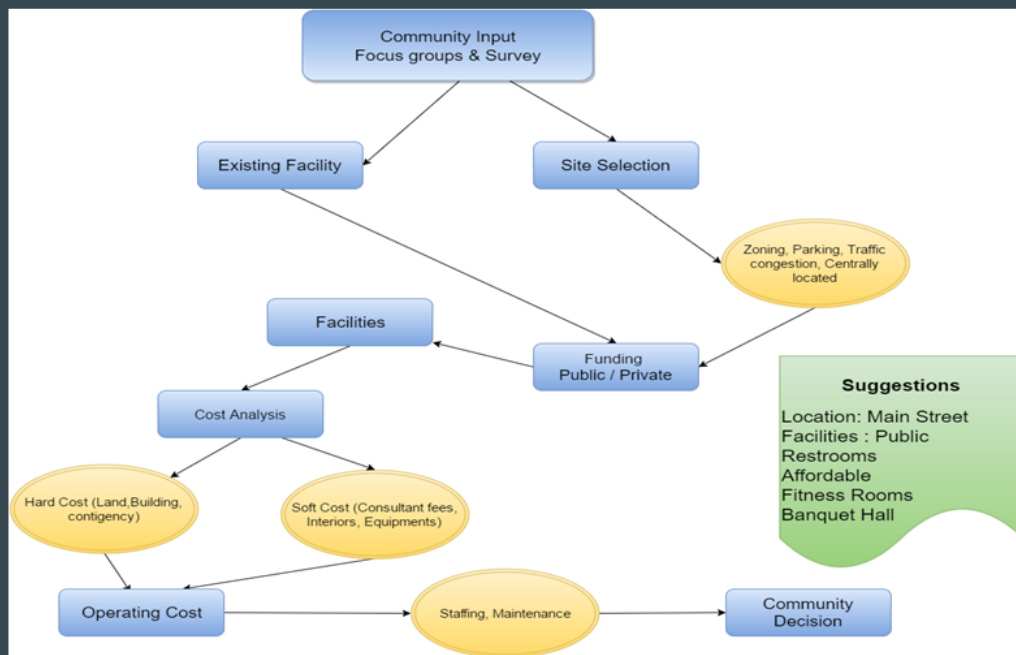
Questions?

Thank you

Image Sources

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https://www.wpi.edu/offices/marketing/logos.html
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http://vignette3.wikia.nocookie.net/clubpenguin/images/e/e3/Trashcan_furniture_icon.png/revision/latest?cb=20120607190621
https://fthmb.tqn.com/173-rsyUj1NV0ftvjXx_B-szkt4=/2000x1501/filters:no_upscale()/about/83815215-56a2583c5f9b58b7d0c9320c.jpg

South End

Strategic Economic
Development of Springfield
• • •

Our Sponsors

WPI

DEVELOP springfield

Our Team

Yahel Nachum
Computer Science
Junior

Lindsey Andrews
Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Cameron DeWallace
Mechanical Engineering
Senior

Katie Curran
Actuarial Mathematics
Junior

Patrick Bemben
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Junior

Nick Porter
Math & Mechanical Engineering
Junior

Our Graduate Students

Wilander Tauro
Master of Science
Information Technology

Yanling Lin
Master of Science
Marketing & Innovation

Agenda

1. Our Project

2. Objectives

3. Previous work of C-Term Students

4. Research, Surveys, and Focus Groups

5. Findings and Final Recommendations

Our Project

- Propose solutions to challenges faced by the Springfield North and South Ends

- This project is a continuation of the previous team who focused primarily on collecting a broad range of ideas and data

- We validated the C-Term's survey and addressed the primary concerns

- We continue the research by the previous team and refined the solutions outlining a course of action for DevelopSpringfield

Previous Work of WPI Team

- Participants chose top 5 challenges in South End
- Then they were asked to rate the challenges they chose

Previous Work of WPI Team

Top 5 Challenges

- Crime
- Substance Abuse
- Low Income Level
- Parking
- Access To Groceries

Previous Work of WPI Team

Possible Problems With Survey:
- Was focused on negatives

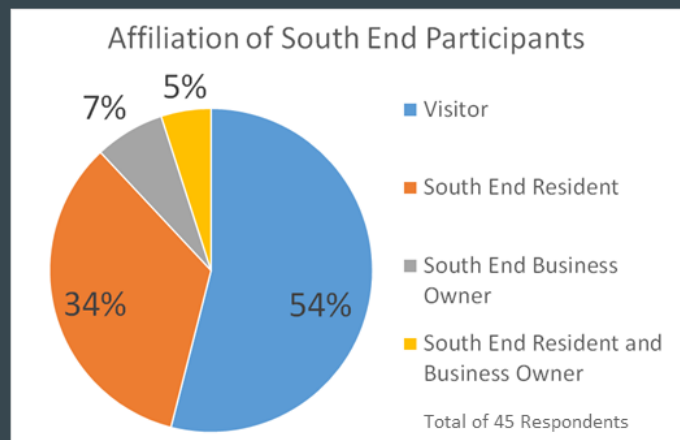Please choose the top 5 challenges in the South End

Least Severe | O O O O O | Most Severe

Please explain any other challenges that exist in the South End

Previous Work of WPI Team

Possible Problems With Survey:
- Might not have captured a representative sample
- More than half consisted of visitors

Affiliation of South End Participants

- Visitor
- South End Resident
- South End Business Owner
- South End Resident and Business Owner

5%
7%
34%
54%

Total of 45 Respondents

Our Survey

Goals

- Create a neutral survey
- Get a more representative sample

Our Survey

Demographics:

- Used to see if sample is more representative
- Needed to discern between location and affiliation

Demographics

Which region of Springfield do you identify with?

- ○ North End
- ○ South End
- ○ Neither

Do you identify as:

- ☐ Resident
- ☐ Business Owner
- ☐ Visitor
- ☐ Employee in Springfield

Our Survey

Demographics:
- Ethnicity would allow us to see if we achieved a representative sample
- Age would allow us to discover interesting trends between different age groups

What is your Ethnicity?
- ○ Hispanic or Latino
- ○ Black or African American
- ○ Native American or American Indian
- ○ Asian/Pacific Islanders
- ○ White
- ○ Do not wish to identify
- ○ Other: _____

Age:
- ○ 18-24
- ○ 25-32
- ○ 33-40
- ○ 41-48
- ○ 49-56
- ○ 57 or older

Our Survey

- Participants were asked to rate qualities of South End
- Ratings ranged from poor to excellent

WPI

Please rate the South End on these following qualities.

