

Mayor
Christy Clark

Mayor Pro Tem
Jennifer Hunt

Commissioners
Alisia Bergsman
Amanda Dumas
Edwin Quarles
LaToya Rivers
Nick Walsh



Town Manager
Anthony Roberts

Deputy Town Manager
Jackie Huffman

Assistant Town Manager
Bobby Williams

Town Attorney
Emily Sloop

Town Clerk
Janet Pierson

AGENDA

Planning Board Special Meeting October 14, 2025 - 6:00 PM 101 HUNTERSVILLE-CONCORD ROAD ()

Meeting available via YouTube [@townofhuntersvillenc28078](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=@townofhuntersvillenc28078)

Advisory Board Members: Chair Jay Henson, Vice-Chair Scott Hensley, Chris Boyd, Lee Hallman, Marshall Horsman, Trina Loomis, Michael Pollard, Prince Tokpah, Jodi Wright, Alternate Jennifer Davis, Alternate Alyssa Miller

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Approval of Minutes**
- 3. Public Comments**
- 4. Action Agenda**
 - 4.A. Consider a recommendation on the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan.
- 5. Other Business**
- 6. Adjourn**

General Meeting Information

Planning Board:

The Planning Board functions as an advisory board to the Town Board on all requests for changes in the zoning laws, and ordinances of the Town of Huntersville subdivision requests pursuant to the Huntersville Subdivision Ordinance, and is empowered to make recommendations to the Town Board, or other governmental agencies consistent with the Planning Board's charged obligation to provide for proper planning for the future growth of the Town of Huntersville, and its environs. For more information, visit www.huntersville.org.

Meeting Time, Place and Agenda:

All meetings of the Board are open to the public and the public is invited and encouraged to attend. The Board meets in Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday of each month (unless otherwise posted). Agendas are published Wednesdays before the meeting on our website. The Board reserves the right to deviate from the agenda.

Public Comment and Public Hearing Policy:

Persons desiring to address the Board during the public comment period or a public hearing shall sign up via the speaker sign-up sheet no later than five (5) minutes prior to the designated meeting start time. Once the meeting has begun, a person may not sign up to speak. Persons who have signed up to speak shall be allowed to speak for up to three (3) minutes. The Mayor shall have the discretion to shorten the allotted speaking time depending on the number persons registered to speak and in consideration of the length of the agenda. (*Public Comment and Public Hearing Policy - Amended February 19, 2024*)

Special Accommodations:

Please contact the Planning Department, 72 hours prior to the meeting, for special accommodations to attend this meeting and/or if this information is needed in an alternative format. Tracy Barron can be reached at tbarron@huntersville.org or 704-766-2215.



Request for Board Action

October 14, 2025

To: Board Members

From: David Peete, Principal Planner - Long Range

Date: October 14, 2025

Subject: Consider a recommendation on the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan.

EXPLAIN REQUEST:

Consider a recommendation for the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan. Working with the residents of the Pottstown Community, Town Staff, and the planning consultant firm Neighboring Concepts, engaged the residents from January to July 2025, to explore their concerns and preferences for how the Pottstown Community could develop over the next 10 years. This draft plan reflects those concerns and offers goals and strategies to achieve their preferred path forward.

ACTION RECOMMENDED:

Make a recommendation

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 2025-1001 Pottstown Community Preservation Plan Final Draft for Public Hearing

POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN



OCTOBER 7, 2025

DRAFT: FOR PUBLIC HEARING

FOREWORD



LETTER OF PURPOSE

Dear Neighbors, Partners, and Friends of Pottstown,

This plan is created with one purpose in mind: to ensure that Pottstown remains a vibrant, inclusive, and thriving community for current and future generations. Pottstown’s strength lies not only in its historic buildings or landmarks, but in the people, traditions, and relationships that make it home.

Over the past months, we have engaged with residents, local organizations, and agency leaders to understand what makes Pottstown unique and what challenges it faces as growth and change continue. This plan reflects those conversations, highlighting strategies to preserve housing stability, support governance that reflects community voices, and guide community investments in ways that strengthen our neighbors.

The Pottstown coalition will serve as the cornerstone for putting this plan into action. By reviewing and prioritizing the tools outlined here, engaging the wider community, and working collaboratively with Town leadership, the coalition will help ensure that preservation is an ongoing, living practice.

This document is a guide. It invites residents, Town leaders, and partners to work together to protect the things that make Pottstown home—its people, its culture, and its legacy. Together, we can shape a future that honors the past while embracing the promise of growth and opportunity.

With gratitude and purpose,
Daniel McNamee, Partner, AIA
Neighboring Concepts

TEAM AND STAKEHOLDERS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Neighboring Concepts and the Town of Huntersville are grateful for the time and energy of the many people who came together to guide the creation of the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan. **While the names of more than 48 Pottstown residents who shared their voices through community meetings, one-on-one conversations, door-to-door outreach, and pop-up events are not listed here, the vision and recommendations in this plan are driven by their passion, perseverance, and ideas.**



Image captured at the Pottstown Community Workshop on April 02, 2025.

Pottstown Community Stakeholders

- Residents of the Pottstown Community
- Pottstown Heritage Group
- Mababu Live
- Torrence Lytle Alumni Association
- St. Phillips Missionary Baptist Church
- Huntersville A.M.E. Zion
- United House of Prayer

Town of Huntersville

1. DEPARTMENTS
 - Town Board of Commissioners
 - Town Manager’s Office
 - Planning Department
 - Communications Department
 - Police Department
 - Engineering Department
 - Public Works Department
 - Parks & Recreation Department
2. TEAM MEMBERS
 - David Peete, AICP
Principal Planner - Long Range
 - Bobby Williams
Assistant Town Manager
 - Lauren Speight, MPA, CZO
Senior Planner
 - Brian Richards
Planning Director
 - Heather Maloney, MURP, MPH
Principal Transportation Planner
 - Pamela Escobar
Lead Communications Specialist

Neighboring Concepts

- Daniel McNamee, AIA
Partner
- Eric Orozco, AICP
Associate, Urban Planner
- Brynn DeBrabant, Assoc. AIA
Community Engagement Specialist, Architectural Designer
- Sheldyn Merrell, Assoc. AIA
Community Engagement Specialist, Architectural Designer
- Carlos Lopez, Assoc. AIA
Bi-lingual Community Engagement Specialist, Architectural Designer

Community Coaches

- Shamaie Haynes
Greater Enderly Park Neighborhood Association | QC Family Tree
- Rickey Hall
West Boulevard Neighborhood Coalition | Three Sisters Market
- Tiffany Capers | Grier Heights Community
CrossRoads Corporation | Renaissance West Community Initiative

Town Partners

- Mecklenburg County
- Historic Landmarks Commission
- Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS)
- David B. Waymer Senior & Recreation Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Located in Huntersville southeast of the Town Center and just east of the railroad tracks that parallel N.C. 115, Pottstown today is a close-knit neighborhood where history lives in the memories, traditions, and relationships of its residents. One of Huntersville’s earliest historically African American neighborhoods, Pottstown has deep generational roots, historic buildings dating as far back as the 19th Century, and a legacy of more than a century being shaped by creative resilience, cultural pride, communal solidarity and an enduring commitment to human dignity and justice.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Pottstown Community Preservation Plan provides a roadmap to safeguard the neighborhood’s cultural heritage while addressing the pressures of growth and change. The Pottstown Preservation Plan is built around three components—Goals, Toolkits, and Tools—that translate community values into practical strategies. These strategies are organized into four key toolkits—Process & Representation, Regulatory Tools, Housing Stability, and Public & Nonprofit Investment—the plan offers practical steps that empower residents, guide Town policies, and align outside partners. The plan balances urgency with institutional sustainability—pairing immediate opportunities for action with a long-term vision for generational preservation. At its core, it positions Pottstown’s residents as leaders, ensuring that the neighborhood’s future is defined by community voice, cultural resilience, and equitable development.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Over the course of five thoughtful phases spanning nine months, Neighboring Concepts worked hand-in-hand with the people of Pottstown to create this Preservation Plan. Through deep engagement and collaboration, the plan reflects the community’s vision for honoring and enhancing Pottstown’s historic fabric, grounded in cultural stewardship, community-influenced development, and alignment with policies that support long-term preservation. Across different backgrounds and age groups, community members shared a deep pride in Pottstown’s identity and a strong desire to protect it.

THE ELEMENTS OF THE PRESERVATION PLAN

Together, the Goals, Toolkits, and Tools define the structure of the Preservation Plan—establishing clear priorities, outlining strategic approaches, and offering actionable methods for implementation. Each element plays a distinct role in translating community values into meaningful, lasting change.

The Goals of Preservation

The following goals set the vision and agenda for Pottstown’s Preservation Plan:

- **Strengthen Community Assets**
Preserve and reinvest in historic anchors like Torrence-Lytle High School, Torrence-Lytle Community Center (formerly Dellwood Center), and neighborhood parks so that these buildings and spaces remain active places for community life and symbols of pride.
- **Preserve Neighborhood Character**
Maintain Pottstown’s modest homes, tree cover, and open space while guiding new construction to respect scale, history, and context.
- **Celebrate African American Heritage**
Honor Pottstown’s role as a resilient African American community by elevating its history, culture, and contributions as foundations for equity and justice.
- **Advance Human Dignity and Justice**
Affirm the community’s call to be seen, heard, and respected, ensuring policies and practices uphold equity and recognize Pottstown’s lived history.
- **Foster Community and Belonging**
Strengthen the bonds of fellowship through traditions, gatherings, and shared identity that nurture trust, joy, and a sense of home.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONT.)

THE ELEMENTS OF THE PRESERVATION PLAN CONT.

The Toolkits and Tools

The Toolkits are broad strategies to achieve those goals as listed above. The Tools in each Toolkit are specific, context-sensitive actions the Town and community can take together. Each Tool outlines responsibilities, potential partners, resources, and realistic time commitments, ensuring that ideas are both actionable and grounded in local capacity.

The Plan identifies four Toolkits:

- **Toolkit A:** Process & Representation strengthens community voice in decision-making. By creating structured opportunities for dialogue, forming a representative and unified leadership group, and resourcing organizing efforts, these strategies ensure that Pottstown residents have both influence and visibility. With modest resources, these tools can be implemented quickly.
- **Toolkit B:** Regulatory Tools provides a framework to guide growth and protect neighborhood character. Strategies include demolition review, zoning incentives, and sustainability standards. These tools require greater Town involvement, public processes, and advocacy but ensure long-term consistency and equity in development.
- **Toolkit C:** Housing Stability focuses on keeping families in their homes through repair, weatherization, counseling, and ownership models like land trusts. These tools require partnerships and resources, but they build lasting affordability and community resilience.
- **Toolkit D:** Public & Non-Profit Investment leverages public dollars and nonprofit partnerships to enhance infrastructure, facilities, and catalytic projects. This includes improvements at the Torrence-Lytle Community Center, Seam Trail connections, and broader infrastructure upgrades.

Together, these toolkits link community, history, housing and investment to one another, empowering Pottstown to preserve its identity.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Pottstown Preservation Plan outlines a ten-year roadmap to preserve the neighborhood’s historic and cultural identity while advancing affordable housing and community stability. It emphasizes early achievable actions, followed by deeper investments and lasting systems to protect Pottstown’s future.

Years 1–2: Quick Wins (by 2027)

The first two years focus on building momentum. A coalition of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) will spearhead preservation initiatives and strategic planning, collect oral histories, implement research projects, and engage with developers to strengthen dialogue. The Town of Huntersville may adopt preservation-based zoning regulations and incentives and explore enhanced review measures with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commision. Grassroots home repair efforts will expand through new and existing partnerships. Traffic calming measures will near completion, and the coalition will convene to discuss community identity signs/markers. Feasibility work for a Community Land Trust (CLT) may begin, alongside initiatives to document cemeteries, landmark schools, and historic homes. Workshops will also shape outdoor enhancements at the Torrence-Lytle Community Center (also known as the Dellwood Center).

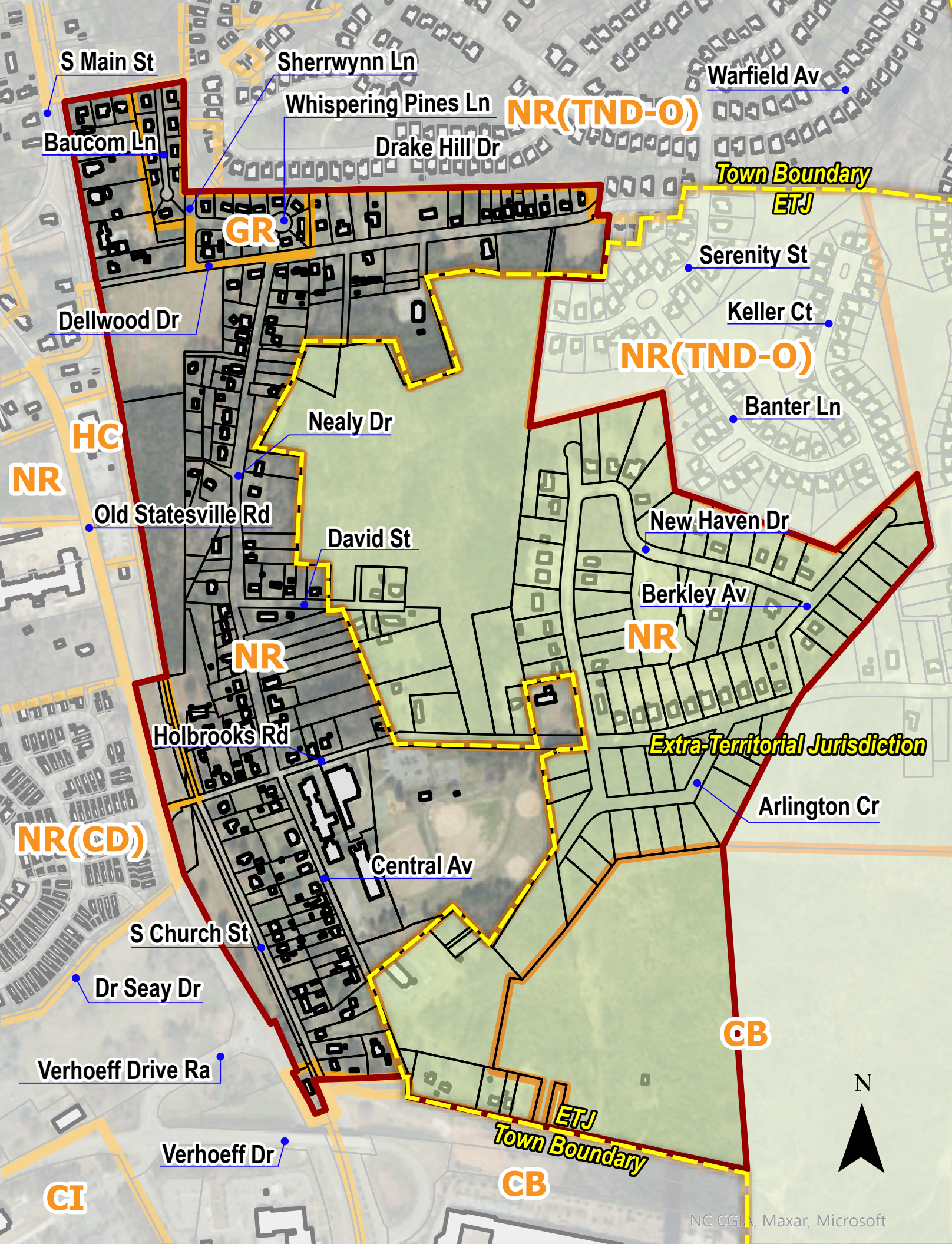
Years 3–5: Securing Momentum (by 2030)

This stage formalizes new tools and partnerships. Housing initiatives and financial coaching programs would launch, while residents, CBOs and churches gain training and support to use state and philanthropic resources for preservation. The first housing efforts would get started, providing affordable ownership opportunities for residents. Torrence-Lytle Community Center and other historic sites would undergo improvements and secure cultural programming, with new community identity and signage added, including an interpretive layer celebrating Pottstown along the Seam Trail.

Years 6–10: Lasting Systems (by 2035)

The final phase secures institutional capacity, such as a fully operational CLT or Community Development Corporation. Major Pottstown anchors, including historic schools and cemeteries, will be rehabilitated and protected. An annual “Preservation Awards and Update” meeting will sustain accountability and community voice.

Through this staged approach, Pottstown can preserve its history, strengthen housing stability, and build a resilient foundation for future generations.



POTTSTOWN STUDY AREA AND ZONING DISTRICTS

The majority of Pottstown falls within the Neighborhood Residential Zoning District (both in Town and outside of Town Limits). The study area includes both parcels that are located within Town limits and parcels in the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction. It is important to note that elements of the preservation plan, such as municipal investments, could primarily only apply to properties within the Town’s annexed areas. For properties outside the annexed area, these recommendations are advisory and may require coordination with county or regional authorities for implementation. The Town administers the Zoning Ordinance for both annexed properties and the ETJ.

Pottstown Study Area

Pottstown Parcels

Building Footprints

Zoning District Boundaries

Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction

ZONING DISTRICTS

NR

Neighborhood Residential

NR(CD)

Neighborhood Residential Conditional

NR(TND-O)

NR with Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay

GR

General Residential

CB

Corporate Business

CI

Campus Institutional

HC

Highway Commercial



Image via wfae.org

CONTENTS

1.0 Community Foundations	17
1.1 Where We Began	18
1.2 Where We Are Now	26
1.3 Methodology and Process Overview	28
2.0 Vision, Goals, and Strategic Framework	37
2.1 Preservation Vision	38
2.2 Preservation Goals	39
2.3 Preservation Tools: What’s Possible	42
3.0 Toolkits For Preservation Strategies	47
3.1 Toolkit A: Process & Representation	48
3.2 Toolkit B: Regulatory Tools	62
3.3 Toolkit C: Housing Stability	72
3.4 Toolkit D: Public & Non-Profit Investments	88
4.0 Conclusion	107
4.1 Implementation Plan	108
4.2 Action Steps by Toolkit	112
4.3 Closing Remarks	122

Appendix A

1.0 COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS



Otha and Daisy Potts' home.
Original landowner and namesake of Pottstown.

Image via *Historic Pottstown Families in Stories and Photos* by
Bee Jay Caldwell.

1.1 | WHERE WE BEGAN:

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF POTTSTOWN

Pottstown is one of Huntersville, North Carolina’s earliest historically African American neighborhoods, located southeast of the Town Center and just east of the railroad tracks along N.C. 115. Though modest in size, Pottstown has deep generational roots and a legacy shaped by resilience, cultural pride, and a strong sense of community.

