Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation (BPDC)
Serving Neighborhoods in West Park

Strategic Plan
2018 – 2023
Dear Neighbor,

We want to share with you our Strategic Plan for Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation (BPDC) which will guide our efforts for at least the next five years.

Founded in 1991, BPDC strives to promote, protect, and develop the central neighborhoods of West Park for residents, businesses, employees, students, and visitors. Initially, we focused on commercial and industrial retention and increasing neighborhood involvement in safety as a means to protect the quality of life in the neighborhood. Since our founding, we expanded options for housing and commercial real estate through our own construction and renovation projects. We also developed programs to increase the quality of residential life, especially for seniors and families in financial need; to increase constructive options available to youth to prepare them for their own future success and positive civic participation; and to intervene in neighborhood conflicts with a restorative mediation process.

Amid changes in and around Greater Cleveland, especially during the economic downturn and the ongoing outward migration from the city, it was easy to see problems in our community. However, from the interviews undertaken as part of this plan, we learned how concentrating on investment in the neighborhood—and the resilience of its people—led to stability during these waves of change and economic threat. We helped industrial properties continue to be refurbished and re-occupied to preserve our manufacturing sector; we assisted the Cleveland Metropolitan School District and its students while it invested time, effort, and money in school buildings and better educational opportunities for children; and guided homeowners who invested in their homes to preserve and maintain quality housing.

Our mission remains the same, but our vision going forward is to bolster the kind of resilience we’ve witnessed over the years: in our families, our neighborhoods and the local economy. We aspire to strengthen and foster relationships that connect all of you, our neighbors—residential, industrial and commercial. We will convene neighbors and promote critical investments of time, energy, money and hope. And we will communicate with neighbors and partners to share the challenges and successes of our work together and promote investment and improvement throughout the neighborhood.

On behalf of the many people whose hard work drives the successes of our organization, thank you for your support of BPDC and commitment to West Park!

Charles Nusbaum  Bryan Gillooly  
BPDC Board President  BPDC Executive Director
Neighborhood and Agency Context

Our Services and Geography
Our main service area today aligns with Cleveland’s Ward 16 and is a collection of stable industrial, commercial and residential neighborhoods. Ward 16 is part of West Park, which historically consists of all of Cleveland west of West 117th Street.

With the provision of consistent housing and commercial code enforcement, several successful new housing construction projects, home, and commercial renovations, and by extensive intervention, property improvement, and planning services, BPDC has been a cornerstone of this neighborhood’s stability.

We also offer services that extend beyond the ward. These include neighborhood services, home and property assistance for senior and disabled persons, and neighborhood cleanups. Our agency also coordinates youth development programs, workforce readiness services, and home energy assistance programs that reach a wider audience.

West Park’s Importance within Cleveland’s Changing Landscape
West Park’s assets—it’s safety, affordability, quality public parks and schools, accessibility to downtown and other regional employment hubs—make it an attractive option for Cleveland residents and businesses—and those aspiring to move into the city.

Community Development
The work of community development is changing. The models that the community development industry was founded on over forty years ago are no longer the dominant or relevant paradigm. Due to factors such as shrinking municipal budgets, financial stress caused to individuals and families by the housing crisis of 2008, and the fact that schools are trimming more and more activities from their curriculum, increasing needs are going unmet. Although once focused primarily on a “bricks and sticks” model (an almost exclusive focus on physical (re)development) of market rate and affordable housing production, the community development industry now looks to build up the people that are the cornerstones of those structures. CDCs are increasingly looked at to play a larger role in the stabilization of the people, families, and communities within their service areas, which in turn act as the accelerators of new businesses, services, and community solutions.

BPDC identified that need years ago and today boasts a robust portfolio of placed-based programs and services that align with the legacy of community development along with people-based programs and services that express the growing trend to embed social services within the context of community development.
Individual and Family Resilience

**Connect:** Identify connections across BPDC’s portfolio of programs serving individuals and families; connect people to needed resources in the community.

**Communicate:** Spread the word wide and far about BPDC’s programs and other neighborhood program opportunities so that individuals and families know all the options available to them.

**Convene:** Build a broad-based, cross-sector coalition of partners committed to supporting individual and family resilience throughout the neighborhood.

**Goals**

- **Support** youth and family resilience by connecting and developing active partnerships with agencies providing basic needs assistance, mental and behavioral health, and other services not provided by BPDC.
- **Maximize** youth and adult program participation neighborhood-wide through interdepartmental and interagency referrals and cross-promotion.
- **Prepare** youth for academic and career success with a focus on critical thinking skills, social and emotional development, and cultural competence.
- **Increase** family engagement in youth development programs for the dual purpose of supporting youth participants and their parents/caregivers with relevant resources and content.

Neighborhood Strength

**Connect:** Establish more relationships with residents, businesses, and neighborhood anchors; foster connections among these diverse stakeholders.

**Communicate:** Tell the story of the organization, the neighborhood, and the people and businesses of the neighborhood; promote BPDC’s services to the neighborhood and promote the assets of the neighborhood to the rest of the region.

**Convene:** Create more opportunities to convene neighborhood stakeholders and take collective, voluntary action to strengthen the neighborhood.