	Poor	Fair	Average	Very Good	Excellent	Not Applicable
Safety	○	○	○	○	○	○
Cleanliness	○	○	○	○	○	○
Access to Community Space	○	○	○	○	○	○
Job Search Resources	○	○	○	○	○	○
Well Lit at Night	○	○	○	○	○	○
Available Parking	○	○	○	○	○	○
Job Training	○	○	○	○	○	○
Quality of Public Schools	○	○	○	○	○	○
Substance Abuse Programs	○	○	○	○	○	○

Our Survey

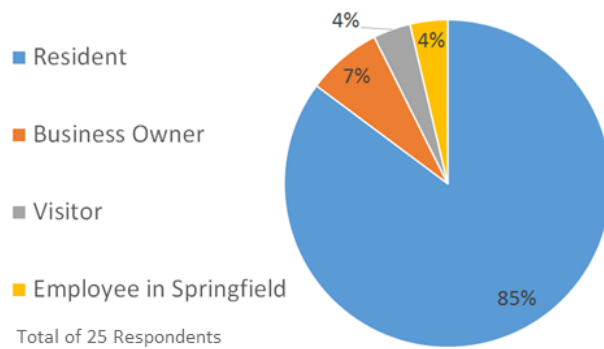- If a participant rated a quality poor or excellent they were asked to elaborate on their response

Could you elaborate on why you feel access to community space is Poor?

Could you elaborate on why you feel job search resources are Excellent?
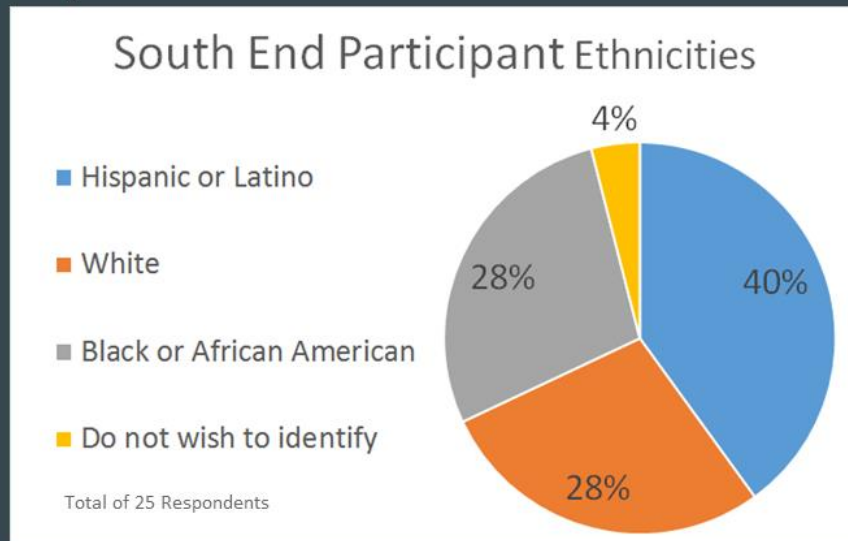
Our Survey Results

- 109 Total Responses
- Interviewed 25 who identified with the South End
- Majority of responses are from residents
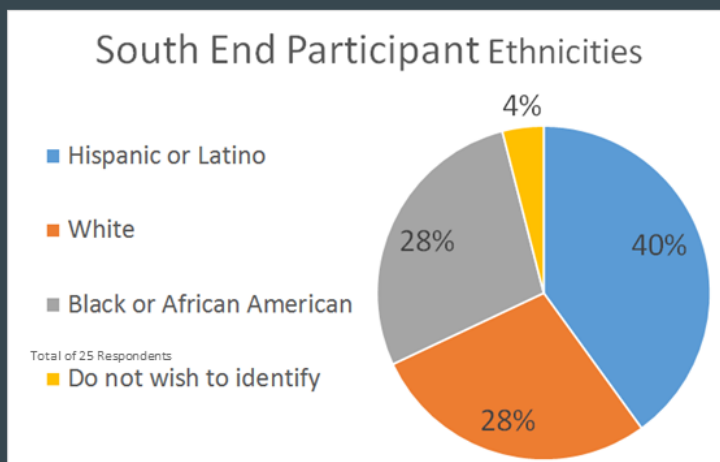- Previous survey had over 50% visitor responses

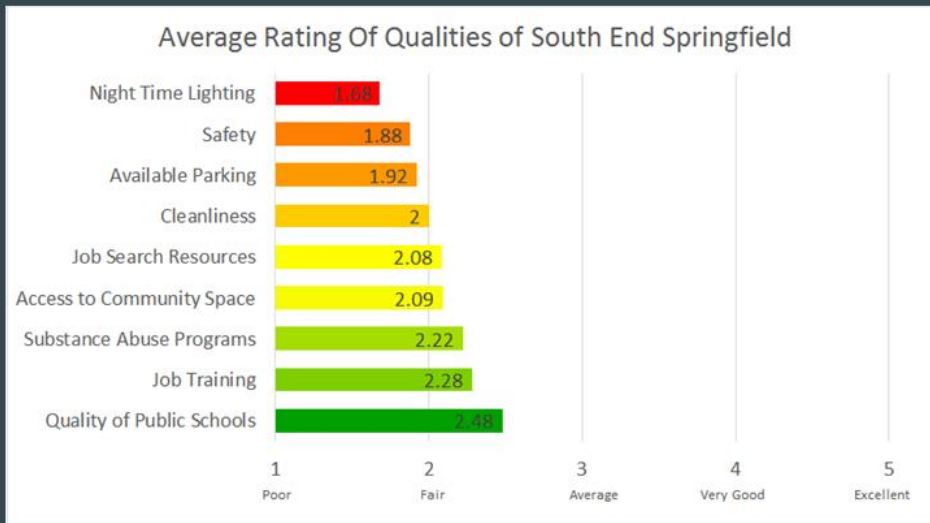### Affiliation of South End Participants

- Resident
- Business Owner
- Visitor
- Employee in Springfield

4%
7%
4%
85%

Total of 25 Respondents

197

Our Survey Results

Average Rating Of Qualities of South End Springfield

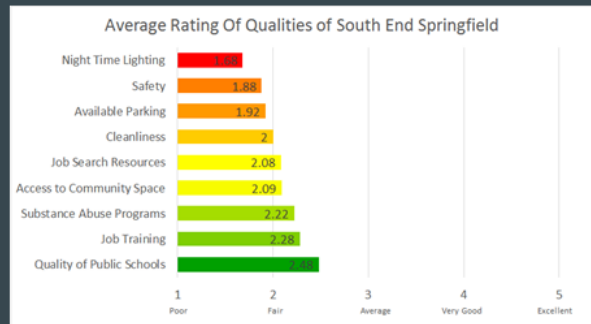
Our Survey Results

Key Take-aways:
- Top problems from C-term team are confirmed even with neutral questions
- Education, Substance Abuse, and Job Training almost on par with what is expected from the community

Average Rating Of Qualities of South End Springfield

Focus Groups

South End:
- 3 participants
- Biased towards members in leadership roles

Topics:
Blue Light System
Community Lighting
Beautification
Community Space
Community Resources
Youth Community Cleanup
Adopt-a-Plant
Mentoring Program
General Inquiry

South End Focus Group Analysis

Hottest Topics:
- Community Resources – 19.64%
  - Weekly Calendar of SECC and MassLive
  - Multi-social media channels (FB, Twitter, Newsletter, Email)
- Beautification – 16.81%
  - Community artwork & following-up protection (Main Street)
- Youth Cleanup Program – 10.89%
  - Negative Reaction
  - Potential danger behind it

Other General Concerns:
- The mindset of the community has to be improved
- Develop business on the Main Street

Blue Light Emergency Systems

Description:

- Provide immediate police response when pressed
- Can include alarm when pressed
- Typically used on college campuses
- Often within sight of another pole

Blue Light Emergency Systems

Benefits:

- Quicker emergency response
- Increased feeling of safety
- Can provide other services
  - Public wifi
  - Lighting
  - Emergency Warnings

Potential Drawbacks:

- Possible bad impression of community safety
- Cost $2,500 per unit + maintenance costs
- Requires ongoing support from local police department

Blue Light Emergency Systems

Recommendation:

- Beta testing in small locations
- Perform initial trial on the Riverwalk

Other possible areas of use could include:

- Recreational parks
- Commercial areas
- High crime areas

Any Feedback?