The Town of Huntersville was incorporated in 1873. A few decades later, in the late 1800s, a nearby area began to take shape as a cluster of small farms and worker dwellings. Much of this land was cultivated and eventually owned by descendants of formerly enslaved people, free Black residents, and former sharecroppers (Source: Mecklenburg County, North Carolina: An African American Cultural Resources Survey, Gray & Stathakis, 2002. North Carolina Historic Preservation Office.)

One of the early landowners was Otha Potts, a brick mason and farmer known for selling parcels of his land to other African American families. Over time, homes were built around the Potts farm, and by 1909, the growing settlement became known as Pottstown (Gray & Stathakis, 2002). Despite systemic racism, segregation, and violence—particularly during the Jim Crow era—African Americans in Huntersville and Pottstown built strong, self-sustaining communities. Residents established

churches, schools, and businesses, and the neighborhood eventually grew to include approximately 150 homes, many still occupied by descendants of the original landowners.

In 1987, parts of Pottstown were annexed into the Town of Huntersville. While census data is available for the town as a whole, there is no demographic data specific to Pottstown due to the way census tracts are drawn—often combining Pottstown with surrounding communities that are nearly 100% white. As a result, public data does not accurately reflect the neighborhood’s racial makeup, which has historically been predominantly African American.

By 1990, the town’s population was just over 3,000 according the United States Census. At the time of annexation, according to longtime Pottstown resident Varona Wynn, local authorities promised infrastructure improvements, including paved roads and municipal water access. However, many in the community felt these promises were not fully honored, fueling long-standing concerns about neglect and inequity in public investment. Yet, this period also underscored the community’s strength, unity, and determination to move forward with grace and hope.



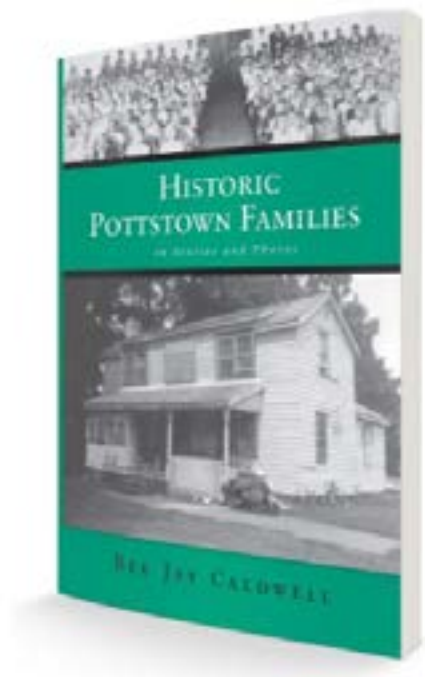
1.1 | WHERE WE BEGAN (CONT.):

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF POTTSTOWN

Pottstown has long served as a vital space for education, care, family, and faith within a broader context of exclusion. Pottstown resident Bee Jay Caldwell, and member of the Torrence-Lytle Alumni association, recalled in her memoir, “Historic Pottstown Families in Stories and Photos”:

“A Pottstown family’s major religious activity was to attend church services on Sunday, prayer meeting on Wednesday nights, and revival services in the Spring and Fall. Though treated as second class citizens, most believed that because we did not live in a perfect world, a time was needed to give back to God, the Creator of the Universe for all He had allowed us to accomplish.”

Faith institutions have anchored the neighborhood’s cultural identity for generations. Pottstown is home to several historically Black churches, including the United House of Prayer for All People, Huntersville A.M.E. Zion Church, and St. Phillips Missionary Baptist Church. Many residents also maintain spiritual ties with New Friendship Presbyterian Church, which served Black families throughout the greater Huntersville area. (Source: Mecklenburg County, North Carolina: An African American Cultural Resources Survey, Gray & Stathakis, 2002. North Carolina Historic Preservation Office.)



Bee Jay Caldwell’s book, *Historic Pottstown Families in Stories and Photos*, was published in 2016.

“THOUGH POTTSTOWN HAS CHANGED, IT IS STILL LOVED AND A GREAT PLACE TO CALL HOME.”
- Bee Jay Caldwell
via carolinacountry.com



St. Phillips Missionary Baptist Church



United of House Prayer for All People



Huntersville A.M.E. Zion Church

1.1 | WHERE WE BEGAN (CONT.):

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF POTTSTOWN

Education has always been a cornerstone of the community. In the 1920s, residents secured Rosenwald funding to build a school now known as Huntersville Rosenwald School #2—also popularly called the “Dellwood Center” or the “Little School.” It is one of only six surviving Rosenwald schools in Mecklenburg County. These schools symbolized a commitment to educate African-American children during the Jim Crow era. The Torrence-Lytle Community Center received historic designation in 2021, with signage unveiled in 2025. Today, it serves as a community center owned by the Town of Huntersville.

In 1937, the opening of Huntersville Colored High School marked a major milestone for the Pottstown community. Located at the corner of Holbrooks Road and Central Avenue, it served grades 1 through 11 and was North Mecklenburg’s first and only public high school for African American students. In 1953, the school was renamed Torrence-Lytle High School in honor of Isaiah Dale “Ike” Torrence and Franklin Lytle, two community leaders instrumental in its establishment. Its founding principal, Isaac T. Graham, led the school until its closure in 1966 (Source: Mecklenburg County, North Carolina: An African American Cultural Resources Survey, Gray & Stathakis, 2002. North Carolina Historic Preservation Office).

Following desegregation, the school sat vacant for decades and fell into disrepair. The former gymnasium, now maintained by Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department, was remodeled and reopened as the David B. Waymer Center after a \$1.3 million investment in 2021. The original 1937 school building is now owned by the Mecklenburg County Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC), which has invested in structural stabilization and roof repairs. The Torrence-Lytle Alumni Association remains active, continuing to honor the High School’s legacy and advocate for its preservation and reuse.

Pottstown’s foundation, built on faith, education, and collective care, has fostered a resilient and connected community. However, in recent years, the neighborhood has faced increasing development pressure due to Huntersville’s rapid growth.



David B. Waymer Center



Torrence-Lytle School (1937)



Torrence-Lytle School (2024)

1.1 | WHERE WE BEGAN (CONT.):

HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF POTTSTOWN

In 2022, residents—joined by Corine Mack, President of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg NAACP—mobilized to oppose the proposed Valea Village development, which would have added 31.4 acres of new construction in the heart of Pottstown. Community members rallied at the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center with signs reading, “Save Historic Pottstown from Gentrification.” Their advocacy succeeded: Mecklenburg County ultimately purchased the property using park funds, halting the project and protecting it from future speculative development. The County has its own process to involve the Pottstown community in future planning for the land (Source: “Residents of Historically Black Pottstown Neighborhood Are Pushing Back Against Gentrification,” Amanda Harry, QCity Metro, April 6, 2022).

Despite this victory, development continues to expand around Pottstown. Large-scale, high-density developments in Huntersville are rapidly expanding, with major subdivisions being built directly adjacent to Pottstown. The average home prices of these developments near Pottstown exceeds \$500,000—as high-end development and land values rise, long-time homeowners risk property tax increases beyond their means (Source: Charlotte/Mecklenburg Quality of Life Explorer). For residents with fixed or modest incomes, rising costs—including maintenance, utilities, and insurance—can lead to displacement.

Though less documented in Pottstown, this pattern is common in gentrifying areas—particularly affecting long-term residents who purchased homes under different market or income conditions. As long-underinvested neighborhoods begin to experience nearby growth, inconsistent zoning and mismatched infrastructure (such as roads, lighting, and sidewalks) can make it more difficult for existing residents to remain. Often, residents are not asking for change to stop, but rather to be included in planning and improvements. Pottstown is briefly mentioned in the East Huntersville Development Plan (2007), the Huntersville Downtown Master Plan (2023), and the Huntersville 2040 Community Plan (2024). However, residents often feel they have been left out of key decisions. This Plan aims to help bridge those gaps.

The proposed commuter rail corridor also carries weight, as areas along the route—from center city Charlotte to Mount Mourne in Iredell County—have drawn growing interest from investors and developers. Notably, Pottstown lies directly beside the proposed tracks. Residents have voiced serious concerns over pressure to sell, environmental impact, and personal health related to the rail proposal. Amid these growing pressures, residents feel threatened by displacement, making intentional preservation and investment increasingly urgent.

Pottstown is more than just a neighborhood; it stands as a living testament to perseverance, cultural heritage, and generational legacy of Black Americans. As the region continues to reshape, preserving Pottstown’s identity, land, and history is both a moral and cultural imperative.

The Preservation Plan offers only a brief overview of Pottstown’s history. Partnering with local resources like the Historic Landmarks Commission, or hiring a professional historian, if feasible, can help document a fuller account. Sharing this history meaningfully within the community is encouraged. A variety of tools are shared in Section 3 of this document, which focuses on the tools for preservation, ensuring that Pottstown’s legacy is both honored and accessible.

*“SAVE HISTORIC
POTTSTOWN FROM
GENTRIFICATION”*

- Pottstown Residents

via qcitymetro.com



Image via qcnerve.com

1.2 | WHERE WE ARE NOW:

COMMUNITY VOICES

Today, Pottstown remains a close-knit neighborhood where history lives through the memories, traditions, and relationships of its residents. Many families have deep generational ties to the area, while newer residents are drawn by its strong sense of belonging, cultural richness, diversity, and affordability. Across backgrounds and age groups, community members share a deep pride in Pottstown’s identity and a strong commitment to preserving it.

During the preservation planning process, residents spoke candidly about both the joys and challenges of living in Pottstown today. They also expressed concerns about rising property values, speculative development, and the growing risk of displacement.



At the first community meeting, residents were asked two foundational questions to help shape the focus of the Preservation Plan:

- 1 What do you cherish about Pottstown?
- 2 What does preservation mean to you?

WHAT DO YOU CHERISH ABOUT POTTSTOWN?

In response, the residents emphasized the neighborhood’s close-knit community, historic character, and the importance of family ties that span generations. They spoke with pride about Pottstown’s deep-rooted history, strong sense of belonging, and enduring African American heritage. People, relationships, and shared experiences were described as the heartbeat of the neighborhood, with faith institutions, schools, parks, and multi-generational connections fostering resilience and hope for the future.

WHAT DOES PRESERVATION MEAN TO YOU?

When asked what preservation means for Pottstown, residents shared a vision that goes beyond buildings and physical spaces. They described preservation as honoring and sustaining the neighborhood’s cultural and historical identity, while ensuring that future growth is inclusive and respectful of its legacy. For many, preservation means maintaining affordability so families can remain in their homes, advocating for justice and respect, and safeguarding the essence of the community (see Appendix for more details regarding community engagement).

While residents acknowledged that growth is inevitable, they emphasized that it must not come at the cost of erasing their presence or history. Progress, they said, should uplift and empower the people who call Pottstown home.

Residents also made it clear that future development must include community benefits and meaningful input from those who live in Pottstown. Many expressed frustration at not being a part of decisions that directly affect their homes, heritage, and daily lives. The community is calling for a more inclusive, transparent, and thoughtful approach to growth. This approach honors Pottstown’s cultural legacy, invests in its people, and ensures that future changes strengthen rather than displace the neighborhood they have worked so hard to sustain.



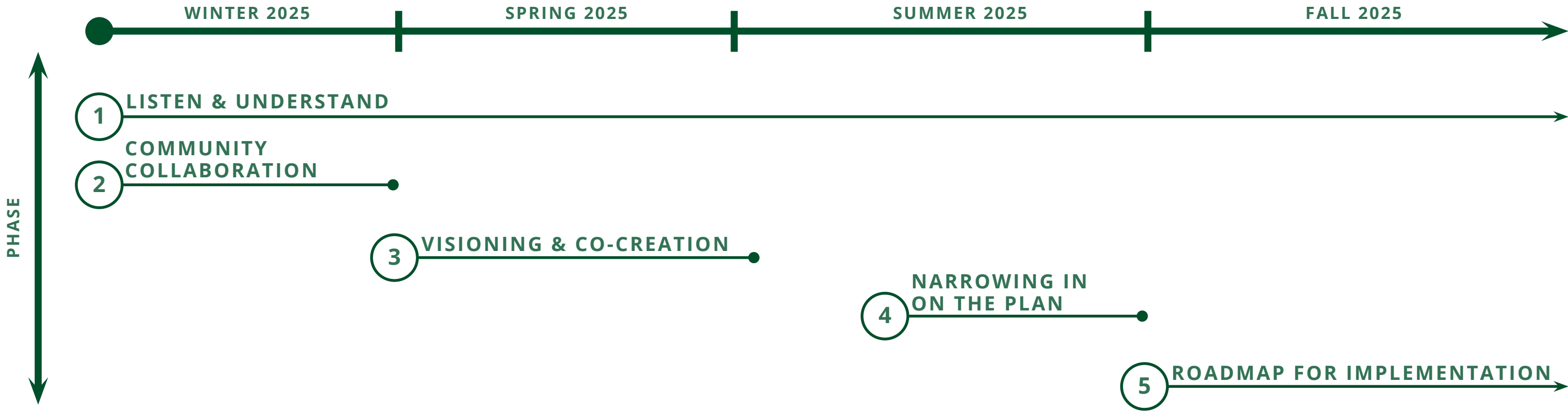
1.3 | METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS OVERVIEW

As a consultant to the Town of Huntersville, Neighboring Concepts proposed a thoughtful framework for project delivery that set the tone for how the Preservation Plan would be developed. While the final product is a Preservation Plan, the top priority was to establish a deep understanding of the Pottstown community, including its values, concerns, and aspirations, through a robust community engagement process. Recognizing that multiple perspectives enrich the design process, we prioritized connecting with a broad range of stakeholders and ultimately engaged 48 individuals over the course of the project.

Over five carefully structured phases spanning nine months, Neighboring Concepts partnered closely with Pottstown residents to co-create the plan. Through meaningful engagement and collaboration, the resulting Preservation Plan reflects the community’s vision for honoring and enhancing Pottstown’s historic character. It is grounded in principles of unified community-led development, cultural stewardship, and alignment with policies that support long-term preservation.



PROJECT TIMELINE



PHASE 1:LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND

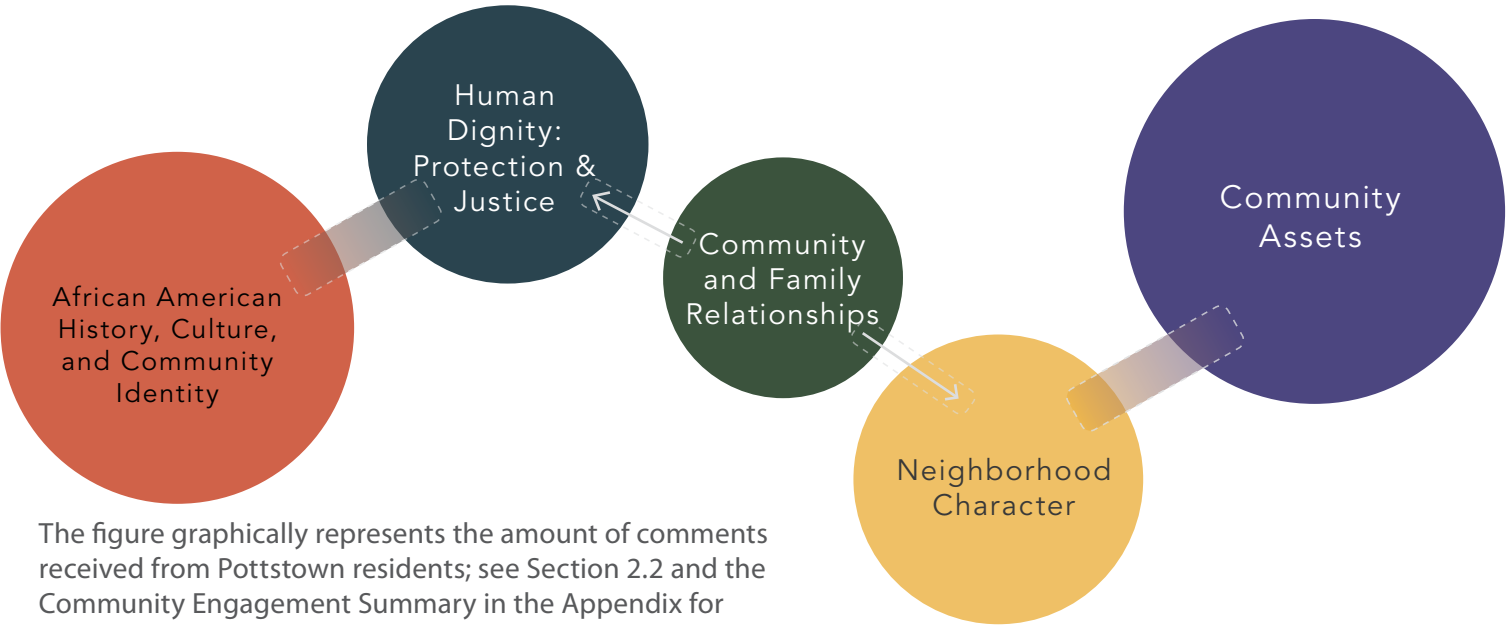
9 months | Winter 2024 - Fall 2025

The first phase of the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan centered on listening to the community and gaining a clear understanding of how the residents view their current conditions and vision for the future. This ongoing effort prioritized identifying residents’ goals, dreams, and priorities by building upon existing and previous plans for the area.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Reviewing existing and potential future land uses, environmental conditions, and transportation connections.
- Collaborating with key partner organizations to align efforts and share insights.
- Developing a community engagement strategy to ensure inclusive participation and that all voices were heard.

The primary goal of Phase One was to ensure that the Preservation Plan authentically reflects what the community values and envisions for Pottstown’s future.



PHASE 2: COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

3 months | Winter 2025 - Spring 2025

The second phase of the Pottstown Preservation Plan focused on fostering deep collaboration with the community. A multi-step, intensive planning workshop brought residents together to brainstorm ideas and develop strategies for equitable development and resource alignment.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Developing inclusive concepts that create opportunities for all members of the community.
- Engaging key stakeholders through targeted meetings to align priorities and gather input.
- Conducting one-on-one interviews to capture a wide range of perspectives and lived-experiences.

This phase ensured that residents played a meaningful role in shaping the strategies and priorities for Pottstown’s future, reinforcing the importance of community-led planning and shared decision-making.



Photo taken at Community Workshop held on April 02, 2025 at the David B. Waymer Center.

PHASE 3: VISIONING & CO-CREATION

6 months | Spring 2025 - Early Summer 2025

The third phase focused on visioning and co-creation, where draft concepts were studied and refined to advance the community’s vision for equitable development and investment in local assets.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Polling residents to gather feedback and preferences on proposed concepts.
- Analyzing applicable Codes and Ordinances, infrastructure and environmental reviews, and exploring potential funding sources for future projects.
- Assessing the capacity of local organizations and identifying opportunities for capacity building to support effective implementation.

