

California Urban Communities Collaborative Strategic Planning Workshop
Los Angeles Urban League – Business, Transportation and Housing Agency

June 29, 2009
10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Junior Blind of America Building,
5300 Angeles Vista Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90043

Crenshaw Community Needs

Introduction

The California Urban Communities Collaborative (CUCC) is an initiative of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency (BTH) to assist at-risk urban communities leverage public and private resources to improve their quality of life. Public resources include transportation services that provide mobility and accessibility for residents of the at-risk communities to education, jobs, and health services. The Crenshaw community is one of two areas in the state that have been identified to participate in this pilot project.

The purpose of today's workshop is to identify strategies that address the housing and transportation needs of the Crenshaw community. The Los Angeles Urban League currently provides a variety of programs that serve the needs of this community. However there are still some unmet needs. During today's discussion you will work within a topic group focused on transportation or housing strategies. During this Topic Group discussion you will review the most important needs of the Crenshaw community and existing programs that address some of the needs. In your Topic Group you will discuss the gaps in programs/projects and identify strategic funding opportunities.

The following list of the greatest community needs and current LAUL programs/projects is provided for reference.

Needs in the Crenshaw Community

Housing

- Homeowner retention – prevent the displacement of long-term homeowners and prevent residential mortgage defaults foreclosures.
- Housing services and programs - services to assist homeowners at-risk of losing their homes.
- Housing located in proximity to employment centers.
- Home value protection – protect value of homes, home beautification initiatives and projects.
- Access to affordable rental and owned housing – augment housing stock to ensure a supply of housing with an appropriate mix of rental and homeownership opportunities.
- Transitional housing opportunities.

Transportation/Mobility

- Pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements - increasing pedestrian lighting, fixing sidewalks, improving dangerous intersections, pedestrian and bicycle safety programs, and addressing crime along main streets.
- Public transit system improvements - bus stop and light rail stop improvements and amenities (lighting, benches and shelters), additional bus routes, affordable fare rates, efficient services, safety on public transit and at transit stops.
- Streetscape improvements and enhancement – tree planting and landscaping, enhancing the public realm, and increasing the availability of usable public space.
- Infrastructure improvements and updates– traffic calming measures such as speed humps, one-way street conversions, narrower streets, pedestrian refuges, curb extensions, and raised pedestrian crossings.
- Transportation connections – link residents to local and regional employment opportunities and the commercial corridor.
- Safe routes and transportation for school children and youth– provide safe mode of transportation or route for school children and youth that connects students from their homes to school entrances

Other Crenshaw Community Needs

Health

- Health and well-being improvements
 - Available and affordable, fresh, quality produce
 - Opportunities for exercise
 - Nutrition education
- Mental health services and support – children and adult mental health challenges

Employment

- Local economic development
 - An economic development strategy
 - Facilitated local business support
 - Employment opportunities
 - Retail developments that meet community shopping, entertainment, and dining needs, jobs and workforce plan
- Workforce development and training – skill development and employment intermediation
- Repositioning of industrial lands – attract responsible businesses and maximize generation of quality employment opportunities.

Education

- Academic enrichment opportunities – positive adult role models, career options awareness, supportive peer culture
- Academic performance and achievement
 - Access to quality education resulting in high Academic Performance Indicator (API) scores at elementary, middle, and high school levels
 - Charter school development.

Safety

- Public safety
 - Reduce gang related crime and violence

- Engage community in safety solutions
- Partner with law enforcement agencies
- Provide positive opportunities for ex-offenders reintegrating into the community
- Promote neighborhood safety with environmental conditions
- Crime reduction measures
 - Address high violent and property crime along main streets and in hot spots such as the southeast section of Park Mesa Heights and adjacent to Crenshaw High School
 - Analyze crime data by time of day to discern patterns

Leadership

- Collaboration and coordination opportunities
 - Develop a clear approach to address community needs
 - Coordination between existing initiatives and programs
- Opportunities for youth involvement and development
- Public engagement and outreach – clear communication between the residents and the City of Los Angeles.

Technology

- Access to broadband technology

Existing Programs

Housing

- Financial Literacy Workshops
Workshops designed to improve our consumers' economic quality of life
- Individual Financial Counseling
Counseling sessions include education and recommendations pertaining to homeownership, credit, and money management.
- Students of Success life skills curriculum

Transportation

- Crenshaw High School Safe Travel Program
Guard provides security and surveillance around perimeter of Crenshaw High School to the commercial corridor before and after school.
- Environmental Justice planning grant to conduct a study with youth around pedestrian traffic safety issues associated with the upcoming Metro light-rail lines along the Crenshaw Blvd.

- Traffic safety workshop with UC Berkley, CHP and BTH Office of Traffic Safety scheduled for this fall