Lighting

Focus Group Response:
- Need more lighting
- In support of improving the cities lighting

Location:
- Adams Street
- Dale Street
- Palmer Ave (At the ends)
- Arlington Court

Recommendation:
- LED lighting retrofit
- New poles with sidewalk lighting

Lighting

Benefits:
- Improved night time safety and visibility
- Reduces direct and reflected up-light
- 40%-80% energy savings
- LED retrofit can pay for itself in the long run

Potential Drawbacks:
- Initial investment for retrofit bulbs
  - ~$35 increase over HPS
- Significantly higher cost for new poles
  - 2-4 times more expensive than traditional poles

Any Feedback?

http://www.leotek.com/education/documents/Leotek.LED.Streetlight.Guide.V7-101613.pdf

Beautification

Focus Group Response:
- Overall positive response
- Local art that represents the community
- Plants and trees throughout
- Concerned with maintenance and vandalism

Locations:
- Main Street
- Other high traffic areas
- Old boarded up buildings

Beautification

Benefits:
- Gives a sense of pride in their community
- Better perception from outsiders

Potential Drawbacks:
- Cost
- Hard to maintain and manage new efforts

Recommendation:
- Community based group
- Actively communicate with the community for continuous efforts

Any Feedback?

John Simpson

www.keepspringfieldbeautiful.org, regreenspringfield.com

Adopt-A-Plant

Findings:
- Has the potential to turn into a major beautification effort for the city

Recommendation:
- Implement this programs as a gateway to a community garden
- Have produce plants available as well as flowers

Any Feedback?

http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?22098/WWF-launches-an-adopt-a-plant-campaign-in-India

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Youth Community Cleanup

Findings:
- Could be dangerous, misperceived project

Recommendation:
- Do not pursue this program due to the risks involved
- Alternate Solution: children plant gardens or flowers & learn about the environment

Any Feedback?

Community Space

Focus Group Response:
- Free community space with recreational activities

- A place for gatherings

- Any community center or space should be open

- Some participants were skeptical of new community center promises

Location:
- Multiple smaller community centers or spaces with basic needs programs

Any Feedback?

Questions?

Thanks for Listening

Sources

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- http://www.afampointofview.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/DevelopSpringfield-logo-large.jpg
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- http://m.c.lnkd.licdn.com/mpr/mpr/AAEAAQAAAAAAAAbgAAAAJDc2YTAxMjM1LWM1YmEtNDkzYi05MWFkLTczMzI4Y2NmOGMyNA.jpg
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- http://image.masslive.com/home/mass-media/width620/img/breakingnews/photo/2015/01/15/16781096-mmmain.jpg
- www.leotek.com/education/documents/Leotek.LED.Streetlight.Guide.V7-101613.pdf

Appendix D

Pioneer Project

Strategic Economic Development of Springfield

Yanling Lin

Master of Science, Marketing & Innovation

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Foisie School of Business

Professor Kevin Sweeney

May 3rd, 2016

Abstract

This article is a period report Strategic Economic Development of Springfield from marketing prospect. In order to propose in-depth solutions to issues faced by the North-End and South-End neighborhood in Springfield, the author describes all marketing methodologies and activities in two phases. In phase 1, the C-term team conducted street-interviewing survey with 5-Point Likert Scale and defined top five challenges in both neighborhoods. D-term team continually improved survey design and implemented focus-group interviews with random sampling in phase 2. At the end, the author came up with conclusions of higher safety & income, higher accessibility to education in phase 1. Multi-media promotion for community resources and beautification & mentoring program of the South End and in-demand community resources and more effective safety facility and community space of the North End are proposed in the phase 2.

Key Word: Springfield, Marketing, Survey, Focus-group, Strategic Development

Table of Contents

Introduction

This project, Strategic Economic Development of Springfield, focus on improving the economic and social conditions in the city of Springfield, MA by the sponsorship of *DevelopSpringfield*. The project center, the Pioneer Valley Project Center, is a two-term project site for undergraduate students. But as a graduate student, my role is marketing consultant which serves at a one-semester base. I assisted two teams with brainstorming sessions, resource sharing, survey and focus group interview design, and implements of all marketing activities in Springfield. So this is an independent study report for the project of two terms work (C-term & D-term, 2016) from a marketing prospect.

The general goal of this project is to propose in-depth solutions to issues faced by the North-End and South-End neighborhood in Springfield. Specifically, the goal of being a marketing consultant in the group is to provide scientific and effective marketing approaches to assist the team to achieve the general goal.

Locating at southwestern Massachusetts, Springfield is a city went through a severe tornado in 2011that left both rubble and hardship only. (Rebuild Springfield, 2014) The North End and South End are two neighborhoods in Springfield, MA that have faced difficulties as communities. They have seen a sharp increase in crime rates and substance abuse, as well as housing challenges. *DevelopSpringfield*, a nonprofit corporation, dedicated in rebuilding Springfield through advance development and redevelopment projects, stimulating and supporting economic growth, and expediting the revitalization process within the City of Springfield (DevelopSpringfield, 2016). DevelopSpringfield partner with the

pioneer Project Center at WPI in 2015 and 2016 to get help of solving unique challenges in two parts of Springfield -- the South End and North End.

Research Approach

Phase 1

In order to better understanding where should we start with, I advised the C-term team to take initial surveys for both the North End and the South End respectively. The purpose of these surveys is to figure out top issues that people care about. According to background information, the team came across what the media portrayed as the top challenges in Springfield, which include Public Transportation; Parking, Housing; Substance Abuse; Crime; Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement, of Land for Recreation, and of Job Training; and Accessibility to Education, to Entertainment Places, to Hall of Fame, to Groceries, and to Health Care/Mental Health Services.

The survey was designed with the 5-Point Likert Scale. Likert scale, a psychometric response scale, is applied as one of the most fundamental and frequently used psychometric tools in educational and social sciences research (Ankur Joshi, 2015). Simultaneously, it is commonly regarded as technique tool for measurement of attitudes in the management science field (Likert Rensis, 1932).

In the survey, the survey asked people about their demographics to identify if the participant is from the neighborhood. This was important because people who did not live in the area to have a different perception than those who did. Also, we asked people to choose top five issues among the above challenges in their mind and then rate the severity degree of

each issues, ranging from "Least severe" on one end to "Most severe" on the other. Each level on the scale is assigned a numeric value from 1 to 5. This design of survey allowed the team to get the overall idea of what are top five issues and how severe of each on in people's perception.