This phase aimed to produce clear, actionable strategies that align with Pottstown’s long-term goals and reflect the community’s ability to lead and sustain meaningful change.



PHASE 4: NARROWING IN ON THE PLAN

2 months | Summer 2025

In the fourth phase, the focus shifted to refining and finalizing implementation strategies to advance the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan. This stage emphasized coordination, prioritization, and alignment with available resources to ensure the plan’s feasibility and long-term success.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Building consensus around high-priority strategies identified through earlier engagement.
- Collaborating with key agencies to ensure coordinated and aligned efforts.
- Refining the plan to match current and potential funding opportunities.
- Prioritizing the most promising concepts for advancement and implementation.

This phase ensured that the Preservation Plan was grounded in realism, strategic coordination, and shared ownership, reflecting both community aspirations and practical pathways for action.



PHASE 5: THE ROADMAP FOR IMPLEMENTATION

2 months | Late Summer 2025 - Fall 2025

The fifth and final phase focused on delivering a comprehensive, community-backed Preservation Plan supported by a multi-year implementation strategy. This phase emphasized sustainability, long-term stewardship, and actionable steps to bring the plan to life.

KEY DELIVERABLES AND ACTIONS INCLUDED:

- Presenting the Implementation Framework to local leaders and stakeholders for feedback and alignment.
- Providing tools and resources to empower residents in advancing the Plan’s goals and maintaining community ownership.
- Outlining a clear, community-driven roadmap for preserving and enhancing Pottstown’s future, including timelines, decision points, and strategies for securing funding.

This phase ensured that the Preservation Plan is not only visionary but also practical, designed to be implemented over time with shared responsibility and continued community engagement with the leadership of a unified community organizing group.



2.0 VISION, GOALS, AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



2.1 | PRESERVATION VISION

STRATEGIES INTRODUCTION

The shared vision for Pottstown is forward-looking and, above all, honors the past while building a future rooted in equity, community identity, and mutual solidarity among neighbors.

PROTECT

Pottstown residents emphasized that they feel increasing pressure as outside influences interact with the physical and cultural elements that define their neighborhood. While thoughtful change is welcomed, displacement is not. Protecting the community’s core assets is essential to preserving its identity and future.

These assets include:

- Historic homes and landmarks
- Land and homes passed-down generation to generation
- Social infrastructure including schools, churches, and parks
- Affordability and accessibility for long-term residents.

HONOR

Uplifting the legacy: culturally, historically, and emotionally

- African American heritage and contributions to Huntersville and beyond
- Community biographies, oral history, and lived-experience
- Traditions and events that have fostered belonging in Pottstown
- Elders, families, and local leaders who have shaped the neighborhood and advocated for Pottstown

BUILD

A shared determination to organize together, and lay the foundation for a thriving future for Pottstown, not one that is left in the past or erased.

- Create avenues for intergenerational ownership and wealth
- A framework to designing spaces and housing in Pottstown WITH Pottstown Community
- Encourage policy change that puts equity and justice at the forefront
- Cultivate the idea of collective care amongst neighbors, mutual support and accountability will go a long way

2.2 | PRESERVATION GOALS

Preservation Goals serve as the guiding light of this document. They anchor the approach to the preservation plan and help ensure that, as the action plan is implemented, the needs of the community remain at the center. These goals were developed collaboratively with the community during a nine-month engagement process.

The Neighboring Concepts team identified recurring themes from early meetings by asking the community: *What does preservation in Pottstown mean to you? What makes Pottstown feel like home or an important place?* After synthesizing the responses, five key themes emerged (additional details are included in the appendix) and helped define what matters most to the community and directly informed the goals of the Preservation Plan:



01 STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ASSETS



02 PRESERVE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER



03 CELEBRATE AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE



04 ADVANCE HUMAN DIGNITY AND JUSTICE



05 FOSTER COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

2.2 | PRESERVATION GOALS

 01 STRENGTHEN
COMMUNITY
ASSETS

Buildings are living history; they tell the story of the past and stand as evidence of a community’s roots and contributions. In Pottstown, community members want to preserve and strengthen meaningful buildings that have shaped their lives and families. Structures such as Torrence-Lytle High School, Torrence -Lytle Community Center, and David B. Waymer Park are just a few examples. Maintaining, repurposing, and activating these spaces with community life is a key goal. Efforts from both internal and external stakeholders to invest in and care for these buildings serve as reminders that the people of Pottstown are seen, valued, and remembered.

 02 PRESERVE
NEIGHBORHOOD
CHARACTER

Pottstown is known for its modest homes and strong sense of community, with roots in a legacy of agriculture and farming—even if little open land remains today. Residents have voiced a strong desire to preserve this unique character, especially the charm and history of older homes built and owned by long-time residents. There is a shared hope that new construction will respect the scale and context of the existing neighborhood. While open space is limited, the community values what remains and seeks to avoid overdevelopment. Though residents welcome thoughtful change, preserving the neighborhood’s character remains a top priority.

 03 CELEBRATE
AFRICAN AMERICAN
HERITAGE

Pottstown is deeply rooted in African American history and culture. Like many resilient Black communities across the country, Pottstown has created a space for Black families to live, work, and thrive despite the challenges of segregation and systemic inequity. By celebrating this heritage, the community honors past struggles and triumphs, reinforcing the importance of continuing the work toward equity and justice. Acknowledging this legacy provides both inspiration and direction for future efforts.

 04 ADVANCE HUMAN
DIGNITY AND
JUSTICE

At the heart of community organizing in Pottstown is the pursuit of justice and human dignity. Residents who have historically been marginalized continue to express a strong desire for equity, acknowledgment, and honesty. There is a deep need to be seen, heard, and respected—to have their history recognized and their humanity affirmed. While systemic injustice cannot be solved overnight, the community remains deeply committed to ongoing efforts that advance dignity and justice for all.

 05 FOSTER
COMMUNITY AND
BELONGING

Pottstown thrives on its strong sense of connection and shared identity. While visions for the community’s future may differ, residents agree on the importance of fostering a spirit of belonging. Community events like Sunday meals, summer festivals, and Torrence Lytle School Galas are essential for maintaining this bond. These gatherings encourage laughter, fellowship, and shared experience. The tradition of knowing your neighbor, offering support, and building trust continues to be a defining feature of life in Pottstown.



Image via qcnerve.com

This image shows a welcome sign for Pottstown, installed in front of Torrence-Lytle High School, a historic site owned by the Mecklenburg County Historic Landmarks Commission. Created in partnership with a local artist to honor the community’s heart and heritage, the sign was unveiled during a ceremony covered by Queen City Nerve on October 23, 2023.

*“WE ARE HISTORY. WE ARE
POTTSTOWN AND WE HAVE A
WEALTH OF HISTORY TO GIVE.”*

-LaToya Rivers

via qcnerve.com 10/23/23

2.3 | PRESERVATION TOOLS: WHAT’S POSSIBLE

INTRODUCTION

Pottstown residents seek to preserve not only buildings, but also the culture, memory, and legacy of generations of African American life. Preservation here means honoring a way of life and preventing the displacement of families who fought to build and sustain this community. It represents an ongoing commitment to sustainable change centered on local needs. This document serves as a guide for residents, leaders, and all who care about Pottstown’s future.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PRESERVATION PLAN

This preservation plan is organized into three core components: Goals, Toolkits, and Tools. **Goals** guide the development of the focus areas, organized into Toolkits. **Toolkits** are strategic approaches to achieving the plan’s goals. Each Toolkit includes a set of **Tools**: recommended, context-sensitive strategies that the community, Town, and all other allied-agencies can use to align efforts and drive progress. The Tools are *optional*. Some may not prove feasible, but the Town and Pottstown Community can collaborate to explore, test and decide upon which of the tools to advance into use.

Each tool includes:

- A clear description of the strategy
- Community efforts required
- Town and other agencies’ responsibilities
- Potential partnerships
- Guidance on how to get started

Community efforts refer to what can be initiated, organized, or advocated-for locally. **Town efforts** include actions the municipality can fund, implement, or support. Some strategies may be led independently, while others require collaboration between the community, Town, and other allied-agencies. Tools also include estimated time commitments and potential upfront or ongoing costs to help inform decision-making.

This preservation plan will be an ongoing process, one that will evolve based on time, collaboration, and shared commitment. It was created specifically for Pottstown, grounded in community voices and guided by values of care, equity, and empowerment.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THE TOOLS

The descriptor below illustrates how to navigate the Tools in the Plan.

Each tool includes a relative gauge of time and costs to implement:

TIME	🕒 🕒 🕒	Tool exists or could be put into action within 2 years.
TIME	🕒 🕒 🕒	Tool could be in place within 5 years.
TIME	🕒 🕒 🕒	Tool will need a period of steady buildup to sustain itself (typically 5-10 years).
COST	\$ \$ \$	Tools may require short-term volunteer labor to get started, but represent modest costs.
COST	\$ \$ \$	Tools may need short-term funding sources, primarily from local sources that are known.
COST	\$ \$ \$	Tools may demand ongoing levels of org./staff capacity, labor, fundraising and/or capital.

Number and title of the tool within the toolkit

C8 | NONPROFIT HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS (CDC’S)

TIME 🕒 🕒 🕒 **COST** \$ \$ \$

Description: Create a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or partner with nonprofits that build and manage affordable housing, rehab properties, and support residents with housing. Empowering them expands capacity for community-driven development. An option is to work with organizations like Habitat for Humanity and Lake Norman CDC to resource opportunities in Pottstown. *Provides trusted, mission-driven partners for long-term community investment.*

Community Efforts: Explore the potential to create a CDC by expanding the capacity of one of Pottstown’s CBOs to take on development work. Alternatively, partner with nonprofits as volunteers and advocates, provide local knowledge to shape housing priorities, and support fundraising and advocacy campaigns for housing development projects.

Town Efforts: The Town will explore incentives and approaches to support single-family housing development. It can also streamline approvals for nonprofit housing projects and integrate nonprofits into housing strategies, particularly when participating in development projects incorporating a Public-Private Partnership.

Taking the First Step to Enact a Pottstown-based Affordable Housing Initiative:

1. Community expands the capacity of a local group to create a CDC based on existing opportunities for infill housing development or home restoration in Pottstown.
2. Town + Community explore potential partnerships with nonprofit partners active in the region.
3. Community and its partners secure land, homes or funding for first projects.

QC Family Tree, a grassroots nonprofit led by Shamaie Haynes, creates affordable rental homes. It supports resident leadership and advances anti-displacement efforts to protect the neighborhood’s deep African American heritage. Their work offers a valuable model that could lend direct expertise to Pottstown CBOs as they explore community-led housing and preservation.

Image from qcfamilytree.org

84 | POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN, 07 OCTOBER 2025

GOALS

SECTION 2.0



STRENGTHEN
COMMUNITY
ASSETS



PRESERVE
NEIGHBORHOOD
CHARACTER



CELEBRATE AFRICAN
AMERICAN HERITAGE

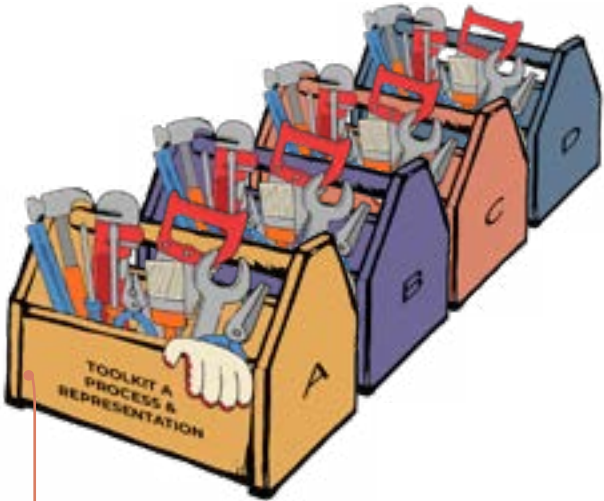


ADVANCE
HUMAN DIGNITY
AND JUSTICE



FOSTER
COMMUNITY AND
BELONGING

The Goals shape each Toolkit, and the Toolkits provide Tools to put those Goals into action.



Each Toolkit section is color coded

TOOLKITS

SECTION 3.0

TOOLKIT A

PROCESS & REPRESENTATION

TOOLKIT B

REGULATORY TOOLS

TOOLKIT C

HOUSING STABILITY

TOOLKIT D

PUBLIC & NONPROFIT INVESTMENTS

TOOLS

SUBSECTIONS

5

TOOLS

3

TOOLS

9

TOOLS

7

TOOLS

3.0 TOOLKITS FOR PRESERVATION STRATEGIES

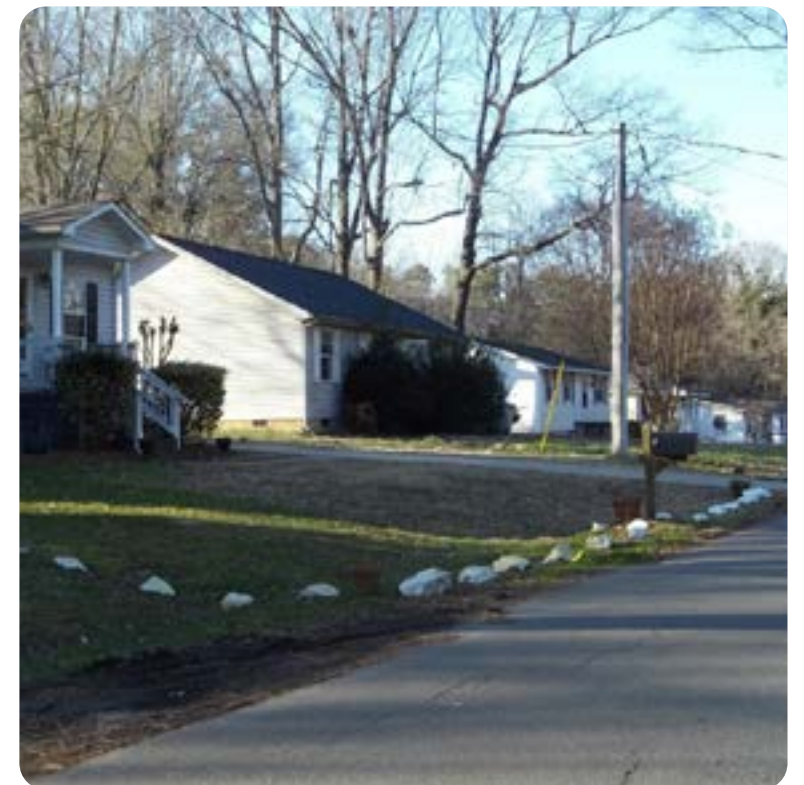


Image via wfae.org

3.1 TOOLKIT A

PROCESS & REPRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION

The tools for Toolkit A address the systems of decision-making, representation, and accountability that enable neighbors to shape community outcomes. The strategies represented in Toolkit A can ensure that residents have true influence in shaping development and investment in their neighborhoods.

The intention of Toolkit A is to unify and strengthen a coalition of Pottstown’s Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and leaders, which include the community organizations of **Mababu Live**, the **Pottstown Heritage Group** and the **Torrence-Lytle High School Alumni**, as well as other active community elders and volunteers working on their own initiatives, including projects documenting Pottstown’s history. We shall simply refer to this group as the “Pottstown coalition” – or simply: the “coalition” —in this document. As an example, a coalition group is already meeting as the “Pottstown Leaders Group” with County projects.

By strengthening collaboration between Town leadership and the Pottstown coalition, the elements of Toolkit A will allow both entities to effectively co-implement the critical paths needed for preservation outcomes. Overall, the tools in Toolkit A could be achieved within a short timeframe. Tool A1, Formalize a Community Coalition for Pottstown, is the most important of the tools in this plan to begin with, for all the other tools of the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan will need the dedicated leadership of this body to implement them, working not just with the Town but all other agencies. This is recommended allow community members to more easily organize in coordinating their efforts among the independent projects of multiple partners and agencies.



Image from ajc.com



Image from atlantamagazine.com



Image from knowatlanta.com



Image from investatlanta.com

GEORGIA STAND-UP

Community-Based Organizations like Georgia STAND-UP played a decisive role in embedding community protections into the Atlanta BeltLine project, which utilized a former rail line to catalyze a major community reinvestment effort. In 2005, as Atlanta City Council prepared to authorize nearly \$2 billion in Tax Allocation District (TAD) funding for redevelopment, the advocacy of Georgia STAND-UP influenced the City to require developers using BeltLine TAD funds to meet community benefit standards. Outcomes included a dedicated BeltLine Affordable Housing Trust Fund (15% of TAD proceeds) and commitments to local hiring, workforce training, and equitable development.