**Goals**

- **Cultivate** relationships that empower neighborhood leadership and promote inclusive civic engagement and pride.
- **Help** residents self-organize around community-driven issues and projects and connect them to resources to help bring their ideas to fruition.
- **Improve** marketing and external communications using methods that build a more connected and resilient neighborhood.
- **Serve** as a neighborhood hub that convenes people and local organizations and links them to information and resources.
- **Maintain** neighborhood aesthetics while increasing an equitable quality of life for all our neighbors.
Community Strategic Objectives: Connect, Communicate, Convene

Local Economic Growth

**Connect:** Deepen connections within the local business ecosystem; connect residents with the housing services necessary to maintain the quality and affordability of the neighborhood’s housing stock.

**Communicate:** Communicate with and organize the local business community.

**Convene:** Partner and collaborate with regional entities relevant to local economic workforce and local employers.

**Goals**
- **Coordinate** economic development and planning to grow a vibrant, inclusive, and resilient local economy.
- **Connect** businesses to each other to create a strong local business community.
- **Cultivate** mutual support between the neighborhood and businesses to build collective strength.
- **Maintain** the stability and affordability of the housing market and enhance housing options through assistance to homeowners, home rehabs and new housing construction.

Organizational Resilience

**Connect:** Connect and integrate internal data; connect relevant data within the organization to improve outcomes.

**Communicate:** Create robust and regular communication with funders; more emphasis on board-staff communication through committee structure.

**Convene:** Convene neighborhood stakeholders to discuss sustaining and enhancing BPDC’s work; use data and outcomes tracking to better inform convenings of partner organizations working toward mutually complementary goals.

**Goals**
- **Grow** and diversify funding streams, including pursuit of regional and national grants, and exploring expansion of some program fees.
- **Formalize** and grow the budget for physical development.
- **Develop** a centralized BPDC data system.
- **Formalize** and enhance the work of the Board of Directors.
- **Improve** internal communication, efficiency and teamwork.
Overview
In mid-2017 BPDC selected John G. Lynch and his company JGL Strategy, LLC after a competitive bid process to lead BPDC in its strategic planning process. John immediately began gathering information from internal stakeholders—interviewing BPDC Board and Staff members; and from interviews with external stakeholders including residents, funders, business owners and operators, organizational partners and other neighborhood groups. In the fall of 2017, we constituted a Strategic Planning Steering Committee to help guide the process and review its findings and recommendations.

The Strategic Planning process was inquiry-driven and participatory. We wanted to learn about the organization and the neighborhood it serves from both internal stakeholders and external stakeholders. The inquiry involved a variety of tools including interviews, focus groups, a survey, and a public meeting. Including:

- 540 SURVEY RESPONSES
- 65 INTERVIEWS
- 17 FOCUS GROUPS
- 1 PUBLIC MEETING
- over 700 INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS to this strategic planning process

How BPDC will use the Strategic Plan
- A major advantage of this stakeholder led strategic planning process is the assurance that BPDC’s efforts align with what the neighbors need and want for the advancement of their neighborhood. We are grateful to the 700+ stakeholders that helped shape this plan.
- BPDC will maintain a broad range of programs, consistent with the types of interventions needed to maintain investment and a high quality of life in the neighborhoods we serve.
- BPDC will create and follow work plans for our programs and strategies for our own organizational development.
- BPDC will communicate to its neighbors and stakeholders regarding the progress of agency leaders, volunteers and staff efforts towards the fulfillment of this plan.

What can neighbors expect?
- BPDC will continue to deliver a comprehensive set of programs and services.
- BPDC will work to advance the neighborhood and its residents, strengthen the local housing market and bolster the local economy.
- BPDC will build opportunities for neighbors to get involved in positive neighborhood change.
- BPDC will improve its publicity, web presence and direct communication about BPDC, and its programs and accomplishments. BPDC will gather more input and direction from neighbors and stakeholders to help shape on-going efforts and future projects.
Many thanks!

A debt of gratitude is owed to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee that stewarded this process. The committee was intentionally representative of the neighborhood and included BPDC staff, BPDC Board members, West Park residents and business owners, BPDC organizational partners, and community development experts. The steering committee had six meetings during the strategic planning process.

Strategic Planning Steering Committee Members:

Paradise Black  
Resident; John Marshall High School Student

Emily Crompton  
Cleveland Public Library, Rockport Branch

Heather Forsythe  
Resident; Community Volunteer

Jessica Forsythe  
Resident; John Marshall High School Student

Bryan Gillooly  
BPDC Executive Director

Ian Heisey  
BPDC Staff Member

Ernie LaManna  
West Park Shell, Owner

Monisa Mason  
John Marshall High School, Community & Business Coordinator

Emily Miller  
MyCom, Program Officer

Melissa Miller  
BPDC Staff Member; Resident

Chuck Nusbaum  
BPDC Board of Directors, President; Resident and Committee Chair

Ken Surratt  
Cuyahoga County, Deputy Director of Housing & Community Development

Rev. Gregory Thomas  
St. Paul AME Church, BPDC Board of Directors, and BPDC Treasurer

The strategic planning process involved every member of the staff and board of directors. To reach us, visit our website: www.bpdc.org and find contact information or call 216-671-2710. We are happy to talk about the strategic plan, our programs, and ways you can get involved!