The team came up with two separate surveys for two parts of Springfield first, then I helped them to combine two into one and taught them use a powerful and convenient survey tool called Qualtrics, which enables the team to survey people with phone and to collect data more effectively.

Phase 2

Survey

Based on the C-term team's survey, D-term team continue to work on another survey because we realized that there is a large portion of respondents of the previous survey were visitors instead of residents. 17.6% of respondents in the North and 25% of those in the South were non-Springfield residents visiting. (Feeley, Gad, Nowick, Rao, & Rivas, 2016). So the team decided to conduct another more effective and valid survey.

The team continually used the 5-Point Likert Scale (Likert Rensis, 1932) for the new survey. According to the feedback from the New North Citizens' Council meeting, I suggested the team to add neutral option in the survey, which can reveal the entire picture instead of negative aspect only. Therefore, instead of asking people to rate top five issues in the area, the new survey asked people their feeling about specific topics, ranging from "Poor"

on one end to "Excellent" on the other, with "Not applicable" as additional option. Each level

on the scale is assigned a numeric value from 1 to 5. These topics include Safety, Cleanliness,

Access to Community Space, Job Search Resources, Well Lit at Night, Available Parking,

Job Training, Quality of Public Schools and Substance Abuse Programs.

Focus-group Interview

Besides survey, D-term team also conducted focus-group interviews to collect more

primary data. A focus group is, according to Lederman (Thomas et al. 1995), 'a technique

involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they

are a purposive, although not necessarily representative, sampling of a specific population,

this group being 'focused' on a given topic'. In recent years, focus-group interviews, as a

means of qualitative data collection, have gained popularity amongst professionals within the

health and social care arena. (Fatemeh Rabiee, 2004) Comparing to the previous business

owner interviews, one-to-one interview, focus-group interviews can gather more diverse type

and range of data generated through the social interaction of the group, which are often

deeper and richer than those obtained from one-to-one interviews (Thomas et al. 1995).

In these focus groups, the team used random sampling to pick up attendants of focus

groups in order to avoid data bias. As I notice the language barrier of areas, especially in the

North End, the team took my suggestions to modified their inviting poster and interview

slides and have them another version in Spanish.

Data Processing

Phase 1

Data Collection

With electronic survey, the C-term team was able to conduct survey by street interviewing people with their mobile tablets. At the end, the team totally obtained 81 respondents, 36 of them from the North End and 45 from the South.

Data Analysis

Based on the survey data, I pulled out the overview of top five challenges of two parts of Springfield. Further detailed survey analysis can be accessed in C-term team's paper.

- The South End

45 out 81 respondents from the South End and from *Figure 1*, we can tell that the top five challenges in the South End are Substance Abuse, Crime, Low income level, Accessibility to Education and Parking.
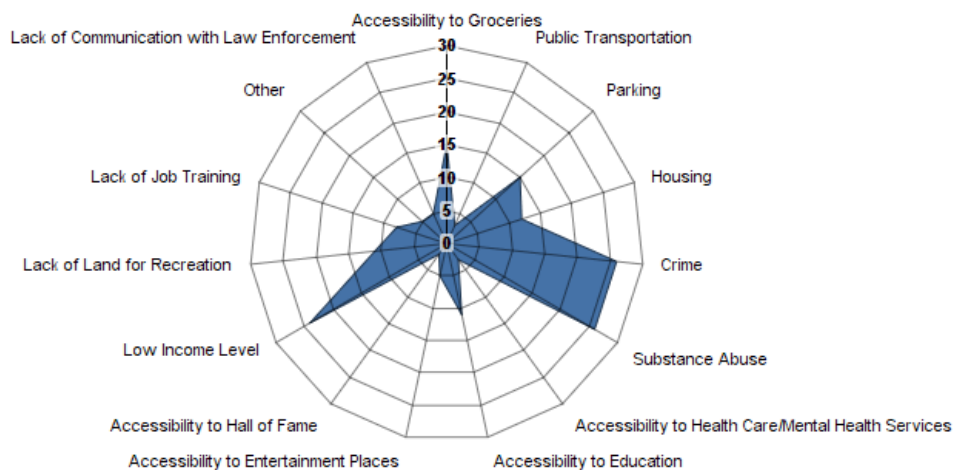

Figure 1

● The North End

36 out 81 respondents from the South End and from *Figure 2*, we can tell that the top

five challenges in the North End are Substance Abuse, Crime, Low income level, Lack of Job

Training and Lack of Communication with Law Enforcement.
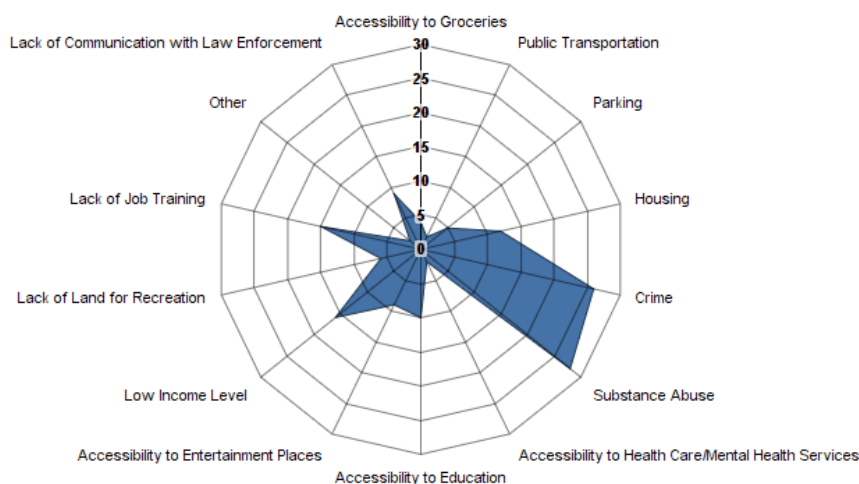
Figure 2

Phase 2

Data Collection

With the help of Spring Technical Community College (STCC) students, we obtained

110 responses at the survey with 72 of them from the North End and 25 of them from the

South. We accepted all people who accepted focus-group interview invitation and we

obtained 3 attendants from the South End and 12 from the North End, which provide enough

data for the following analysis.

Data Analysis

The analysis and interpretation of focus group data require a great deal of judgment

and care, just as any other scientific approach, and regardless of whether the analysis relies

on quantitative or qualitative procedures. (Stewart, 2006) Therefore, the team used audio

records and made transcriptions for all focus group. My analysis are based on their

transcriptions.