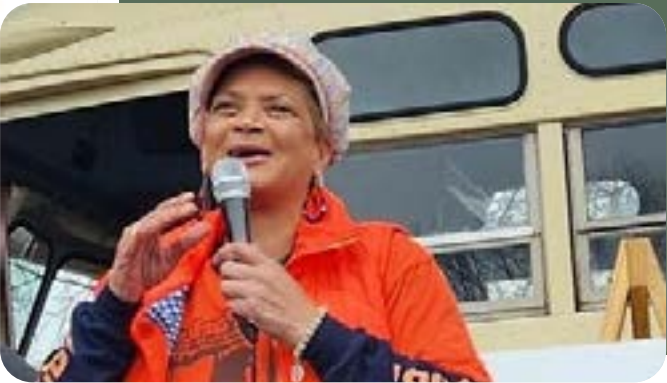
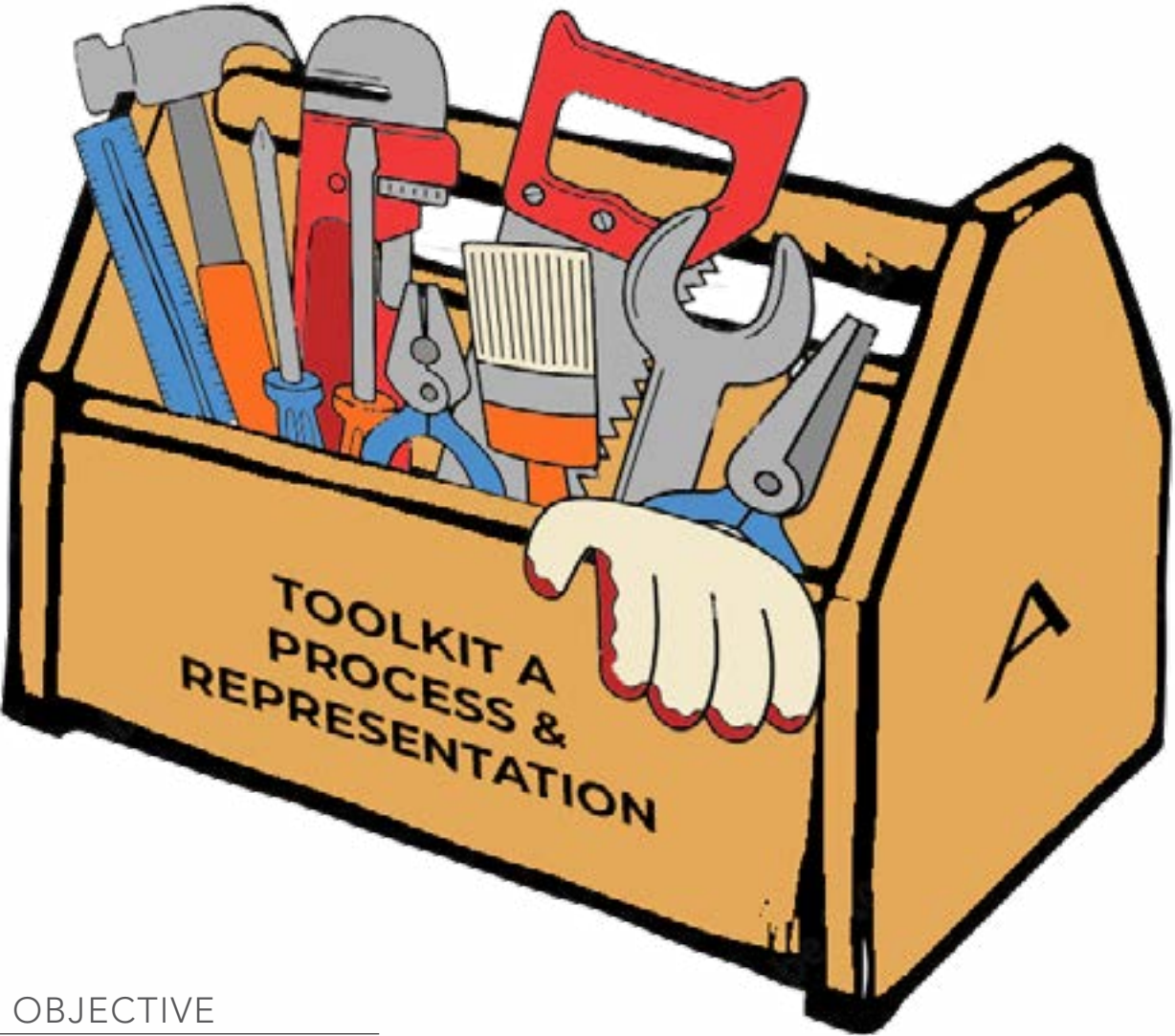


Image from georgiastandup.org

TOOLKIT A ELEMENTS



TOOLKIT A OBJECTIVE

To strengthen community organizing and stewardship processes.

Within this toolkit, the tools work together to create mechanisms for community representation and leadership, to add processes for effective and ongoing dialogue, and to resource community organizing.

STRATEGIES

- A1 | **FORMALIZE A COMMUNITY COALITION FOR POTTSTOWN**
The Pottstown community can establish a unified, organizing body to lead community-driven preservation in partnership with the Town and other public bodies. Members of all Community-Based Orgs should be represented. *Creates a unified voice for Pottstown and ensures organization to shape decisions that impact Pottstown's future.*
- A2 | **ORGANIZE INFORMAL DEVELOPER DISCUSSIONS WITH THE COMMUNITY**
Encourage developers to hold meetings with representatives of the community (e.g., Coalition) for projects requiring Town Board decisions. Work within established processes to organize as a community to enable productive dialogue between developers and the community, ensuring that community priorities can shape projects from the start. *Builds trust, collaboration, transparency, and influence for residents at the earliest stage of certain types of development.*
- A3 | **POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY RESOURCE WEBPAGE**
Establish a Pottstown Community resource site that plugs into the Town's existing online dashboards to offer a central, accessible source of information especially tracking development matters (e.g., rezoning petition status updates and community mobilization/engagement opportunities). *Keeps residents informed on community matters as well as active and proposed development projects in Pottstown, ensuring no one is left out of key decision points.*
- A4 | **ANNUAL POTTSTOWN PRESERVATION AWARDS AND UPDATE**
An annual Pottstown Community meeting organized by Community-Based Organizations to review the preservation initiatives and plans in progress (or ahead) for the preservation of Pottstown. *Fosters goal-setting, recognizes success, invites public partners for updates, identifies areas for improvement, and strengthens collaboration, reflection, and organization advancing preservation.*
- A5 | **COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION IN ADVISORY BOARDS**
Continue to encourage Pottstown community members to enroll in Huntersville 101 (citizen's academy) and to volunteer on advisory boards (both Town and County). *Elevates local voices to represent community interests, safeguard community priorities, and promote equitable outcomes.*

A1 | FORMALIZE A COMMUNITY COALITION FOR POTTSTOWN

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Community leadership should formalize a standing body of community stakeholders diversely representing a coalition of community leadership bodies. In this document we shall call this group the “**Pottstown coalition**” as a temporary basis until such an entity is named. The coalition will be a recognized, regularly convening body of community elders, community organizers, and representatives from Pottstown-based organizations like Pottstown Heritage Group, Mababu Live, and the Torrence-Lytle H.S. Alumni. Its role is to guide and coordinate community-led efforts identified in this Preservation Plan, working with the Town of Huntersville to implement the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan, as well as to collaborate with the County and other agencies on their projects. The coalition should reflect Pottstown’s full diversity and represent the community’s priorities in planning, preservation, and development matters. *Creates a unified, representative voice for Pottstown and ensures locally diverse voices shape decisions that impact their future.*

Community Efforts: Establish the coalition entity with a transparent, inclusive selection process for members. Organize into reporting committees or work groups keeping track of community matters, initiatives, and public projects, including the implementation efforts for the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan.

Town Efforts: Through the adoption of this Plan, officially recognize the coalition body (yet to be named) as the community’s implementing body of the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan.



Image from smithvillecommunitycoalition.org

The Smithville Community Coalition in Cornelius could be a great partner for coalition building. Their recent experience as a community mobilizing advocacy for resources, funds and public sector partnership in their initiatives for community development and staying power could offer valuable lessons learned.

KEY STEPS

- 1 **Community Call-to-Action:** Convene a community-wide meeting to announce the creation of the coalition and invite applications from residents, while also supporting current processes that promote unified community leadership. A coalition structure is recommended to divide tasks among work groups, reducing the burden on any one individual to attend to every project or process.
- 2 **Member Recruitment:** Select members from community organizations, faith-based groups, and other community-based entities to ensure broad representation.
- 3 **First Official Meeting:** Coalition sets priorities, assigns committee responsibilities, and establishes reporting processes across the different plans, projects and agencies.
- 4 **Organizational Mobilization:** Name and establish the coalition. An administrative workgroup should be selected to draft meeting structures, lead coordination, and establish communication protocols that build on the patterns already established. Work with the Town, County and nonprofit/consulting organizations for assistance (see Step #5).
- 5 **Capacity Building:** Train members on organizational sustainability, grant writing, research, story-building, Town/County processes, and any relevant laws/statutes and procedures. Work with grants or coaching programs available from the United Way, governmental partners and others to resource consulting for organizational capacity building.

A2 | INFORMAL, COMMUNITY-ORGANIZED DISCUSSIONS WITH DEVELOPERS

TIME   

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Encourage developers to hold meetings with representatives of the community (e.g., Coalition) for projects requiring Town Board decisions. Work within established processes to organize as a community to enable productive dialogue with developers, ensuring that community priorities can shape projects from the start. *Builds trust, collaboration, transparency, and influence for residents at the earliest stage of certain types of development.*

Advance Human Dignity and Justice

Promoting developer-community dialogue in early stages of development review, with the community at the table, creates a critical opportunity to bring local values and goals into new development proposals. This serves as a productive forum for developers to gain community support, ensures Town Board members hear from Pottstown’s leadership, and the community gains a unified voice and self-representation to promote dignity and justice.

Community Efforts: Assemble a development review committee from Coalition (be sure to include a representative of any housing nonprofit or Community Development Corporation who can lend development expertise and negotiation skills). Assign review committee roles and responsibilities and formulate a process to review each application following clear guidelines and methods of review that ensure that the community’s preservation goals are addressed consistently. For this, we recommend that the Coalition create a development review scoring tool that evaluates development characteristics to meet the Goals of the Preservation Plan using clear and concise language and objective metrics.

Town Efforts: The Town will answer questions about existing procedures to ensure transparency throughout all discretionary processes requiring Town Board decisions. For an Applicant, the process outlined here shall remain a purely voluntary step to undertake to help secure the community’s support. Existing Town procedures shall remain in place as for any other application.



Image from thealliancetc.org

Organizing an Effective Discussion:

1. Coalition organizes internally to evaluate projects being proposed in or in proximity to Pottstown.
2. Invite a developer Applicant to meet one-on-one with the coalition to discuss their project.
3. Coalition members present community goals and objectives for preservation, and a designated coalition member leads an expertly structured discussion listening to the Applicant’s goals and considerations for their development.
4. Coalition attendees provide a summary review on the applicant’s meeting to the coalition membership body.
5. After discussing the results of the meeting with the coalition membership, the coalition provides a structured response to the Applicant outlining the benefits and concerns of the Applicant’s project, including suggestions to adjust to better their project’s support for community preservation.
6. Applicant can continue meeting separately with the coalition.
7. Based on Applicant’s responses and ability to negotiate with the coalition, prepare speakers to speak on behalf of the coalition at Town Board meetings.

A Model Community Process:

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability (Twin Cities, MN) organizes community-led developer meetings. These are typically informal but structured around building dialogue, trust and transparency. In the Twin Cities, groups like the Alliance convene developers to present early concept plans in neighborhood forums. Residents and community leaders walk through priorities such as housing affordability, cultural preservation, and public benefits, while facilitators record commitments and expectations. This creates a shared record of community concerns, giving developers a roadmap to secure grassroots support and reducing opposition later in the approval process.

A3 | POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY RESOURCE WEBPAGE

TIME



COST



Description: Establish a Pottstown Community resource website that plugs into the Town’s existing online websites to offer a central, accessible source of information especially tracking development matters (e.g., rezoning petition status updates and community mobilization/engagement opportunities). *Keeps residents informed on community matters as well as active and proposed development projects in Pottstown, ensuring no one is left out of key decision points.*

Community Efforts: The coalition, working collaboratively with partners, can develop the website. A website dashboard would ideally centralize elements already present across Town websites (or Open Data dashboards). The website can also make the information accessible in plain language, drawing out those contextual factors that clarify the relevance to Pottstown. Pottstown Community-Based Organizations can help publicize the webpage via community networks and provide feedback on user-friendliness and missing information.

Town Efforts: The Town of Huntersville can advise the community in plugging into the existing online Town resources listing project descriptions/plans, meeting dates, staff reports, approval stages, etc.

KEY STEPS

- 1

Town Planning Department can assist the community to access existing online channels.
- 2

Community creates a webpage and test-runs website and identifies improvements.
- 3

Updates made before public launch.
- 4

Webpage promoted at Community events.

A4 | ANNUAL POTTSTOWN PRESERVATION AWARDS AND UPDATE

TIME



COST



Description: An annual Pottstown Community meeting organized by the coalition or a Community-Based Organization to review the preservation initiatives and plans in progress (or ahead) for the preservation of Pottstown. *Fosters goal-setting, recognizes success, invites public partners for updates, identifies areas for improvement, and strengthens collaboration, reflection, and organization advancing preservation.*

Community Efforts: Coalition can prepare an awards show and a session to present a status update and to discuss progress on preservation initiatives and projects.



Image from villagepreservation.org



Celebrate African American Heritage

At the heart of this Annual Meeting is a moment of celebration and reflection on the efforts made throughout the year to help Pottstown thrive. It is also an opportunity to honor the work and activism of the Coalition, celebrating African American heritage and recognizing their role in carrying forward the legacy and vision of their ancestors.

Town Efforts: With the Coalition’s invitation, Town and County staff can attend the annual meeting and provide staff presentations on projects, including the status of the Preservation Plan’s implementation steps.

The Village Preservation (Greenwich Village, NYC) nonprofit hosts an Annual Meeting and Village Awards event that celebrates local preservation heroes, reviews progress, and sustains public engagement in ongoing neighborhood stewardship.

A5 | COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION IN ADVISORY BOARDS

TIME



COST

\$ \$ \$

Description: Continue to encourage Pottstown community members to enroll in Huntersville 101 (citizen’s academy) and to volunteer on advisory boards (both Town and County). *Elevates local voices to represent community interests, safeguard community priorities, and promote equitable outcomes.*

Community Efforts: Recruit and mentor potential advisory group candidates. Consider building the leadership capacity of local residents and Community-Based Organizations by encouraging enrollment in Huntersville 101, a seven-week, citizen-focused course to educate participants on the services and responsibilities of the Town.

Town Efforts: Encourage Pottstown representatives to continue serving on advisory boards/committees. Be sure to advertise vacancies on these bodies to the coalition and its community networks.

KEY STEPS

- 1

Community members enroll in Huntersville 101.
- 2

Coalition tracks for Advisory Board openings and encourages residents to apply.
- 3

Town Board may appoint members. Training is provided for all appointed members.
- 4

Pottstown advisory group members keep the coalition updated on Pottstown-related advisory board matters.



Meeting with Community Coaches (July 17, 2025)

COMMUNITY COACHES

Contact Information

Pottstown community members had a chance to meet with three community advocates leading initiatives in Mecklenburg communities that are also experiencing threats to their preservation. They have offered their wisdom and support to continue conversations in allyship with Pottstown’s initiatives.



Shamaïye Haynes | Shamaïye@QCFamilyTree.org

Executive Director, QC Family Tree
President, Greater Enderly Park Neighborhood Association

Encouraged neighbors to organize collectively, stating that “you only get what you organize for”.



Rickey Hall | rickey@westblvdnc.org

Senior Board Chair, West Boulevard Neighborhood Coalition
Board of Three Sisters Market

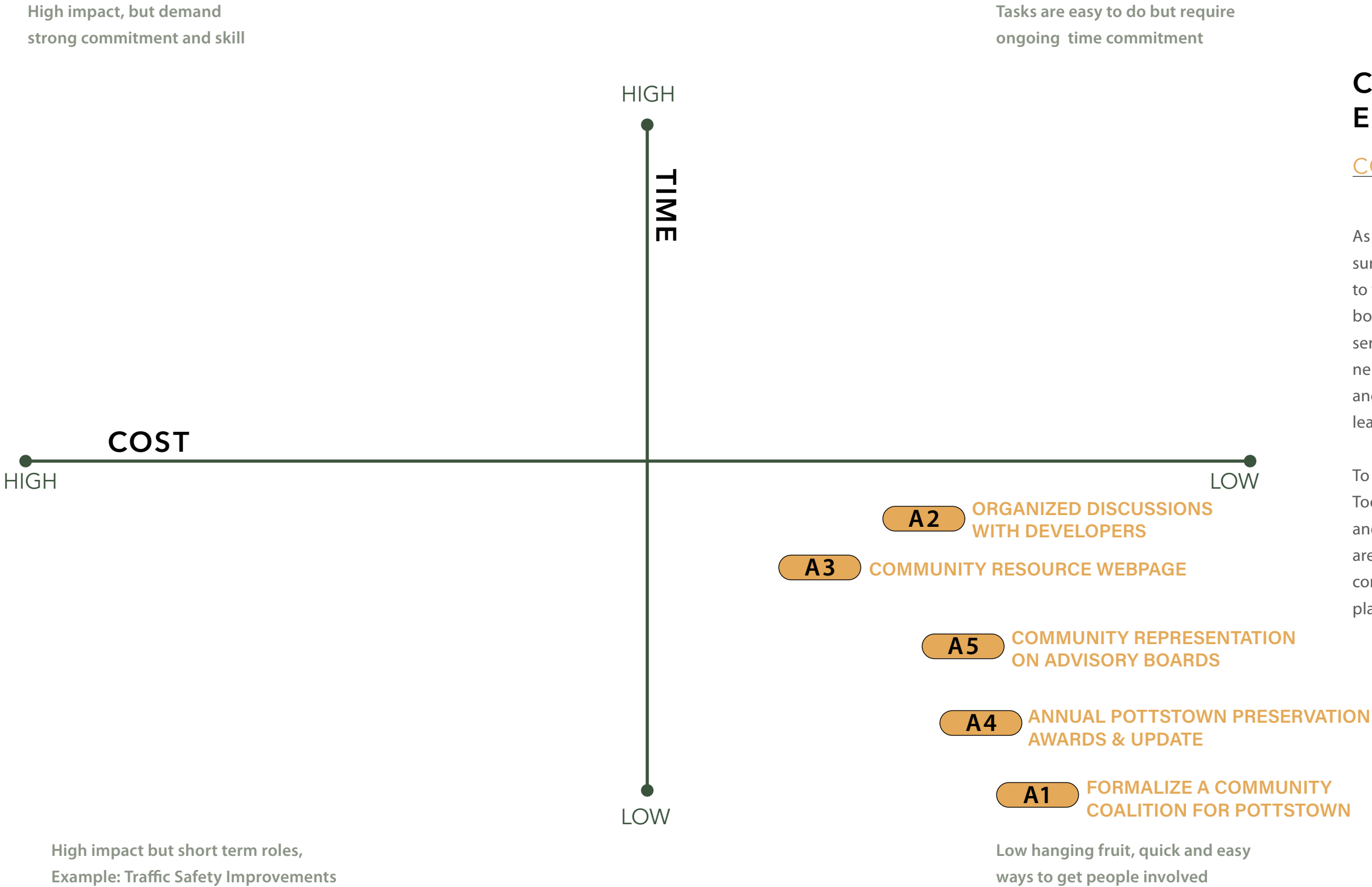
Champions the Community Land Trust (CLT) model to preserve affordability and urged residents to understand the push and pull of the systems at play in organizing for projects.



Tiffany Capers | tcapers@rwci.org

Executive Director, Renaissance West Community Initiative
(at the time of the meeting she was with CrossRoads Corp. in Grier Heights)

Highlighted the importance of asset-based initiatives and starting with a shared resolve and basis of understanding, convening an “Indaba” (a gathering to agree on community matters) before diving into action.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

CONCLUSION

As the Downtown Huntersville area and its immediate surroundings continue to grow, Pottstown will continue to face challenges for preservation. Town and County bodies regulating and influencing land use, public services, law enforcement, economic development, neighborhood improvements, community resources and facilities will need the perspectives of Pottstown’s leaders to create staying power in Pottstown.

To empower the Community, thankfully, the Tools in Toolkit A are all quite achievable with volunteer hours and modest resources. Unity and community resolve are the key. Through a dedicated, unified group of community organizers, all of these elements could be in place within a year.

3.2 TOOLKIT B

REGULATORY TOOLS

INTRODUCTION

The strategies in this toolkit focus on tailoring regulations around what can be built, where, and how. These tools may revisit existing standards or introduce new regulations, as preservation is typically regulated by zoning, overlay districts, land-use plans, and design standards. These determine what can be built and how buildings fit within the historic context, ensuring alignment with the community’s preservation strategy and ensuring residents have a meaningful role in development decisions.

Preservation-oriented zoning ordinances often add incentives for affordable housing, apply stronger review procedures, and create building standards supportive of historic context. However, incentives may favor higher-density areas over single-family neighborhoods and may fall short of delivering meaningful levels of affordable housing, potentially detracting from Pottstown’s goal of retaining its residents.

If an incentives approach is used in the Overlay District Tool (Tool B1), the recommendation of this Plan is to explore ways to innovate the incentivization model to apply financial incentives to preservation outcomes. For instance, projects preserving housing could be granted access to special grants and programs available for rehabbing the homes. Any kind of housing fund would be the product of a Town Board action, but the Town can explore adopting this approach.



Flyer from offbeat.com



Image from prcno.org



Image from prcno.org



Image from prcno.org

THE NEW ORLEANS CASE STUDY FOR PRESERVATION

In New Orleans, the regulatory frameworks for historic preservation demonstrate that regulations can only do so much. Their approach to incentivizing preservation is to create financing programs that make preservation and affordability feasible. The city therefore offers various financial tools to make the financing for preservation projects pencil out. The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority helps deals in historic corridors to close by offering gap financing for rental projects, often rehabbing historic properties. CDBG-backed loans help first-time home-buyers to overcome upfront costs with forgivable Soft Second mortgages. Finally, developers can stack tax credits with grants to further de-risk rehabilitation projects for housing.

TOOLKIT B
ELEMENTS



TOOLKIT B OBJECTIVE

To guide growth and protect neighborhood character, helping ensure consistency, predictability, and equity in Pottstown’s built environment.

The Tools in this Toolkit add regulatory controls to safeguard housing, ecological assets, community character, and cultural and economic resilience. Together, they set the ground rules for equitable, community-centered development in a way that conforms to the goals of preservation.

STRATEGIES

- B1 | OVERLAY DISTRICT FOR PRESERVATION & HOUSING STABILITY
Special zoning overlays can tailor rules to protect Pottstown’s character, limit demolition of historic structures, and support community needs and goals. *Keeps growth consistent with community identity.*
- B2 | GREEN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND STANDARDS
Work with current Town initiatives that enhance sustainability and resilience in Pottstown with context-sensitive development standards and proactive policies and programs to execute green standards. These strategies can support long-term community health and reduce climate-event risks, not just in Pottstown but in the greater surrounding area. *Protects residents from flooding, heat, and high energy costs while preserving ecological resources.*
- B3 | PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC & CULTURAL ASSETS
Enhance the regulatory tools already available to protect historic and cultural sites and provide incentives for rehab. Continue to engage in dialogue with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) and the Town to discuss enhancing protective measures in the Zoning Ordinance and existing processes. *Adds additional safeguards to protect and conserve physical and cultural assets that anchor the community.*

B1 | OVERLAY DISTRICT FOR PRESERVATION & HOUSING STABILITY

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Special zoning overlays can tailor regulations to protect Pottstown’s character, limit demolition of historic structures, and address community needs and goals for staying power. *Keeps growth consistent with community identity.*

Community Efforts: Working with the Town of Huntersville, Pottstown community members should provide input on priorities regarding building character, affordability, and design elements. Members can help articulate design factors of community history and identity that can help shape the overlay regulations.

Town Efforts: Town planning staff and the Town of Huntersville Planning Board should explore the feasibility and needs to implement the overlay following the Town’s policies with residents. If the direction seems compelling to

address the needs to preserve housing and historic landmarks and promote housing stability, the Town will then draft and adopt the overlay district with public input. Staff capacity and technical resources for mapping, community involvement, legal review and adoption procedures are needed to ensure proper integration with Huntersville’s Zoning Ordinance.

Key Steps:

1. Town + Community hold community workshops to identify Ordinance priorities.
2. If there is a compelling need for an overlay approach, the Town drafts overlay standards with technical support. For preservation-based overlays, various neighborhood preservation-based models exist in North Carolina and the right approach will need to be tailored based on Pottstown’s context.
3. Town + Community review drafts through the Pottstown coalition and Town Planning Board.
4. Town adopts the overlay district into the Zoning Ordinance.
5. Town + Community monitor outcomes and adjust as needed.



Foster Community Belonging

Creating a sense of belonging is essential to understanding why Pottstown stands firmly against displacement. Rising costs of living and similar systemic pressures often force long-time residents out of the very communities they helped build. An overlay tool with measures incentivizing housing stability could support housing affordability and empower residents to remain rooted in Pottstown.

B2 | GREEN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND STANDARDS

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Work with current Town initiatives that enhance sustainability and economic resilience in Huntersville’s neighborhoods with context-sensitive development standards and proactive policies and programs to execute green standards. These strategies can support long-term community health and reduce climate-event risks, not just in Pottstown but across the Town’s jurisdiction. An important trade-off to be mindful about is the added expenses that are added to development, which can be significant in some cases to the Town and its residents. *Protects residents from flooding, heat, and high energy costs while preserving ecological assets.*

Community Efforts: Continue advocating for stronger green standards in new projects, especially in protecting the extent of the existing tree canopy in Pottstown and ensuring that new development projects do not compromise Pottstown’s ability to weather flooding, heat, or other environmental impacts.

Town Efforts: Continue working to enhance zoning and development requirements in the Town for stormwater, tree canopy, and green space. Adopting new standards moving beyond current minimal thresholds will require review for statutory compliance. Explore methods to incentivize more energy-efficient, resilient building practices, and higher tree save percentages. Explore stronger stream basin protection and code enforcement improvements to prevent adverse impacts from development projects on neighboring properties. Connect community to agencies to provide technical support to current homeowners wishing to improve their properties for resilience during adverse weather events. Consider offering small need-based grants assisting residential property improvement projects to remove failing trees and improve drainage and erosion-prevention. Utilize public infrastructure projects to secure better conditions on adjacent properties, especially by capturing run-off and improving local drainage conditions.

Ongoing and Potential Actions:

1. Town can consider drafting policies for town-wide environmental regulation protecting Pottstown’s ecological assets (e.g., wildlife corridors and contiguous canopy) and green development standards to address known environmental risks.
2. Community could search for need-based grants/loan programs for small-scale green infrastructure improvements and local resilience projects (e.g., solar energy, removing failing trees near homes).

B3 | PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC & CULTURAL ASSETS

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Strengthen the Town’s use of preservation tools, while creating complementary community-led efforts to identify, document, and incentivize rehabilitation of historic and cultural sites. *Explores additional safeguards to protect and conserve physical and cultural assets that anchor the community.*

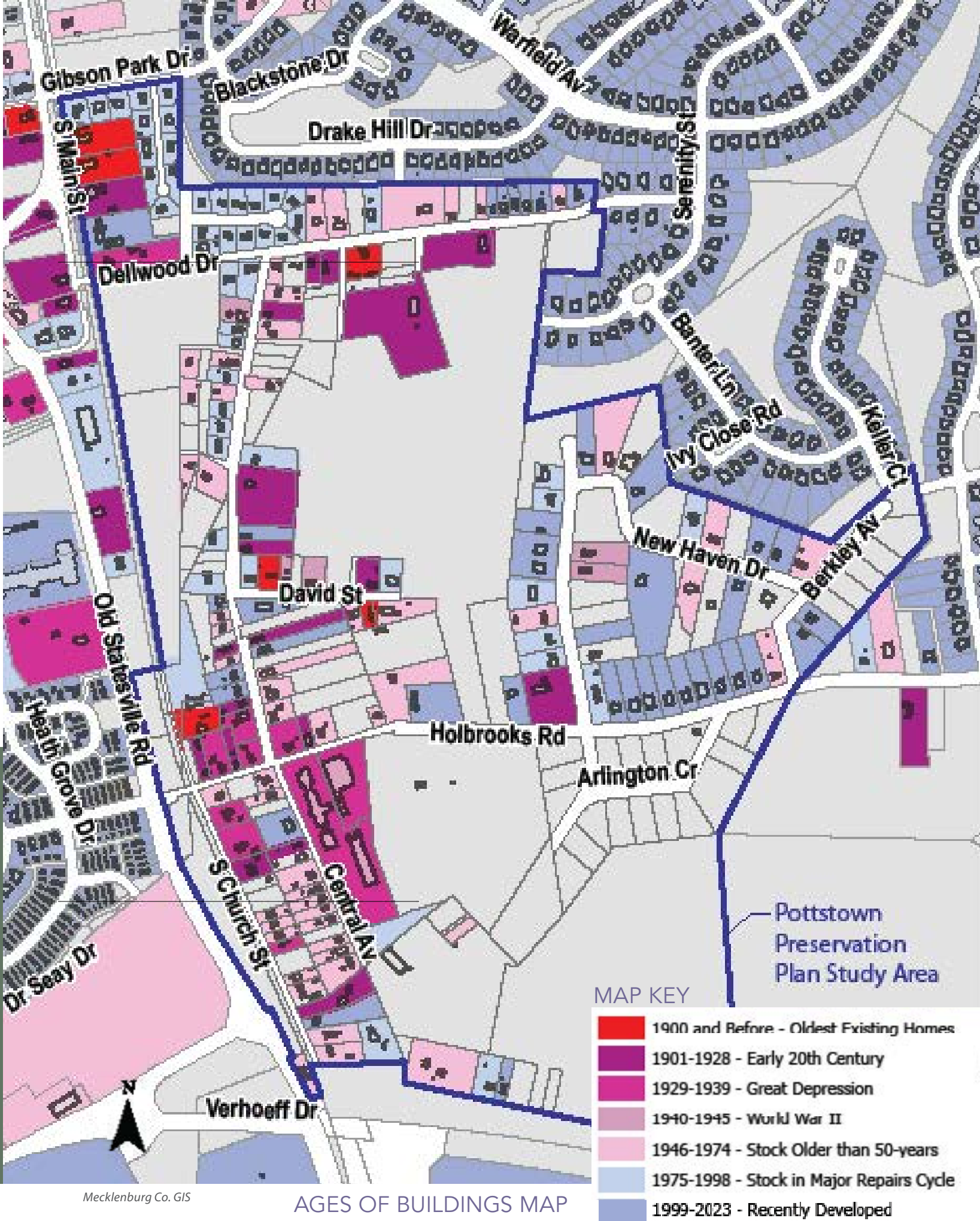
Community Efforts: Continue to identify priority properties through state or local surveys, nominate for designation, and share oral histories. These activities feed directly into the statutory framework and justify Town action.

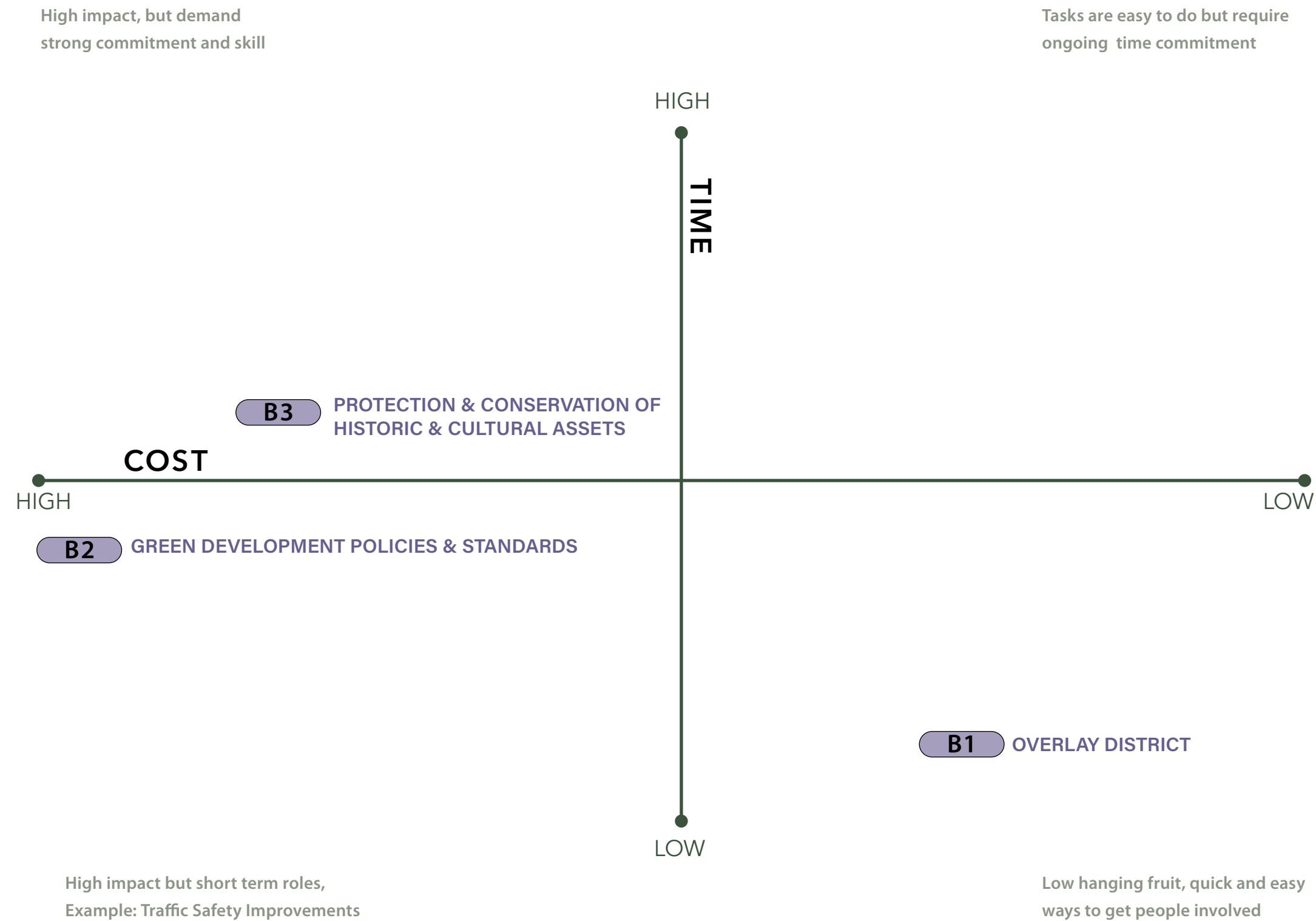
Town Efforts: Ensure early notification to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) when demolition permits are requested for properties identified in local or state historic surveys. Explore creating a local historic or conservation overlay district to extend protections to priority neighborhoods (e.g., Overlay Tool B1 for Pottstown). To incentivize preservation, the Town Board may consider support to owners of designated sites, as permitted under the Town’s general spending authority in N.C.G.S. 160A.

- Potential steps to consider:**
- 1. Town + HLC + Community designate and prioritize landmark or district properties through the survey/ designation process.
 - 2. Town + HLC + Community draft a Cultural Resource Policy to guide the use of incentives and overlays.
 - 3. Town + HLC enhance review notification procedures and policy to apply state-authorized demolition delay to historically designated properties.
 - 4. Town + HLC adopt ordinances consistent with N.C.G.S. 160D to expand preservation protections.
 - 5. Town + Community create voluntary incentive programs for conservation.
 - 6. Town monitors and enforces protections.

AGES OF BUILDINGS IN
POTTSTOWN

The majority of homes in Pottstown date from the end of the 19th Century to 1975. Fifty (+) years is generally the threshold when homes are considered eligible for historic building rehabilitation programs. Thus, many municipalities typically offer Home Repair Programs for homes older than 50 years. Another substantial number of homes in Pottstown built after 1975 are entering the stages that typically require the first major repairs (e.g., HVAC replacements, stabilization repairs, door and window replacements, and electrical system rewiring).





COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

CONCLUSION

Lending a unified voice to how the Town customizes Zoning Ordinance regulations and improves development policies and standards will better ensure that the regulatory approaches recommended can reach adoption. By documenting, nominating, and sharing the cultural value of local sites, the Community can also directly shape what the Town recognizes and protects. This partnership ensures that preservation decisions reflect community priorities, giving local voices a formal role in how heritage and identity are safeguarded.

3.3 TOOLKIT C

HOUSING STABILITY

INTRODUCTION

Strategies for Housing Stability focus on keeping residents securely housed, while also creating pathways to own a home. Instead of simply relying on regulatory approaches to preserve housing, communities themselves can proactively organize to prevent vulnerable community members from being displaced. Example efforts include mobilizing aid and support to tenants, helping homeowners to increase their ability to remain in place, rehabilitating housing, and creating place-based nonprofit organizations like **Community Land Trusts** (CLTs), which lease land for affordable homeownership, and **Community Development Corporations** (CDCs), which typically focus on small scale projects for infill housing and community development.

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), such as the Pottstown Heritage Group, the Torrence-Lytle H.S. Alumni and Mababu Live, are therefore key collaborators in preservation projects. They not only play a stakeholder role, but they can also lead visioning, financing, and implementation of preservation initiatives. Allied CBOs may work on these efforts sometimes by collaborating with **Community Development Financial Institutions** (CDFIs), government agencies and other resource partners. The Ada Jenkins Center—known as the Lake Norman Area’s “Quarterback Agency”—could be a valuable partner for the Pottstown coalition, serving as a resource hub that empowers families and individuals to overcome economic disadvantage. Another standout local example of community-based partnership is the work that LISC Charlotte (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) does as a CDFI. They work with local CBOs to address affordable housing and economic development projects in Charlotte’s Historic West End.



Image from westsideclt.org



Image from qcitymetro.com



Image from westsideclt.org

WEST SIDE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST
Founded by residents in West Charlotte’s historically Black neighborhoods, WSCLT operates with a mission to “provide permanently affordable housing with community-centered development” and is guided by a board elected by neighbors. They accept donated homes from affluent areas to transport and rehabilitate them on land they own. WSCLT leveraged a \$6 million ARPA grant from Mecklenburg County to acquire 32 homes in the Hoskins neighborhood, preventing potential wholesale sales to developers and preserving them for permanently affordable ownership.

TOOLKIT C ELEMENTS



TOOLKIT C OBJECTIVE

To keep residents in their homes and preserve affordability and staying power for future generations.

Together these tools address both immediate housing needs and long-term wealth-building, holistically improving household stability with community-driven initiatives—ensuring that the community of Pottstown, not just the buildings, is preserved.