- The South End

According to the time attendants spent on each discussed sessions, the three hottest

topics at the South End are Community Resources, Mentoring Program and Beautification.
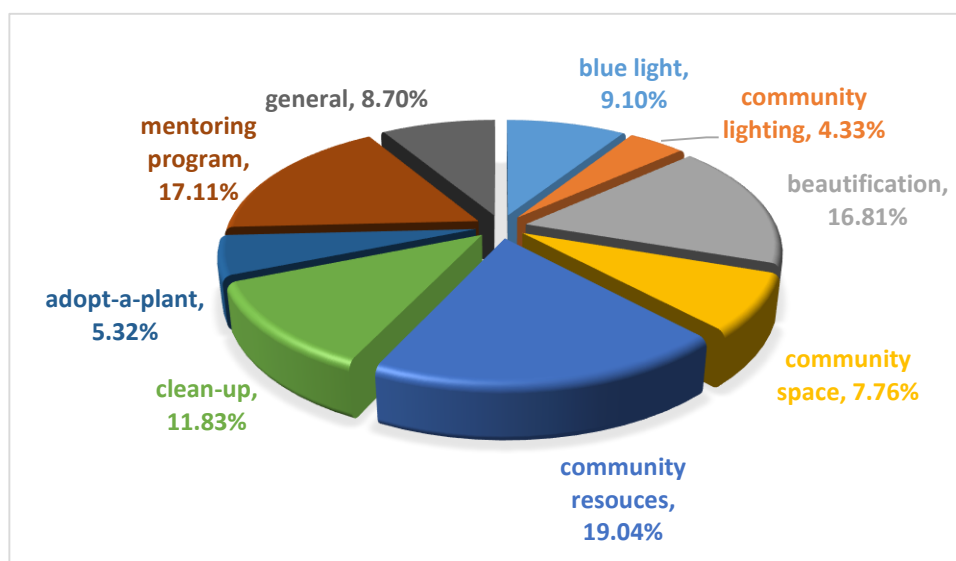

Figure 3

- The North End

According to the time attendants spent on each discussed sessions, the three hottest

topics at the South End are Blue Light System, Community Resources and Community

Space.
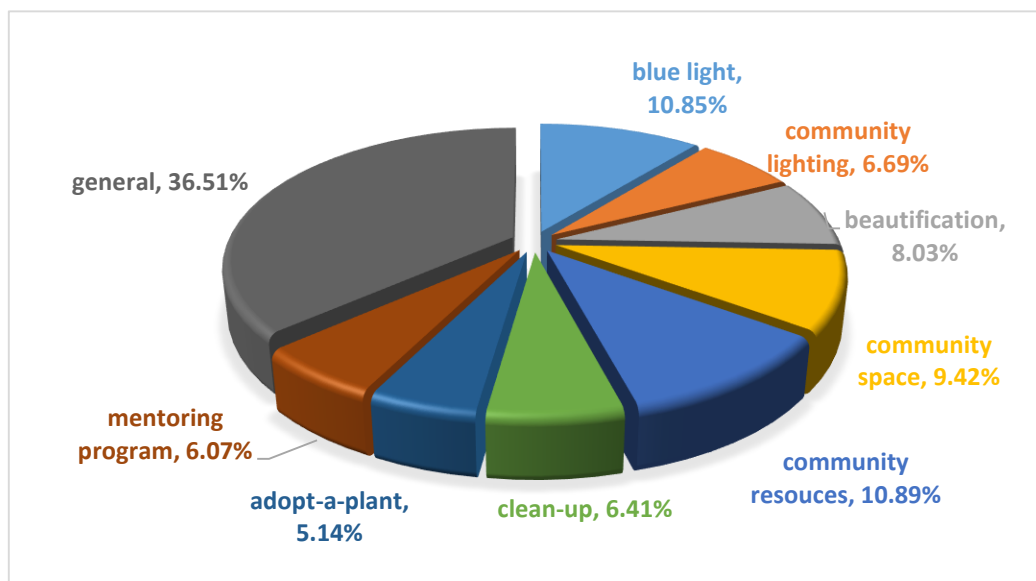
Figure 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

Phase 1

Higher Safety & Income – Both the South End and the North are facing challenges of Substance Abuse, Crime and Low income level, which means people have really bad perception for the safety and the income level in the area. More policemen showing around in a high frequency, especially in the high crime rate area, would be a good lead in improving safety. Also, people would like to see more community resources like job training provided because lots of job are coming but people are not ready for that.

Higher Accessibility to Education – Accessibility to education had a high exposure in both neighborhoods because people are always care about their next generation. Therefore, putting more attention in child-related activities and resources, especially education, would be greatly increase people' expectation in the area.

Phase 2

- The South End

Multi-media Promotion for Community Resources – Lots of community resources are not awarded by residents of the South End. People would like to see the South End Community Council (SECC) keep running weekly calendar. The South End should also make full use of local media like Mass Live and multi-social media like FB and Twitter.

Beautification & Mentoring Program – The South End need to take care of following-up protection of artwork and greening program after they were brought in the area. Starting with children, educate and cultivate their interest and hope for the community to bring more family member back to the community.

- The North End

In-demand Community Resources – Lots of community resources are not avaible at the area and some events are held during night. People would like to see more activities and events happen in the walking distance and open during daytime. More importantly, the North End should cater to residents' need when organizing new events and activities, like child care, walk in clinics, needle exchanges and abuse programs.

More Effective Safety Facility and Commuinity Space – Blue light system looks like a good fit for the neighborhood and people would like to see if it could also collaborate with 3-1-1 system or current shotsspotters. More desiredly, people would be excited if there is a community spaces for both business and residents in the area, like a community center with gym and offices.

References

Thomas L, MacMillan J, McColl E, Hale C & Bond S (1995) Comparison of focus group and individual interview methodology in examining patient satisfaction with nursing care. Social Sciences in Health 1, 206–219.

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Likert, R. (1932). A technique for the measurement of attitudes. *Archives of psychology*.

Shannon Feeley, Huda Gad, Ismael Nowick, Akshay Rao, Rodrigo Rivas (2016). Urban Planning -- Springfield's North and South Ends, *Worcester Polytechnic Institute*

Appendix 1. Transcription Analysis for the South End

Solution	Feedback
Blue Light System	● Concern about the portion of false calls, which may result in negative reaction to the real call. ● It may give people the perception of an unsafe neighborhood. ● Recommended location: Riverfront park bike track ● It may give passersby a nice first impression but not for residents.
Community Lighting	● Definitely a great idea ● Need to specify which kind of lighting when giving suggestions ● Need a whole install and rehab system to maintain, make it sustainable ○ Not just about fixtures but also need to think about lumens and light pollution. ● Recommended Location: Adams street, Morris street, Ashmun street, Dale street, Palmers (just ends), Richiline (just one side), Mills street, Lumbard, Arlington Quart
Beautification	● A good / new artwork is a conversation starter and teaches people how to respect ● Artworks are always welcomed, especially those created by people from the community. Format/Type doesn't matter. ● Need to consider the following protection of artworks. (Problem like theft and trash) ● Who's going to maintain the environment after beautification? No potted plants because of theft. ● How to build align in the community to develop this art culture? ● Recommend location: Main Street
Community Space	● "Community Center" is just a building than anything else. Not open to everyone from the community. (e.g. Restroom is not allowed to be used when people need it) ● A NGO called South End Community Center is the operator of the center building now but the building is city-owned. But most events there didn't go well because of trust. (No trust, no deal, no ticket will be sold) ● Should have more resources and activities for children.
Community Resources (Information Gathering Channel)	● South End Citizen Council has a weekly calendar on the radio channel. MassLive is a widely used new platform. http://www.masslive.com/springfield/ ● In order to cover all people, usually social media and traditional advertising methods are used at the same time for promotion, like newsletter, email, flyer, FB.
Clean-up Program	● Not a good idea ● It may give a perception for passersby that children are being penalized