STRATEGIES

- C1 | PROPERTY TAX RELIEF & ABATEMENT PROGRAMS
Continue to coach residents to take advantage of the County’s HOMES property tax relief for qualifying low-income homeowners. *Helps curb speculative buyouts from happening due to tax burden.*
- C2 | HOUSING REPAIR & WEATHERIZATION PROGRAMS
Continue to support free or low-cost home repair services, grants, and low-interest loans to keep houses safe and affordable, improve energy efficiency, and address code violations. *Targeted at legacy homeowners and seniors aging in place.*
- C3 | UTILITY & SERVICE FEE REDUCTIONS
Continue to advocate to lower monthly costs with utility and service fees for qualifying Pottstown residents. *Reduces household expenses and increases housing stability.*
- C4 | REAL ESTATE & FINANCIAL COUNSELING SERVICES
Community-Based Orgs (CBOs) can bring trusted guidance on financial and housing decisions for first-time buyers, renters, and homeowners facing financial challenges. *Empowers families to make informed choices and avoid falling victim to predatory practices.*
- C5 | TARGETED ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & OWNERSHIP SUPPORT
Consider a focus on economic development by utilizing community initiatives that build local wealth and opportunity through jobs, local businesses, and commercial assets. *Strengthens households by expanding income and ownership opportunities.*
- C6 | LEGAL AID & TENANT-OWNER MEDIATION
Work with nonprofit organizations to secure free or low-cost legal support for tenants facing eviction, as well as homeowners facing foreclosure. *Provides services for third-party mediation and legal support to tenants and at-risk homeowners.*
- C7 | COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS (CLT’S)
Incentivize permanently affordable housing in new developments by establishing a nonprofit Community Land Trust (CLT) to hold donated home properties under shared ownership and community stewardship. Governed by nonprofit stewards, CLT homeowners, and local residents, a CLT would help stabilize the local housing market, allow equity-building, and ensure permanent affordability. *Preserves affordability for generations while building community wealth.*
- C8 | NONPROFIT HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS (CDC’S)
Create a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or partner with nonprofits that build and manage affordable housing, rehab properties, and support residents with housing. *Provides trusted, mission-driven partners for long-term community investment.*
- C9 | PARTNER WITH A QUARTERBACK ORGANIZATION
Continue to work with the Ada Jenkins Center to serve as a central hub to administrate housing, financial literacy and quality of life initiatives, coordinating efforts holistically between the government, nonprofits, and residents. *Brings multiple players together for aligned, multi-service impact.*

C1 | PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Pottstown’s Community-Based Organizations can undertake initiatives to coach residents to take advantage of the County’s HOMES property tax relief for qualifying low-income homeowners. *Helps curb speculative buyouts from happening due to tax burden.*

Community Efforts: Pottstown homeowners who may already qualify for HOMES may not know about the offering or need assistance. A trusted, local peer coach is needed to help such households demonstrate their need and qualifications. CBOs could assist residents with this process in a trusted, more neutral environment and provide coaching services through expert counselors and pro-bono clinics (this element could be implemented in combination with Tool C4: Financial and Real-Estate Counseling).

Town Efforts: None are currently evident, but the Town can continue exploring opportunities allowed under State law or modeled by other North Carolina communities.

C2 | HOUSING REPAIR & WEATHERIZATION PROGRAMS

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Targeted at long-time homeowners and seniors aging in place, the Pottstown Community is already dedicated to mobilizing free or low-cost home repair services to keep houses safe and affordable, improve energy efficiency, and address code violations.

Community Efforts: The Pottstown Heritage Group and Mababu Live, through their own “sweat equity” and grassroots agency finding donated materials, have been mobilizing and implementing home improvements, repairs, and other such improvements within the community. In addition to securing donated materials, tools, and volunteer labor, Pottstown CBOs should continue to explore how to resource their efforts with existing home repair programs in Mecklenburg County, e.g, the County’s CDBG-funded rehab assistance, the NC Housing Finance Agency’s Urgent Repair and Essential Single-Family Rehab programs, and nonprofit partners like Habitat Charlotte Region and Lake Norman CDC.

Town Efforts: The Town can also continue resourcing CBO activities like the community clean ups and further explore available means to support their home repair and capacity-building efforts (to the extent enabled by N.C.G.S. § 160D-1311). The Town and County should ensure that Minimal Housing violation notices inform homeowners of their options to apply for any programs and services the local CBOs offer.

Strengthen Community Assets

This tool helps extend the lifespan of residents’ historic homes, which are valuable community assets. By providing support to those in need, this tool not only assists individual homeowners but also builds the economy and health of the community as a whole.

Taking the Next Step: Pottstown CBOs can join cohort programs (such as those offered by United Way) to further strengthen nonprofit capacity building, e.g., with a 10-year business plan.

The Historic Savannah Foundation (a nonprofit dedicated to preserving historic buildings) rehabilitates homes for affordable housing in the historically African American community of Cuyler-Brownville. Home buyers are eligible to plug into the City of Savannah’s DreamMaker Home Purchase Assistance program, which provides soft cost/gap financing for home purchases. The City also runs home repair assistance programs offering 0% loans and grants for repairs (often \$2,500–\$10,000 grants).

Image from myhsf.org



C3 | UTILITY & SERVICE FEE REDUCTIONS

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: The Community can continue to advocate for lower monthly costs with utility service fees and to secure additional discounts for qualifying Pottstown residents. *Reduces household expenses and increases housing stability.*

Community Efforts: Inform residents of eligibility and application steps, organize feedback on utility affordability, and assist neighbors with program enrollment. These kinds of programs may offer discounts, rebates, or flexible payment plans through their providers. This could also include support for internet access for households with students or seniors.

Town Efforts: The Town can provide connections and links to utility-provider programs that may address this issue.

C4 | REAL ESTATE & FINANCIAL COUNSELING SERVICES

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) can bring trusted guidance on financial and housing decisions for first-time buyers, renters, and homeowners facing financial challenges. Trusted advisors could help families avoid foreclosure, predatory lending, and risky contracts. CBOs can provide peer coaching and host legal aid clinics/pro bono counseling services around estate planning, trust law, and heirs’ property resolution. *Empowers families to make informed choices and avoid falling victim to predatory practices.*

Community Efforts: The Community can partner with nonprofits to coach residents and host workshops/clinics, encourage neighbors to use counseling services, and share trusted referral networks to residents needing advice.

Town Efforts: The Town can explore partnering with HUD-certified counseling agencies, provide space for workshops & training, and support counseling as part of housing programs or other Town-led initiatives.

 **Preserve Neighborhood Character**

Pottstown is known for its modest homes and strong sense of community. From its formation, families allied together to bring common benefits and infrastructure to the community. As before, this means navigating today’s economic systems together as well, so that all members can benefit.

Potential Steps to Launch a Counseling Program:

1. Pottstown CBOs survey residents to gauge common community member needs and challenges.
2. CBOs plan counseling activities and/or identify service providers to address key topic areas.
3. CBOs, perhaps working with nonprofits like the Ada Jenkins Center, launch a counseling program. Formats for counseling could include one-on-one booked meetings with advisors, workshops, online resources, or one-day counseling clinics based on special services that a larger pool of residents needs direct assistance with.
4. Community publicizes events and services in community networks.
5. CBOs track outcomes and re-evaluate residents’ needs.

C5 | TARGETED ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & OWNERSHIP SUPPORT

TIME



COST



Description: Consider a focus on economic development by utilizing community initiatives that build local wealth and opportunity through jobs, local businesses, loan programs and commercial assets. Example economic development initiatives could include a trade school, a business resource center, a tool library, business incubators, cooperative models for ownership, and local hiring mandates, which may not be allowed currently in the Zoning Ordinance. Supporting the ability of Pottstown community members to purchase homes can also be a wealth-building strategy. CBOs and nonprofit organizations may also need office space, conferencing facilities, and other business resources and assets housed in the community. *Strengthens households by expanding income and ownership opportunities.*

Strengthen
Community Assets

Community assets are not just buildings; they are the people. The strength of a community lies in the well-being and empowerment of its residents. Expanding Pottstown’s economic ecosystem is essential to fostering an economically vibrant community, with a focus on education, job creation, and support for local businesses. Ownership and access to education are key to building long-term stability and strengthening the community.

Community Efforts: The Community can engage residents to identify training and business support needs, connect residents to workforce and entrepreneurship programs, and support future local entrepreneurs and businesses as consumers and promoters. The Community can also lend support to a zoning district or overlay solution for community-serving nonresidential uses (such as business incubators and office space for CBO nonprofits) in the currently vacant, nonresidential Torrence-Lytle H.S. buildings.

Town Efforts: If utilizing Tool B1, an overlay district in NR that allows certain limited commercial uses in the future restoration efforts of Torrence-Lytle H.S. can be an incentive in itself for preservation-based redevelopment. The Town can also integrate MBE contracts and job training with Town-involved projects.

Example Actions:

1. Community conducts needs assessment for jobs/business needs.
2. Community plug in workforce training, business resources and micro-grant programs from area workforce boards, financial institutions and educational partners.
3. Community connects residents with opportunities.
4. Town + Community evaluate Zoning Ordinance solutions for community-serving retail, office or other such uses in the vacant non-residential buildings.

An Example Wealth-Building Tool: A Soft Second Mortgage Program

Anchor Pottstown families and members of the community through tailored homeownership tools.

Description: Modeled after New Orleans’ program for “Culture Bearers”, this tool could offer forgivable second mortgages to legacy residents in historic Pottstown. By reducing upfront costs and forgiving loans after occupancy milestones, a tool like this designed for Pottstown could help families remain in the community—or return to it—and invest in the long-term stewardship of the community.

Developers reduce their risks with this kind of program because they can easily find homebuyers for their units upfront and are therefore incentivized to restore or build these for sale at the appropriate income levels. A bonus: design a version of the program so that existing homeowners can also apply financing benefits to a second mortgage to improve their homes, thus restoring homes in Pottstown for successive generations.

The Pottstown Community-Based Organizations can work with local nonprofits, financial institutions (like CDFIs), cultural organizations, and churches to identify sources of funding. The program should be targeted to Pottstown legacy households (e.g., those who are members of a local church, whose parents or ancestors

attended Torrence-Lytle H.S., etc.). The program could work together with peer-to-peer coaching or the financial literacy support offered by the Ada Jenkins Center to households in making home purchases.

Steps to Launch a Soft Second Program:

1. Community defines eligibility requirements for the Soft Second Mortgage.
2. Community organizations, perhaps working with philanthropic partners, CDFIs/banks, the County and/or nonprofits, establish soft second mortgage terms (e.g., loan size, forgiveness timeline).
3. The Community, through its CBOs and nonprofit partners, coaches residents and members of its network (e.g., Torrence-Lytle alumni network) to apply for the soft second program.
4. CBOs track and review the soft second program uptake and results.

C6 | LEGAL AID & TENANT-OWNER MEDIATION

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Work with nonprofit organizations to secure free or low-cost legal support for tenants facing eviction, as well as homeowners facing foreclosure. *Provides services for third-party mediation and legal support to tenants and at-risk homeowners.*

Community Efforts: The Community Based Organizations can partner with local nonprofit and legal aid organizations, connect tenants and owners to mediation and legal aid, and share information about tenant rights.

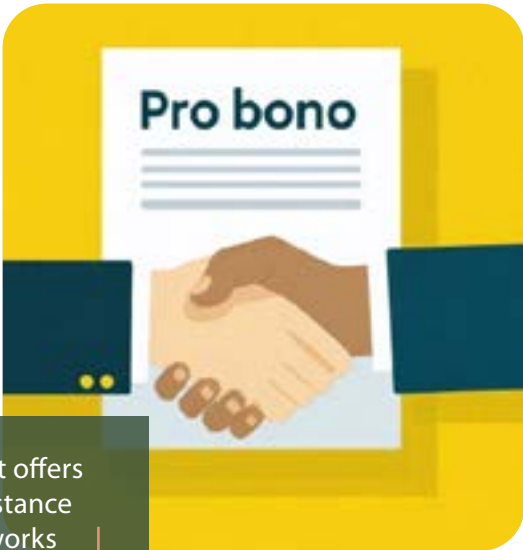
 Advance Human dignity and Justice

Human dignity and justice require equitable systems for resolving problems. Historically, limited access to legal knowledge and representation has led to unjust outcomes. By creating opportunities for residents to understand their legal rights, we empower them to protect their homes and assets, advancing both dignity and justice.

Town Efforts: The Town could support educational efforts to connect to resources. The County’s Community Resource Center can work with community members directly to secure tenant aid and resources.

Steps to Secure Legal Resources:

- 1. Pottstown CBOs establish partnerships with legal aid nonprofits and mediators, such as Legal Aid NC.
- 2. CBOs facilitate housing mediation services via public/nonprofit resources.
- 3. CBOs publicize tenant rights and support resources in Pottstown.
- 4. CBOs track cases and evaluate/adjust mediation approaches.



NC Pro Bono Resource Center’s Housing Stability Pro Bono Project offers support to tenants facing housing instability, providing legal assistance and connecting them with resources. Mecklenburg County also works with N.C Legal Aid and Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy to offer resources for eviction prevention for low-income tenants.

C7 | COMMUNITY LAND TRUSTS (CLT’S)

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Establish a nonprofit Community Land Trust (CLT) to acquire and hold home properties under shared ownership and community stewardship. Governed by nonprofit stewards, CLT homeowners, and neighbors, a CLT would reduce speculative buyouts of historic properties, stabilize the local housing market, allow equity-building in homeownership, and ensure permanent affordability. Grounded Solutions Network can provide guidance in establishing a CLT, as they did for the West Side CLT, Charlotte’s first CLT. *Preserves affordability for generations while building community wealth.*

Community Efforts: Set up a CLT steering group to engage the Grounded Solutions Network in getting started, possibly launched by one of Pottstown’s CBOs. We recommend a committed group of a dozen members meeting monthly to educate themselves about the CLT model and disseminating information to residents. It is highly recommended to send a few individuals to attend the annual Grounded Solutions gathering.

Town Efforts: The Town could explore the formation of a CLT in Pottstown, including potential zoning incentives that could be applied through an overlay approach (Tool B1).



Strengthen Community Assets

A Community Land Trust (CLT) preserves housing affordability, stabilizes neighborhoods, and builds community wealth. By keeping land in community hands and reducing speculation, a CLT protects housing as a shared asset while empowering residents with equity and long-term stability.

Steps to Launch a CLT:

- 1. Community (through the coalition or a CBO) forms a CLT exploratory committee.
- 2. Exploratory committee launches a CLT 501c3 and creates a CLT business plan through expert consulting channels.
- 3. Town adopts an incentives framework for CLT donations (if any).
- 4. Community secures land/homes and funding to get the CLT started.
- 5. Agencies + Nonprofits + Community continue to collaborate to expand the CLT portfolio.

C8 | NONPROFIT HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Create a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or partner with nonprofits that build and manage affordable housing, rehab properties, and support residents with housing. Empowering them expands capacity for community-driven development. An option is to work with organizations like Habitat for Humanity and Lake Norman CDC to resource opportunities in Pottstown. *Provides trusted, mission-driven partners for long-term community investment.*

Community Efforts: Explore the potential to create a CDC by expanding the capacity of one of Pottstown’s CBOs to take on development work. Alternatively, partner with nonprofits as volunteers and advocates, provide local knowledge to shape housing priorities, and support fundraising and advocacy campaigns for housing development projects.

Town Efforts: The Town will explore incentives and approaches to support single-family housing development. It can also streamline approvals for nonprofit housing projects and integrate nonprofits into housing strategies, particularly when participating in development projects incorporating a Public-Private Partnership.

Taking the First Step to Enact a Pottstown-based Affordable Housing Initiative:

- 1. Community expands the capacity of a local group to create a CDC based on existing opportunities for infill housing development or home restoration in Pottstown.
- 2. Town + Community explore potential partnerships with nonprofit partners active in the region.
- 3. Community and its partners secure land, homes or funding for first projects.



QC Family Tree, a grassroots nonprofit led by Shamaie Haynes, creates affordable rental homes. It supports resident leadership and advances anti-displacement efforts to protect the neighborhood’s deep African American heritage. Their work offers a valuable model that could lend direct expertise to Pottstown CBOs as they explore community-led housing and preservation.

Image from qcfamilytree.org

C9 | PARTNER WITH A QUARTERBACK ORGANIZATION

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: A “Quarterback Organization” acts as a central hub, coordinating government, nonprofits, and residents. Working with the Ada Jenkins Center, it administers housing, financial literacy, and quality-of-life initiatives, ensuring services reach households efficiently, avoid duplication, and are tailored to need. This “quarterbacking” mission can also coordinate with CLTs, nonprofit housing development, schools, child development centers, churches and Community Development Corporations. *Brings multiple players together for aligned, multi-service impact.*

Community Efforts: Collaborate with the Ada Jenkins Center and rail corridor communities to pool nonprofit staff and resources for Pottstown, Smithville, West Davidson, and other corridor communities. Partner and ally with these communities to create a strategic coalition. This can attract regional partnerships and resources and benefit residents by implementing a coordinated preservation strategy for each at-risk community. It can help leverage greater resources to implement resources across agencies that can meet and serve the needs of residents at risk of displacement.

Town Efforts: Collaborate at the regional scale to work with a Quarterback nonprofit and continue to support coordination with regional partners for Pottstown’s preservation.