	instead of community service. ● Scary - It could be danger and give kids a bad image of the city because most of trash they will pick up can be glass, needles, etc. ● Gardening could be a better way to facilitate it.
Adopt-A-Plant	● Plants that adopted by people could be easily died because of improper caring way. ● A fix place/garden that people can come and adopt a plant would be a better idea.
Mentoring Program	● Great idea because a significant portion of population make-up is single-parent family. ● Already has Big Brother/Sister thing, but it needs more time and resources to make it into a mentoring program. ● Only one company does mentoring program now in the area. ● Project Coach mentoring program at the North End is a good program model to learn from. (A positive cyclic approach) ● This kind of program also needs role models who have successful career in the real life.
General Inquiry	● The mindset of the community has to change for Springfield to be able to improve. ● There's already projects the city is working bet even more needs to be done. ● Casino is a good improvement to the area. ● Need to work on main street businesses. Get in better businesses that are more suited for the community.

Appendix 2. Transcription Analysis for the North End

Solution	Feedback
Blue Light System	● All agree it would be faster to just press the button ● Recommend locations: main streets, Jefferson, main area, bike path, Riverfront park and north riverfront park ● How to solve aesthetic issue? ○ Collaborate with 311 option or shot spotter
Community Lighting	○ Pride parking lot should have brightest, whitest light, ○ Tone it down as you get more residential
Beautification	● Specific types: Flowers, trees, illumination ● Recommend Location: Main street, Jefferson Park, Chestnut street, Morgan, Mobile to Carlos St. (karro st?)
Community Space	● Sports/ recreation center would be great (both outside and inside) ● Thinks it could solve a lot of problems. It would be great if it happened in places that are under utilized ○ Would be a great way to do some urban cleanup ● Kids after school with nowhere to go cause problems. But to have programs you need a place to have them ● This could be a place for people who can't afford internet or access to technology could go ● It has to be somewhere that people can walk if it's a poor neighbor ● Would be great if it could be in a historic building ● Would be better to keep high value real estate for commercial businesses ● It could help businesses – provide them with office or room if there building needs to close and they still want to have a meeting/event ● Part more structured, part more ad hoc ● Sports/ recreation center would be great ● Location ○ Depends what time of year. Winter, they want to be in a warm place. Summer, they'll want to be outside and be comfortable ■ Have a pool for summer, gym for winter, place to go outside and play ■ It should be a place for both winter and summer
Community Resources (Information Gathering Channel)	● Thinks there's a knowledge gap ○ If you're trying to feed your family, you're not going to care that there's a meeting about the riverfront later ● Disconnect ● Him and his wife know about all the events going on because they pay attention ● Don't think we'll reach more people by having more of a social media presence

	● Cater more to needs ○ Basic needs – child care, walk in clinics, needle exchanges, abuse programs ● Would be nice to start a dialogue instead of doing nothing ● People are starting to trust cops more – that kind of thing can only help ● Tried offering rewards for completing programs- got people to stick with it ● All the resources are not in this area. They are far away and no one has transportation. ● A lot of resources but not here. ● If a battered woman comes in, we have to tell her to go somewhere else ● If it's at night, people don't feel safe ● Think resources should be moved to this area. We need something in this area that we feel belongs to us. A lot of people here on Main Street and on the other side of the highway, along with the Hispanic people here, need a lot of help. A lot are illiterate or poor
Clean-up Program	● Don't think it's a good idea – mainly because of safety issues ○ There are drugs, needles. It's a good idea but depends on the area. ○ The sheriff's department has a group that cleans the street every two days ○ It depends if they're being supervised ● Send a group to plant a tree – would be a good idea ● They would rather see a group of adults doing the cleanup and then seeing the elementary school kids come in and do painting, planting, etc. ● A lot of drugs, old house; could easily fall and get hurt ● Could be misperceived ● There's a hazard with picking up waste ● "Kids are kids" ● Gardening in schools is a huge positive ○ Some of these kids have nothing to focus on ● Places where people immigrate from are often big on gardening - could have a sort of community garden ● Mentioned that in Springfield, you can't send students to principal because you would be depriving them of education ○ If you have a disruptive student, you take the rest of the class out ○ So the reality of being able to replace class time is slim to none ● Previous elementary school of wife – was with high risk kids; the kids loved the garden but the teachers had to pay out of pocket ● Maybe make it into an after or before school program ○ School nurses should be running wellness programs, promoting school gardening ○ Misperception of what people want vs what they need (fruit vs McDonalds)
Adopt-A-Plant	● It's a good idea ● Mentioned wanting something for people with disabilities. Something to teach; they have to do something with their hands - arts/crafts, things like that

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	● The people who don't need it would love it ● People who are working all day to provide for family – picking up a plant wouldn't be high on their list ● Maybe give fruit or vegetable plants ● "bridge some gaps and remove some excuses" ● A program that could feed into a bigger issue --- ie 85 people in this area took home plants, we think this would be a great place to put a community garden ○ Real life data collection ○ Tell people – if this is popular enough, we'll tear down this unsightly building and work to put in a community garden ○ You can't make people do something but you can make them want something
Mentoring Program	● It's a good idea ● Sets a good example for kids to follow ● Programs – tutoring. It will be good for college students; encourages learning on both sides ○ Will get the kids out of the house for a while ● We've tried to model this at our boat house….from retired professionals to kids who can't afford shoes…. Don't often have this range of people in one place ● Main takeaway – you can't start talking about college soon enough with a kid ○ You don't have to be from a privileged background to go to college ○ Will help that person, the community, the city ● Kids who need it most are often hardest to find ● College students may not have time to mentor ● Criteria for mentors ○ Live in city, or are closely connected ■ not someone who does it one day after work to feel better about themselves ○ Start with successful athletes who got out of hood and are interested in helping kids do the same ○ People who are entrepreneurs ■ Who started car shop, pawn shop…..local small time business owners ● Internship/mentorship things ○ Eventually get to level of bigshot big companies
General Inquiry	● We have some pretty stark neighborhood borders ○ Cultural lines often aren't crossed ○ Also gang lines – most of the violence in Springfield is gang-on-gang ■ If that was gone the metrics of the city would change drastically ○ Common enemy often brings people together – don't really have one besides crime/poverty