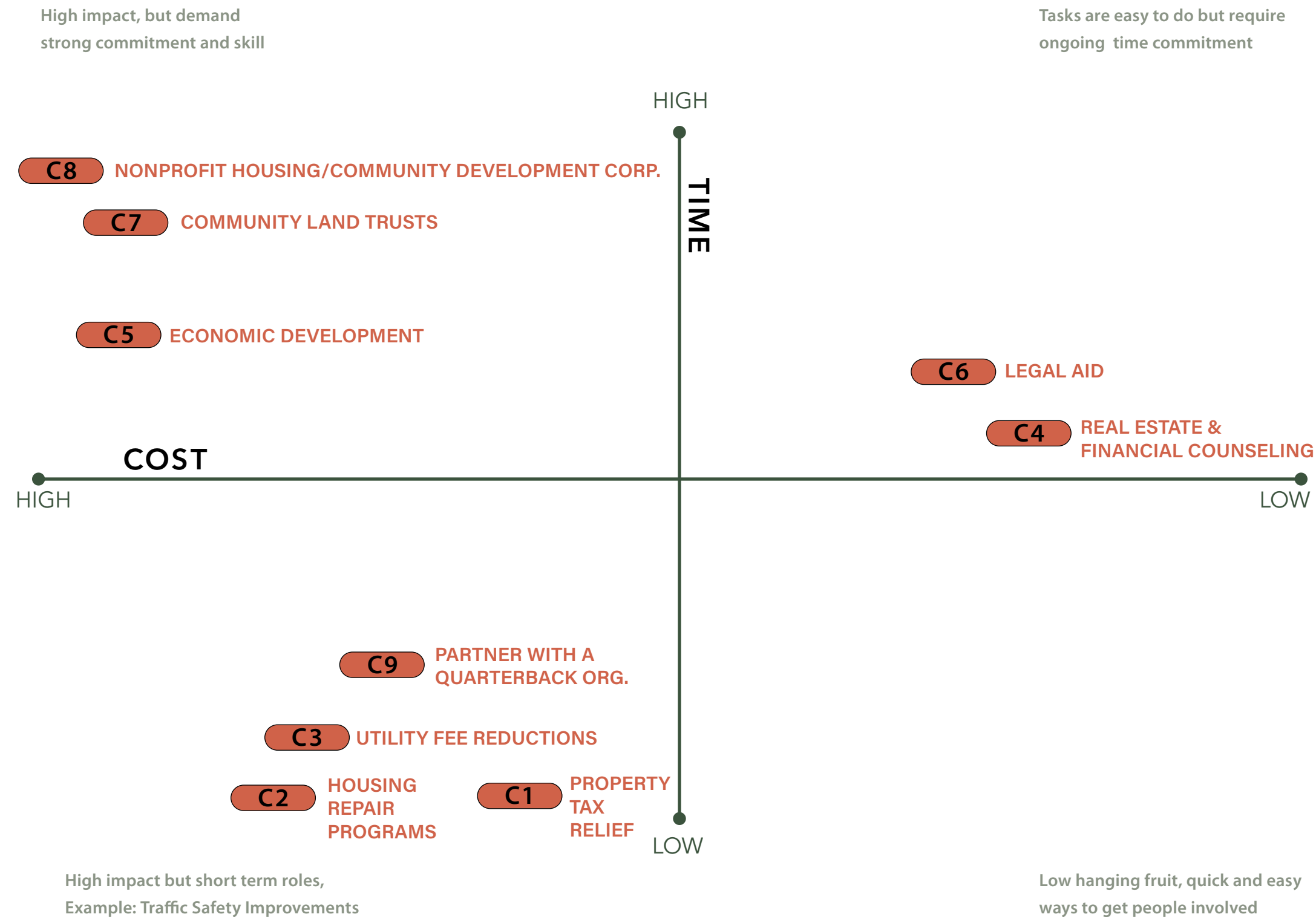


Strengthen Community Assets

Preserving and strengthening Pottstown’s community is a daily effort that can use nonprofit staff, programmatic resources and collaboration with regional partners. A mission-driven quarterback organization can bring expert staff dedicated to efforts and programs that protect and serve Pottstown’s community.

Potential Actions:

- 1. Town + Community facilitate a demographic analysis of the Pottstown Community. Beyond an ethnographic study, quality of life factors such as education, medical and food nutrition needs, and economic data of the population would be vital to understand community needs when submitting for grants and programs. A quarterback organization can utilize this information to target resources to serve resident needs.
- 2. Town + Community work to coordinate cross-jurisdictionally to build corridor wide partnerships securing a hub of resources.
- 3. Town + Community partner with historic peer communities to evaluate outcomes, trade lessons, and shape the role of the Quarterback organization to mobilize for Pottstown’s special needs and conditions.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

CONCLUSION

Through a mixture of costs and/or time commitment, the tools in Toolkit C will require a bit more dedication and resources, relatively speaking, than those represented in the other Toolkits. It is best to ask the question: “What are we in Pottstown already good at?”, and build from that base.

An important approach to each Tool is to partner with regional partners and providers to achieve elements with available resources, staff and expertise. Some simply require advocacy (Utility Fee Reductions and Property Tax Relief), but the rest may require effective partnerships and ample doses social entrepreneurship, fundraising and volunteer labor.

These are great tools to mobilize around and build strong bases for community organizing, thus empowering the community. Communities in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region, including Pottstown, prove that these elements can be planned and implemented successfully.

3.4 TOOLKIT D

PUBLIC & NONPROFIT INVESTMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Public investments—such as walkable streets and safer crossings—were a recurring concern throughout the community engagement workshops for the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan. Traffic calming requests and the active pursuit of federal grant funding for infrastructure improvements have been ongoing throughout the Pottstown Community Preservation Planning efforts. In Pottstown, ensuring that investments such as these address areas of historic disinvestment is important to correcting inequities that still disadvantage the community.

For public sector investments, jurisdictional partners often invest in neighborhoods through public processes, creating Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs), park master planning and design, and publicly owned facility upgrades. At the neighborhood level, priorities are shaped through community input. While often focused on public safety and transportation, these investments can also be coordinated to support preservation opportunities.

Community investments may also extend beyond municipal projects to include housing and other community development initiatives. Partnerships—whether through public-private collaborations or nonprofit organizations—are key to enhancing outcomes. Central to preservation efforts are funds and programs addressing housing stability, historic preservation, small business retention, and cultural representation through a mixture of public and philanthropic sources.

While there are several publicly-owned properties in Pottstown, Toolkit D does not address improvements to those owned by Mecklenburg County or others (e.g., such as those to be implemented on the 31-acre property owned by Mecklenburg County). The Pottstown Community must engage separately with Mecklenburg County and other partners to coordinate additional investments through their established processes.



Image from charlotteobserver.com



Image from charlotteobserver.com

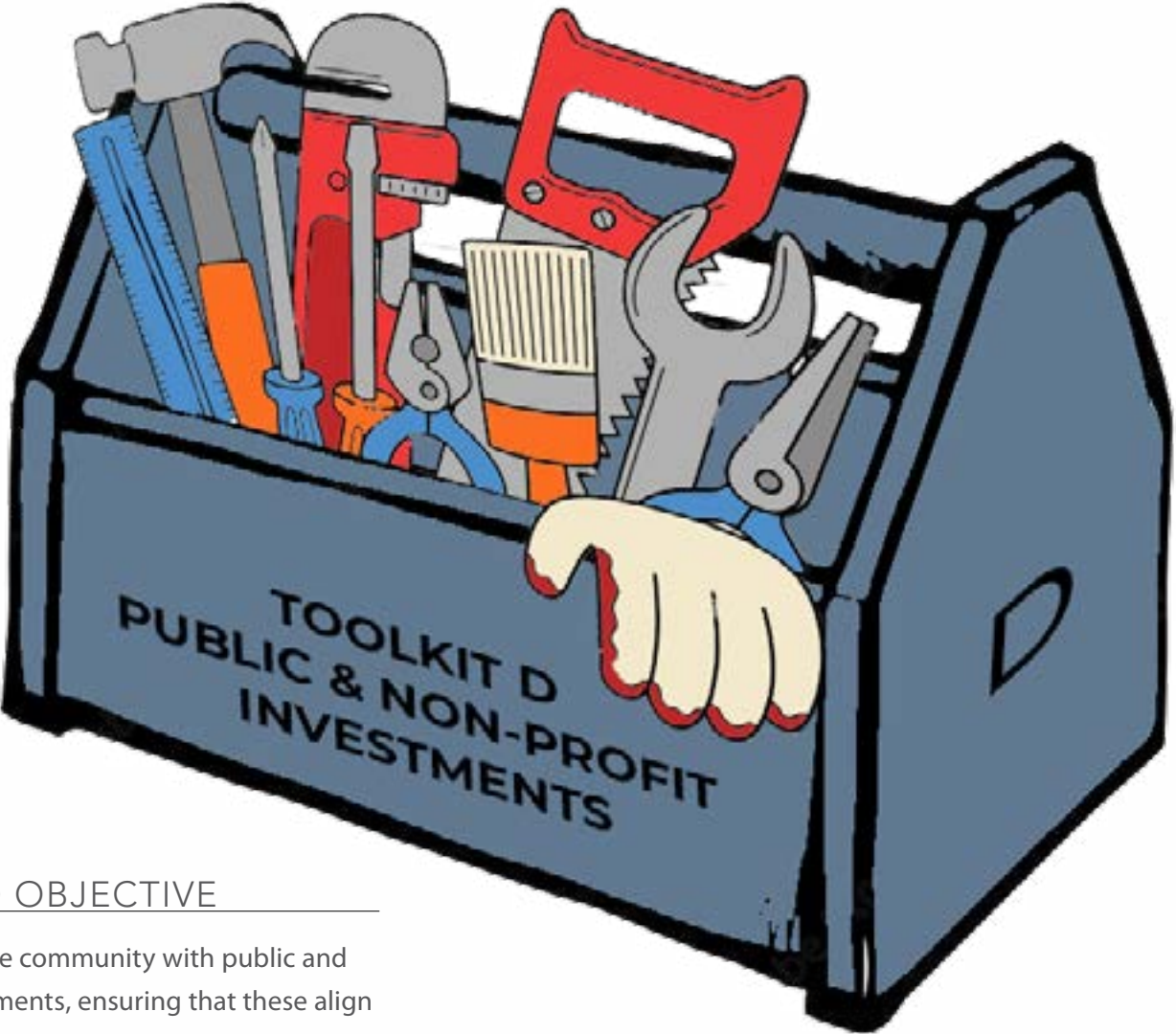


Image from WBTV.com

5 POINTS PLAZA

An example of public improvements for community empowerment and self-representation is the investments for 5 Points Plaza in Charlotte’s Historic West End, which is a City of Charlotte public space project that supports the reactivation of historic shop spaces for minority-owned businesses. LISC Charlotte and the Knight Foundation are currently supporting the Historic West End Partners and the Five Points Community Collaborative to program the Plaza and develop a food co-op taking advantage of the enhanced public space.

TOOLKIT D ELEMENTS



TOOLKIT D OBJECTIVE

To strengthen the community with public and nonprofit investments, ensuring that these align with community priorities and deliver visible, lasting benefits for Pottstown families.

These tools can improve the built environment while also strengthening neighborhood vitality and opportunity with a mixture of public and nonprofit sources. Besides public improvements, such investments are often executed through partnerships, aligning with private, nonprofit, and regional resources of funding for housing, historic research, historic designations of cemeteries, cultural programming and so forth.

STRATEGIES

- D1 | INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES
Modern, reliable infrastructure lays the foundation for safe and thriving communities. *Improves streets, sidewalks, stormwater, and utilities to protect homes and support daily life.*
- D2 | COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND SIGNAGE
Visible neighborhood identity fosters pride and celebrates local history. Public investment in signage and community identity landmarks strengthens community pride and visibility. *These investments make neighborhoods more recognizable and reinforce their cultural and historic importance.*
- D3 | HISTORIC MEMORIALIZATION ALONG TRAILS
The Seam Trail can be a community connectivity asset that brings representational benefits to Pottstown. Strategic upgrades can introduce wayfinding signage, community identity and interpretive elements such as public art and monuments along the trail to announce and educate trail users to the history, and cultural assets within Pottstown. *Expands walkability while celebrating Pottstown's legacy.*
- D4 | COMMUNITY CEMETERIES
Establish a community work group to find sources of funding or support to secure, document, improve and preserve the cemeteries. *Protection of cemeteries safeguards cultural memory and ensures future generations can continue to link their heritage to Pottstown.*
- D5 | TORRENCE-LYTLER COMMUNITY CENTER OUTDOOR ENHANCEMENTS
Based on community workshop input, the Torrence-Lytle Community Center (Dellwood Center) needs to improve off-street parking and a workable solution for the drive entry area. Residents also recommended improving the grounds of the Torrence-Lytle Community Center to support outdoor community activities and integration with future trails potentially in the 31-acre County property. *Enhances the use of the site for community gathering and storytelling.*
- D6 | FUNDING FOR AFFORDABLE & MIXED-INCOME HOUSING DEVELOPMENT
Investment in housing keeps families rooted in Pottstown. Funding support—through gap financing, land donations/99-year ground leases, or public and nonprofit grants—can help deliver affordable and mixed-income housing. This ensures new development serves existing residents and prevents displacement. *Ensures growth includes affordable, stable options for long-term residents.*
- D7 | ARTS & CULTURE INVESTMENTS
Plug in the SculptOUR program or other public and nonprofit sources of funding for arts programs, cultural programs, and history education. Investments can include restoring historic buildings for cultural use and performances, commissioning public art, and creating programs for local artists, local cuisines, cultural activities, music and learning. Seek nonprofit sources of funding to preserve cultural landmarks and historically significant homes tied to African American and marginalized histories. *Celebrates history, fosters pride, promotes economic vitality through cultural investment, and elevates local talent.*

D1 | INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Strategic investment in modern, reliable infrastructure ensures that Pottstown remains livable, accessible, and healthy, laying the foundation for safe and thriving communities. By planning and prioritizing new improvements with the Community, the Town can address flooding issues, improve walkability, calm traffic speeds, and modernize utility systems in ways that benefit residents and improve the community’s quality of life. *Improves streets, sidewalks, stormwater, and utilities to protect homes and support daily life.*

Community Efforts: The Community can assist the Town to identify priority streets and trouble spots, share experiences or first-hand knowledge of flooding, poor drainage or unsafe conditions, and assist the Town to equitably plan and stage infrastructure upgrades

Town Efforts: The Town of Huntersville will secure funding, plan phased improvements, and design upgrades that respond to resident priorities. The current and future Town-involved projects are listed on the following pages.

Typical Planning and Improvements Cycle (Repeat Periodically):

1. Town + Community jointly identify needs and problem areas.
2. Town + Community co-create a list of priority projects.
3. Town identifies funding and implements upgrades with ongoing communication.
4. Town updates Community on the status of infrastructure projects (a great opportunity for this would be at the Annual Pottstown Preservation Awards and Update – see Tool A4).

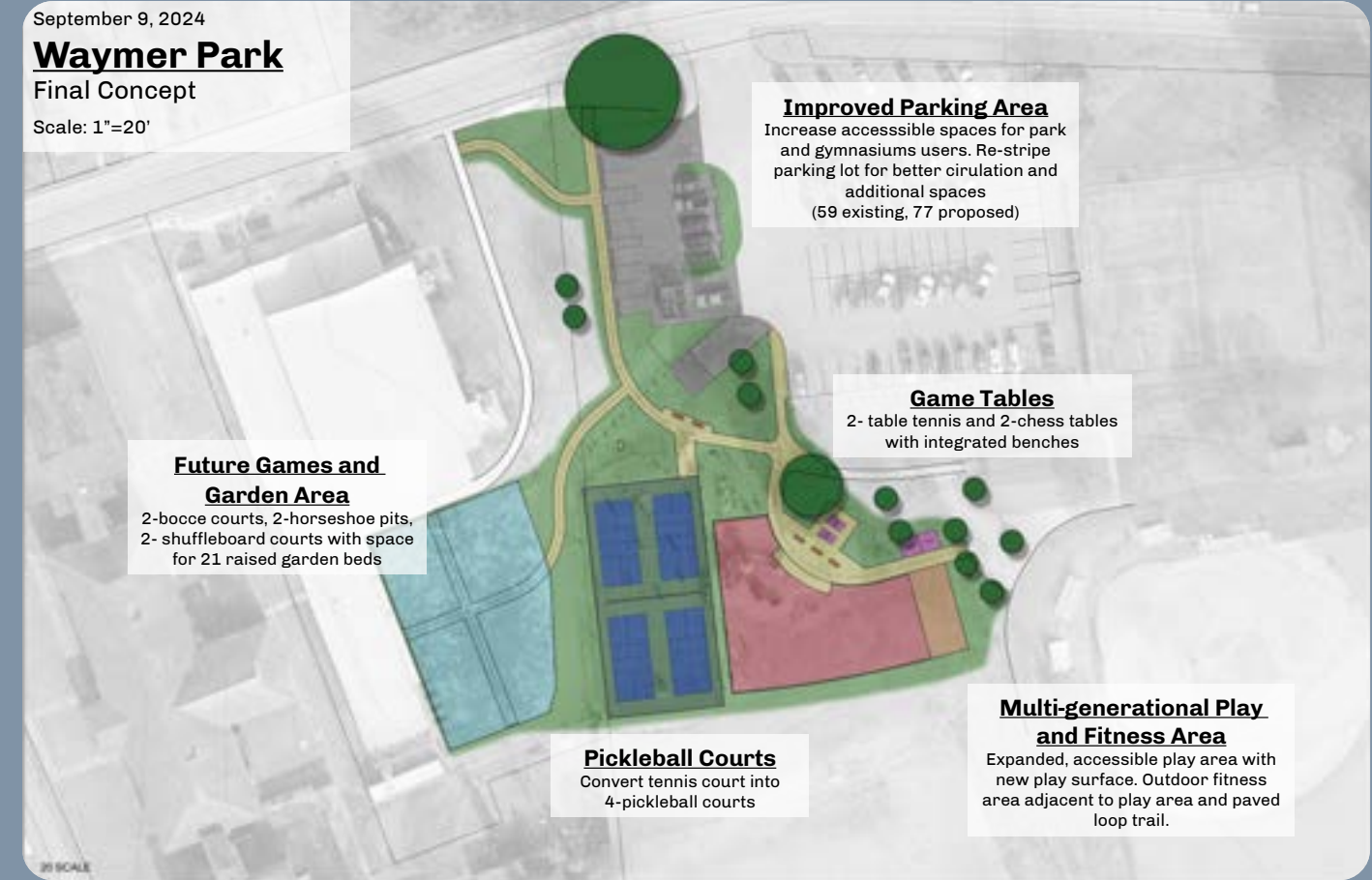


The constructed wetlands along the Little Sugar Creek greenway are an example of a stormwater and green infrastructure project, which restored an active wildlife corridor between Uptown and Midtown Charlotte.

Image from wildlandseng.com

Current Town-Involved Projects

- The Town of Huntersville is currently working on several infrastructure improvements in the Pottstown Community including:
- Waymer Park is receiving new improvements, as depicted in the image below.
 - A traffic calming study on Dellwood Drive resulted in two speed humps being installed in Summer 2025 and a post-study evaluation of speeds along the street will begin soon.
 - A Downtown Stormwater study is underway, which includes the Pottstown Community, that will inventory existing facilities and needs and look to identify regional stormwater solutions.
 - Sidewalks and multi-use path improvements along Dellwood Drive, Holbrooks Road, and Central Avenue are included in a Town-sponsored application to the Federal Better... Grant Program. The Town plans to reapply to this funding program again when available, or identify other funding opportunities.
 - The Town is studying how to improve crossing NC 115 at Holbrooks and how to connect sidewalks along Holbrooks, from NC 115 across the railroad tracks to the existing sidewalks east of Central Avenue. This project requires coordination with and approval from NCDOT, CATS, and Norfolk Southern Railroad
 - The Town is studying how to improve the intersection of Central Avenue and Holbrooks Road to improve driver compliance with stop signs and increase pedestrian safety. This study and its recommendations will be coordinated with the traffic calming study along Central Avenue.