	○ Need more multicultural events
	● Someone needs to adopt project to get rid of unsafe buildings
	● Some of the larger companies are a bit jaded about how much can actually be done here
	○ How can you be a better member of your community besides putting a fence around your company
	○ Mentality of what can you do that would really help that much
	● Casino – could solve some problems, cause some others
	○ Has been downsized – from 20 stories to 4 stories with just as many rooms, casino floor space reduced a bit
	■ People see that they already went against their word
	■ Perception issue
	● River is an underutilized asset
	○ Used to be 5 boathouses, now there's one
	○ It's the only public access to river in Springfield
	○ Good escape from city
	○ Could be a good community space
	● More housing
	● More transportation
	● Help for the kids outside on the street
	○ A lot of kids are homeless, asking for money on the streets. If we don't do anything right now, they'll be getting into drugs
	● The people in shelters – in the daytime, they have to be on the streets. If they could do something during the day, it would be beneficial – send emails for jobs, help out, employ their time in a good way
	○ The problem is that there is no transportation. They barely know how to read and write; they need somewhere that they can start
	● More security
	○ Not enough police presence. You see them drive by once every 20 minutes or half hour. You would think you would see them more often because it is a high crime area.
	○ There should be cops walking, on bikes, overlapping each other. They did it for a couple of weeks and it worked out, but as soon as the crime went down a little bit they stopped doing it
	○ We want to see the police around; we don't want to see drug dealers on the corner.
	● There needs to be more awareness about meetings. There needs to be people that go out and say there will be a meeting for the community. We need to get all different kinds of people – from community, work, church, young, old.

Appendix E

Framework for building a community center

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(as a part of Independent study under Professor Kevin Sweeney)

Abstract

The report outlines a brief overview of factors to be considered while building a community center. It can be used as a framework or template to answer the questions related to building a community center. The report starts with the first step of selecting a location for community center, it also suggests some points to be considered if an existing structure needs to be evaluated as a potential candidate for community center.

The report further explains the financial aspects related to construction costs involved, funding options and operating costs. The ideas suggested in this report are inevitable and crucial aspects which need to be considered while building a community center, but it is not an exhaustive set, additions to the framework can be included as per the requirement of the community. This report will help the community evaluate the steps of building a community center and direct them to focus on the aspects suggested in this report.

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Introduction

The pioneer valley project looks at the development of Western Massachusetts area. Develop Springfield a nonprofit organization is helping the communities in Springfield to bring about strategic economic development in the area. My involvement in the project was as part of Independent Study for a graduate course under Prof Kevin Sweeney. My contributions were mainly focused on the financial aspects of the project. In my report I have outlined a framework required for building a community center. The report will be is a part of work done in IQP by C-term and D-term students of WPI.

Site Selection

For any project to be successful, the foremost criteria is to narrow down on a location. The site of any project should be selected such that it is of a favorable interest to a majority of stakeholders involved in the project. It is difficult to narrow down on an ideal matrix for selecting a location for any project. We can use the concept of weighing factor, where we can assign weights to some criteria and then assign ranks to each of the weights while evaluating each site based on that criteria. The inputs for assigning the weights can be taken from stakeholders in the form of surveys, meetings or any discussion forums.

Below is a model of developing a weighting factor criteria for selecting a site.

Weights	Description
1	Not very important
2	Somewhat important
3	Important
4	Very Important
5	Essential

The weights can then be ranked for each site and then a total score can be calculated by multiplying the weights with rank. The site having the maximum score can be considered for building the community center.

Rank	Description
0	Unacceptable
1	Poor

2	Fair
3	Good
4	Excellent

The criteria for assigning this weights can be brainstormed by conducting surveys, focus group meetings, and discussion forums.

Criteria	Weights	1st Site Rank	1st Site Total	2nd Site Rank	2nd Site Total
Location	x	y	xy		
Parking					
Capacity					
Size					
Outdoor Space					
Zoning					
Ownership					
Future Expansion					
Sustainable development					

Location:

A prominent location that is accessible to all the residents is desirable. The community center should be central to most of the community. It should have basic facilities around it and good connectivity to all the roads and public transport. The roads should be able to

handle the volume of traffic during peak hours. Pioneer Valley Project center can help in doing the analysis of traffic congestion in the area of Springfield. TRIP, a national transportation research group also conducts traffic analysis, their analysis can be one of the factor for selecting a location for community center.

Parking:

The availability of parking space is also an essential factor, most of the people depend on their own vehicle for transportation in Springfield, and so they would require ample space to park their vehicles while they are in the community center. City of Springfield guidebook states that city council should be consulted before finalizing on parking lot. Currently a fee of $1 is applicable for open air parking space in Springfield.

Capacity:

The dimensions of the room determine how many people can be accommodated in a single sitting. This will play a key role during community and family functions. It will also play an important role while getting all the necessary approvals for fire safety, and safety of citizens while in community center.

Size:

How big the community center should be? What all things need to be accommodated in it? Should it have space for gym, meeting rooms, dance studio etc.? The size will have a major impact on the cost of building a community center. As the cost is dependent on per sq. unit, greater the sq. unit greater will be cost.

Outdoor space:

Space for recreational activities such as outdoor games like basketball, tennis and soccer can be important for a community center. It can also be used for outdoor parties by the community. Careful consideration should be placed while selecting the outdoor space for various activities, one of the concerns in the current community center coming up at south end is, the basketball court and the kinder garden play area are both on the opposite side of

each other with the building is in the middle, so a parent having two kids of different age group can't watch their kids simultaneously while they are playing.

Zoning:

The division of areas by municipalities for different purposes is termed as zoning. Laws and regulations needs to be considered such as whether liquor could be served or any other restrictions related to smoking or noise. The department of Inspectional services in the City of Springfield needs to be consulted for having all the necessary approvals for zoning laws.

Ownership:

The question of if the land / building for the community center should it be owned by the residents or whether it should be a place rented by the residents. The ownership model will have an impact on the capital budget and monthly expenses, a rental model will increase monthly expenses but will cost less in terms of capital investment initially and vice versa.

Future Expansion:

Room for future expansion of community center is also one of the key factor, as more and more people start using the facilities, chances of overcrowding might increase. So there should always be room so that future expansion that can be carried out without any overhead.

Sustainable development:

Development done by keeping the environment in considerations are gaining interest nowadays. For instance, Firstenburg Community center in the city of Vancouver, Washington was built after a careful analysis of the areas healthy and significant trees, solar orientation, prevailing wind direction, noise from adjacent street and program requirements. Analysis in this area will help in building an ecologically balanced community center.

Existing Facility Assessment

A structural evaluation assessing the structural condition of the building and adhering to building safety requirements needs to be performed. The following things needs to be assessed for getting approvals from the City of Springfield department-

Heritage Structure: Necessary approvals need to be place before making any structural changes to the facility.

Structural systems: It needs to be checked for any signs of distress and should match the layout of structural drawings and its blueprint.

Roof: Roof needs to be leak proof, the wear and tear of the roof needs to be carefully inspected.

Building walls: If the walls are made of class, the conditions of the glass needs to be checked, damaged glass will have to be replaced. For brick walls, it needs to be in fair condition and corrosion free. It should be well insulated to reduce heating cost during winter and cooling cost during summer.

Floor: Floor needs to be checked for any forms of cracks. The floors should be in contrast to the walls of community center.

Fire Exit and Fire Extinguisher: Facilities related to emergency situations needs to be checked. All the necessary approvals from fire department of Springfield needs to be in place in the building or any modifications or enhancement suggested by the department should be evaluated for cost that would be incurred.

Plumbing: Plumbing fixtures needs to be checked, along with water facilities in the building. The fixtures needs to be check for corrosion and list of necessary replacements needs to be prepared.

Parking facility: Parking facility in the area or in the building needs to be carefully examined, if a new parking facility needs to be build it should be take into consideration while keeping the limitation of existing structure in check.

Room for expansion: The more the probability of room for expansion the best it will be implementing new facilities in the community center.

A ready location will greatly reduce the cost involved in building the community center, also the timeframe by which the community center will be open to the public will be less as compared to starting fresh with community center.

Facility Program

Facility program leads to various facilities in the Community center. The people of Springfield have expressed their interest in the some of the following facilities.

Public Restroom: -Things to consider in terms of cost while preparing a plan are,

- Materials and Labor: - The building material and labor involved in building restrooms
- Plumbing Services/Fixtures: – Water taps and other plumbing fixtures.
- Water Bills
- 5 % Contingency cost

The idea of public restroom in community center will prevent it from vandalism as the staff of the community center can maintain it. Estimates by Public Restroom Company range from $80,000 - $200,000 with some of the modern design and facilities. This cost are generally for standalone public Restroom. If we build in the community center the cost should be less than this estimates, also it depends on how big restrooms are required.

Banquet Hall: - Banquet Hall will be a place where people can having community functions parties, and private affairs. The capacity of the banquet hall plays a primary factor in determining the size of the hall. Some of the things, part of the banquet hall are,

- Chairs and Tables
- Audio/Video setup equipment
- Kitchen Facilities
- Permit for serving alcohol
- Permit for playing music

Fitness Studio: - Fitness studio can be used for activities such as dance, yoga or any functional workout. The studio should have good cooling facilities so that people may feel comfortable while inhaling and exhaling. Fitness studios should have good quality floor and mirrors on the walls. Some of the cost that needs to be considered will be of equipment's in the studio. Some of the popular equipment's and their estimated cost are as follows,

Equipment's	Range
Elliptical	$2000-$4000
Treadmill	$2000-$40000
Stationary Bike	$8000-$10000
Flat bench	$500-$1000
Incline bench	$500-$1000
Plate loaded free weights (2-40kg)	S3000-$4000
Dumbbells (2-40kg)	$5000-$7000

More additions to the facility program in the community center will increase the overall cost of building the community center, so it is necessary for the community to prioritize on what exactly is the need of the hour and then move forward with it to reduce any unnecessary cost.

Funding Options

Funding is backbone of any project to start with. Funding can be public or private funding. The various sources from where the community can gather funds are,

Private Funding:

Every community member can voluntarily donate some amount for instance 1% of their monthly income, and a donation account can be setup for community center. The donation from community members can be recurring for X number of months. Donations can also be taken from wealthy family in the community, some families have their own foundations and trust and willingly donate money in remembrance of someone. The community center can in turn offer to name rooms or community center in remembrance of whomsoever the donation is received. The community center can also have a hall of fame theme where members giving donations above a threshold can have their names displayed on the hall of fame. Further corporate foundations are also sometimes interested in donating towards community needs as it can be a medium for them for advertising their company. They can play a role of a sponsor by funding for the community center.

Public Funding: -

Funding can also be received from government as subsidized loan, the citizen's just need to have a budget plan in hand for government to grant loan. For instance Woodburn had raised $7.5 million at around 4.38% interest from the US Rural development board. The only condition for these loan is that community should be able to demonstrate the ability to service the loan. The Massachusetts government website has various public funding options such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Community Investment Tax Credit Program (CITC), Economic Development Fund (EDF) and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) are some of the grants that the government has granted to some cities of Massachusetts, a feasibility can be done to see if the grants can be applicable to Springfield.

Private & Public:

A mix of both the type of funding can also be considered in developing the community center. The www.grants.gov website has an application form which checks the eligibility of receiving funding for developments of communities.

Cost Analysis

The cost analysis involves the actual cost involved in developing a community center. As detailed in the table the cost can be categorized as Hard cost and Soft cost. The extent to which cost can be minimized depends on various factors, such as whether to start fresh with building a community center or use an existing one. The existing one's structural conditions also matters. If an existing structure can be reused without demolishing it much, it can save the cost related to purchasing or renting land and also minimize the time by which the community center will be open to public . Further to it the area, size and design of community center all contribute to increasing cost. The table list some of the cost, although this is not an exhaustive list but it contains some of the inevitable items such as electrical setup expense, and the construction cost per sq. unit depends from region to region, the construction cost is influenced by labor and material availability in the region, and it also depends on taxes for some extent. Rough estimates in building Woodburn community center in Oregon in the year 2007 were in the range of $250-$300 per sq. unit. The Avg. construction cost in Springfield is around $88, this is just labor cost.

Cost Analysis				
Hard Cost				
	Cost per Sq. Unit	Units in sq. Unit	Total Cost	Comments
Land	$x	y	$ xy	
Building Construction Cost	$x	y	$ xy	
Electrical Fixtures				
Plumbing Charges				
Demolition Expense				Incase old structure might need to be demolished
Contingency	10% of Total Hard Cost			
Soft Cost				

Furnishing				
Interiors				
Furniture's				
Fire Safety setup				
Permit				
Architectural Cost				
Engineering Inspection Cost				
Building Inspection Charges				
Municipal Clearance Charges				
Legal Advice				
Contingency Cost	10% of Total Soft Cost			

Financial Analysis

The financial analysis part involves the operating expenses and revenues involved in the project. Operating expenses are generally related to day to day expenses. Expenses such as monthly compensation of staffing, water, electricity, and Wi-Fi are some of the recurring ones. Further expenses can be added to the list as per specific needs. Operating revenues are income the community center can receive. The community members of Springfield want an affordable community center which leaves less room for earning revenues for the community center. However as community center will be a non-profit organization, revenues covering the expenses should be sufficient for daily operations of the community center.

Monthly Forecasted Operating Expenses		
Description	**Amount**	**Comments**
Labor		Staff Employed at Community Center
Water Bill		Charges for Water
Electricity Bill		Charges for Electricity
Intranet Wi-Fi		Charges for Intranet
Intercom		Charges for Intranet communication
Insurance		Building Insurance
Legal Advising		Charges for Legal advice
Information System Setup		Charges related to Information Technology
Contingency		5% of Total Expenses
Monthly Forecasted Operating Revenues		
Description	**Amount**	**Comments**
Banquet Hall Rental		Community Function Rentals
Meeting Rooms		Rental received on meeting Rooms
Facilities Charges		Fees from Gym and Fitness services
Admission Charges		Charges taken for entry

Conclusion

The contents discussed in the report are questions that will help the decision making committee of Springfield community to make a decision for the community design plan. The items mentioned are inevitable and necessary additions will be applicable while building the community center. The cost will vary widely depending on the factors selected for building community center, the report can be taken as a template where the factors can be replaced with real life options and cost can be calculated for various options.

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