- The Town’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) includes funding to connect Church Street from Dellwood Drive to Holbrooks Road. This project and its funding have been included in the BUILD Grant applications as local match funding.
- A traffic calming study is underway on Central Avenue, and near-term and long-term options are being evaluated at the time of the writing of this report. One near-term solution being considered is “Advisory Shoulders” between Dellwood Drive and Holbrooks Road (see the Advisory Shoulder description on pages 94-95 for details).
- Truck traffic and speeds along Holbrooks Rd. is a concern for residents. The removal of truck traffic from Holbrooks Road is part of an approved rezoning with Greenway Waste and is to occur on or before 2034. The provision of a 10’ multi-use path along Holbrooks Rd. to connect Pottstown/Waymer Park to Waymer Aero Park (across from Greenway Waste Solutions) is also being considered to address the safety of pedestrians along Holbrooks Road. Greenway Waste is proposing to build a portion of 10-foot sidepath along their frontage; Town Staff is recommending connecting path to Waymer Park. The BUILD Grant, mentioned above is also a potential funding source for this multi-use path.

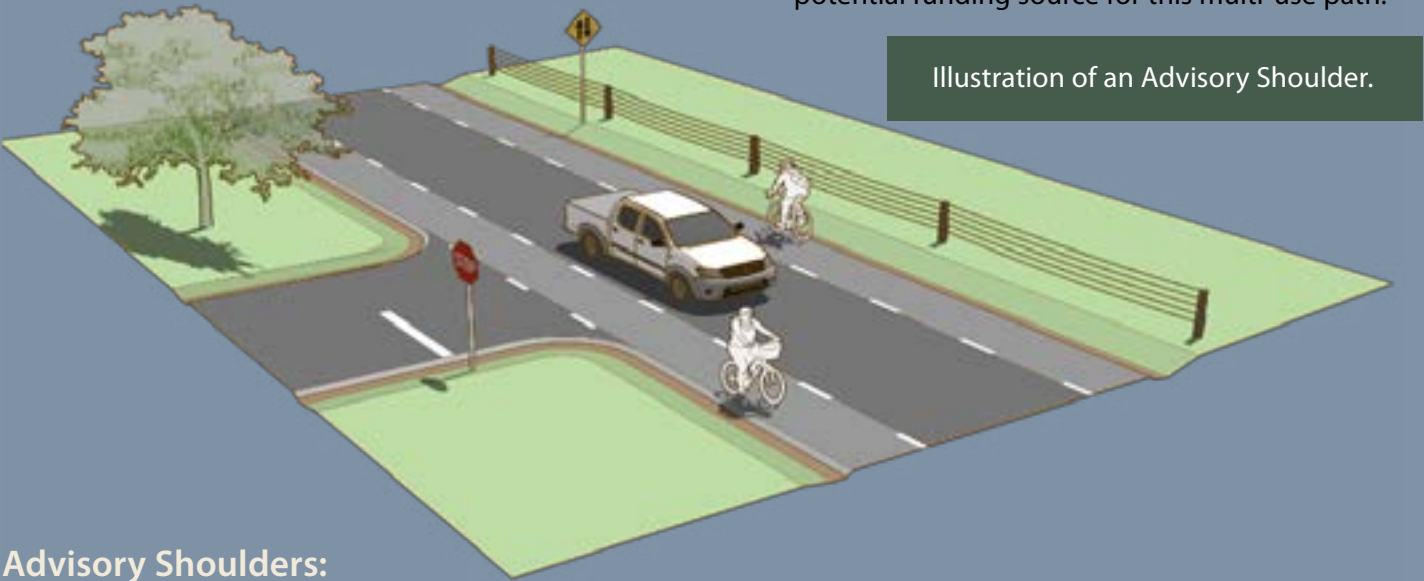


Illustration of an Advisory Shoulder.

Advisory Shoulders:

Advisory Shoulders create usable shoulders for bicyclists and pedestrians on a roadway that is otherwise too narrow to accommodate one. The shoulder is delineated by pavement marking and optional pavement color. When motor vehicles traveling in opposite directions meet, motorists may need to enter the advisory shoulder to create sufficient space to pass (See Figure 2, on page 93). Motorists may only enter the shoulder when no bicyclists or pedestrians are present and must overtake these users with caution due to potential oncoming traffic. Roads with advisory shoulders accommodate low to moderate volumes of two-way motor vehicle traffic and provide a prioritized space for bicyclists and pedestrians with little or no widening of the paved roadway surface. Experimental approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is required to use this traffic control treatment. For more information on Advisory Shoulders, see the FHWA Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide, available here: <https://www.transportation.gov/grants/dot-navigator/small-town-and-rural-multimodal-networks>

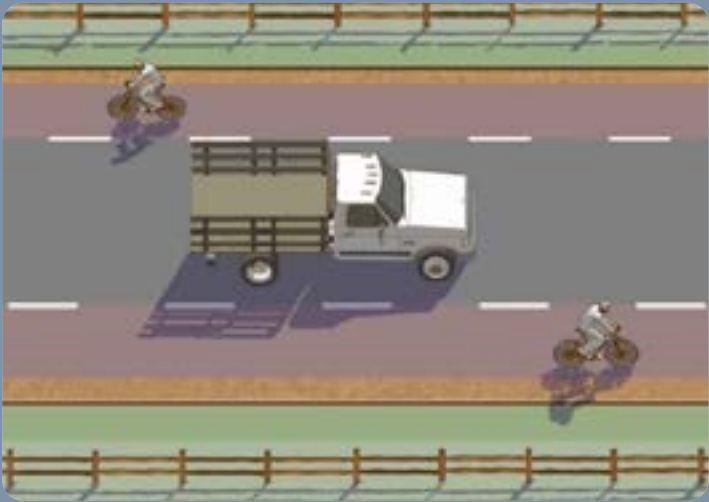


FIGURE 1
Motorist Travel in the center two- way travel lane. When passing a bicyclist, no lane change is necessary.

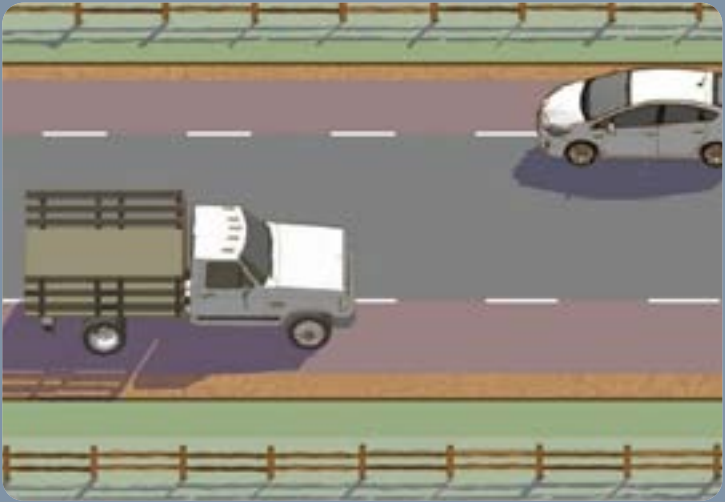


FIGURE 2
When two motor vehicles meet, motorist may need to encroach into the advisory shoulder space.

Future Town-Involved Projects:

There are also opportunities for future infrastructure improvements in the Pottstown area that have been identified by the community as part of the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan. These include:

- The Town has received a request from the Pottstown community to study whether trucks are travelling on Church Street, south of Holbrooks Road, to Commerce Station (Southwire industries & Reynolds Consumer Products), rather than using the Verhoeff Drive overpass. Concerns about truck speeds and damage to mailboxes is a concern.
- The Town has received a request from residents to lower the speed limit on Holbrooks Rd. The Town is coordinating with NCDOT to evaluate this.
- The extension of Verhoeff Drive, east of NC 115 to Prosperity Church Road, and the extension of Ferrelltown Parkway, from Huntersville-Concord Road to Eastfield Road, are part of the regional long-range transportation plan known as the Comprehensive Transportation Plan, which is managed by the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization (CRTPO). These are major infrastructure improvements in the vicinity that can potentially impact mobility and access in the area.

Image from www.transportation.gov

D2 | COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND SIGNAGE

TIME   

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Visible community identity fosters pride and celebrates local history. Investment in signage and neighborhood identity landmarks strengthens community pride and visibility. Common elements include neighborhood sign toppers, wayfinding systems, gateway markers, and historic markers that honor the past while guiding residents and visitors. *These investments make neighborhoods more recognizable and reinforce their cultural and historic importance.*

Celebrate African American Heritage

Public markers and visible recognition help preserve the stories and impact of those who shaped our communities and inspire the next generation, reminding us of the foundation Pottstown stands on.

Community Efforts: The Community helps design signage, identify stories, sites, and themes to highlight, and periodically revisits the neighborhood identity installations to clean and refresh installed features.

Town Efforts: Town provides design support and coordination with historic preservation bodies to ensure signage integrates with broader streetscape efforts.

Continuing the momentum:

1. Community documents neighborhood stories and assets to memorialize with signage installations, collaborating with artists and historians.
2. Town + Community coordinate identity and sign toppers with Town standards, collaborating with artists and historians.
3. Town + Community coordinate to install and maintain elements.

D3 | HISTORIC MEMORIALIZATION ALONG TRAILS

TIME   

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: The future trails in the Pottstown area (such as the “Seam Trail” along Church Street) can become community connectivity assets that bring representational benefits to Pottstown. Strategic upgrades can introduce wayfinding signage, community identity and interpretive elements, such as public art and monuments along the trail to announce and educate trail users to the history and cultural assets within Pottstown. They will also connect residents to the regional trail system. *Expands walkability while celebrating Pottstown’s legacy.*

Community Efforts: Pottstown has an opportunity to think about how to memorialize its history along trails. Look to trails in the region for inspiration, like the Crestdale trail in Matthews and The Purposeful Walk at The Pearl in Brooklyn. Work with artists and local historians to produce materials for telling stories about Pottstown and collaborate with the Town on the design of elements imprinting and highlighting Pottstown’s legacy along the trails.

Town Efforts: The Town of Huntersville can work with the Community to coordinate the inclusion of an interpretive layer of art, history-telling and cultural heritage representation along trails. Also, utilize the Town’s SculpTOUR program to bring in the work of local artists.

KEY STEPS

- 1

Community documents community stories and assets to memorialize with signage installations, collaborating with artists and historians.
- 2

Town + Community coordinate signage design and features to meet Town ordinance standards.
- 3

Town + Community coordinate to install and maintain elements.

D4 | COMMUNITY CEMETERIES

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Establish a community work group to find sources of funding or support to secure, document, improve and preserve the cemeteries. *Cemetery improvements ensure cemeteries are respected, visible, and integrated into the community’s narrative of place and memory.*

Celebrate African American Heritage

Protection of cemeteries safeguards cultural memory and ensures future generations can continue to link their heritage to Pottstown.

Community Efforts: Partner with churches, historians and genealogists to research and document graves; volunteer for cleanup and restoration; organize remembrance events; and create a long-term management plan. Coordination may be needed with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) and State preservation agencies, such as contacting the NC Office of State Archaeology (OSA) to historically designate the cemetery sites.

Town Efforts: The Town can explore securing technical assistance to the Community for research and cemetery improvements. The Huntersville AME Zion Church and the United House of Prayer may need assistance securing their cemeteries within their

landholdings (based on GIS parcel data). By working with the AME Zion Church and their adjacent neighbors, the South Church Street Extension Project can help mobilize real estate solutions to secure the AME Zion cemetery within the Church’s property holdings. Surveying work for the project could be the first critical step needed to understand the needs. The Town can also coordinate with the County to study the need to provide or acquire right-of-way on HLC and County-owned land by the cemetery at the House of Prayer (next to Waymer Park and the Torrence-Lytle H.S.). This might be needed to both secure the cemetery as it exists for preservation as well as to serve as access to the homes just east of the House of Prayer cemetery.

- Recommended Actions to Secure Cemeteries:**
1. Community and churches create a work group to research, survey, document and, if appropriate, to historically designate cemetery sites with NC OSA.
 2. Churches develop cemetery preservation and improvement plans.
 3. If and where needed based on parcel boundary surveys, Town coordinates with and assists churches to rectify and align parcel boundaries to secure the cemeteries into their property holdings.
 4. Collaborating with the available cemetery preservation resources in N.C., Community and churches implement protection, restoration, and community education.

D5 | TORRENCE-LYTLLE COMMUNITY CENTER OUTDOOR ENHANCEMENTS

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Based on community input, the Torrence-Lytle Community Center (formerly known as the “Dellwood Center”) requires site improvements to support its role as a preserved Rosenwald School and active cultural hub. Priorities include addressing off-street parking and driveway access, while also enhancing the outdoor grounds to host community activities, cultural events, and potential trail connections to the County’s adjacent 31-acre property. *These enhancements strengthen the site’s role as a gathering place for storytelling, intergenerational programming, and cultural celebration.*

Community Efforts: Give the Town input on the Torrence-Lytle Community Center’s exterior site improvements and assist the Town to program and maintain community amenities.

Town Efforts: The Town will explore adding site improvements in collaboration with the community, ensuring upgrades align with the historic character of the school. The Town will also coordinate with Mecklenburg County to possibly integrate enhancements, which may include trails and natural amenities on the neighboring 31-acre parcel.

- Steps Ahead:**
1. Town + Community collaborate to plan outdoor improvements, ensuring accessibility and cultural relevance.
 2. Town + Partners pursue funding sources (grants, cultural preservation funds, park bond allocations) to design and implement enhancements.
 3. Town + Community jointly program and maintain new amenities to ensure active and sustainable use.

Strengthen Community Assets

By preserving the Rosenwald School with refreshed indoor and outdoor amenities, the Town and community can create a vibrant center for education, culture, and recreation. This ensures Pottstown retains its deep historic roots while offering resources and spaces for future generations.

Preserving Rosenwald Schools: Funding Sources

- 1 National Trust for Historic Preservation – African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund
- 2 National Park Service – African American Civil Rights Grants
- 3 Institute of Museum & Library Services – Museums for America
- 4 State Historic Preservation Office – Preservation Grants
- 5 Local/Regional Foundations (e.g., Z. Smith Reynolds & Foundation For The Carolinas in NC)



Billingsville School (Grier Heights, Charlotte, NC): The Crossroads Corporation, under the leadership of Don Gately, led the restoration for this Rosenwald School as a neighborhood hub. Funding partners included the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Wells Fargo Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, the Philip L. Van Everly Foundation and Snyder’s-Lance (the snack food company that donated a substantial amount toward the costs), and Myers Park Presbyterian Church.

D6 | FUNDING FOR AFFORDABLE & MIXED-INCOME HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

TIME ⌚ ⌚ ⌚

COST \$ \$ \$

Description: Investment in housing keeps families rooted in Pottstown. Throughout the planning process, community members suggested that some of the parcels outside of Pottstown, such as the former hospital site, were ideal to create opportunities for affordable housing that the community could support, particularly housing for seniors. Funding support from public and nonprofit/philanthropic sources—through gap financing, land donations/99-year ground leases, or public and nonprofit grants—could help deliver affordable and mixed-income housing. This ensures that new development serves existing residents and lessens the potential of community members being displaced. *Ensures growth includes affordable, stable options for long-term residents.*

Community Efforts: The Community partners with nonprofits to address housing needs, advocates for equitable allocations in new projects, and monitors project outcomes. See also the potential to work with Community Land Trusts (Tool C7) and nonprofit developers (Tool C8) as a method to create Affordable Housing.

Town Efforts: The Town of Huntersville dedicates funding and/or land acquisition for affordable housing. Town may explore establishing a housing trust fund and/or incentivize nonprofit and private developers to provide housing through a regulatory approach.

Actions to Consider Undertaking:

1. Community assesses existing and long-term housing need in Pottstown.
2. Town + Community identify funding sources or potential partnerships to develop affordable housing meeting local needs.
3. Town takes a lead in coordinating with affiliated agencies to explore funding or financing mechanisms to help sponsor projects.
4. Town, Agencies + Community launch partnerships to construct affordable/mixed income housing projects.



Foster Community Belonging

By enabling Pottstown residents to remain securely housed in and near Pottstown, the community can ensure that its members can participate integrally in the life and activities of Pottstown. This is especially true for its aging population, who sustain the living links of families to the Pottstown community.

D7 | ARTS & CULTURE INVESTMENTS

TIME



COST



Description: Investing in heritage and creativity strengthens Pottstown’s identity. Strategies here include plugging into the SculpTOUR program or other public and nonprofit sources of funding for arts programs, cultural programs, and history education, including research, training and capacity-building support to sustain cultural activities. Investments can include restoring historic buildings for cultural use and performances, commissioning public art, and creating programs for local artists, local cuisines, cultural activities, music and learning. The Community can also work with nonprofit sources of funding to preserve cultural landmarks and historically significant homes tied to African American and marginalized histories. *Celebrates history, fosters pride, promotes economic vitality through cultural investment, and elevates local talent.*

Community Efforts: The Community, through its local organizations and partners, leads cultural programming, identifies ways to steward and program historic assets, contributes talent and implements and resources cultural programs.

Town Efforts: The Town of Huntersville continues to provide funding, technical assistance, and staffing support through the Parks and Recreation department, and—where possible—streamlines programming and processes by forging partnerships with the Community and its cultural groups and institutions.

KEY STEPS

- 1

Town + Community document assets and identify priority programs to resource.
- 2

Town + Community implement arts and culture initiatives.

Potential Sources of Funding and Assistance for Research, Cultural Programs and Historic Preservation:

While sources of federal funding are no longer available or may be discontinued, the Town and Community can explore how to shore up cultural programming with funds and resources to research, designate, program and improve historic landmarks. Sources of funding in the past have included:

- 1

African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund (National Trust for Historic Preservation): Provides grants for capital improvements, site interpretation, and programming at historically significant African American sites, including Rosenwald Schools.
- 2

North Carolina African American Heritage Commission – Technical Assistance: Can assist local affiliates with expertise to identify funds for education, research, arts and culture, community engagement and preservation projects.
- 3

NC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) – Historic Preservation Fund (HPF): Offers federal pass-through 60% matching grants for publicly owned preservation projects (like the Torrence-Lytle Community Center); eligible uses include site rehabilitation, exterior improvements, and interpretive projects.
- 4

NC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) – Survey & Planning Grants: Funds local governments and nonprofits to conduct historic surveys, which may include cemeteries, as a step toward National Register designation.
- 5

Certified Local Government (CLG) Program (also via SHPO): Towns with CLG status can access special funding for preservation planning, design, and site improvements tied to historic resources.
- 6

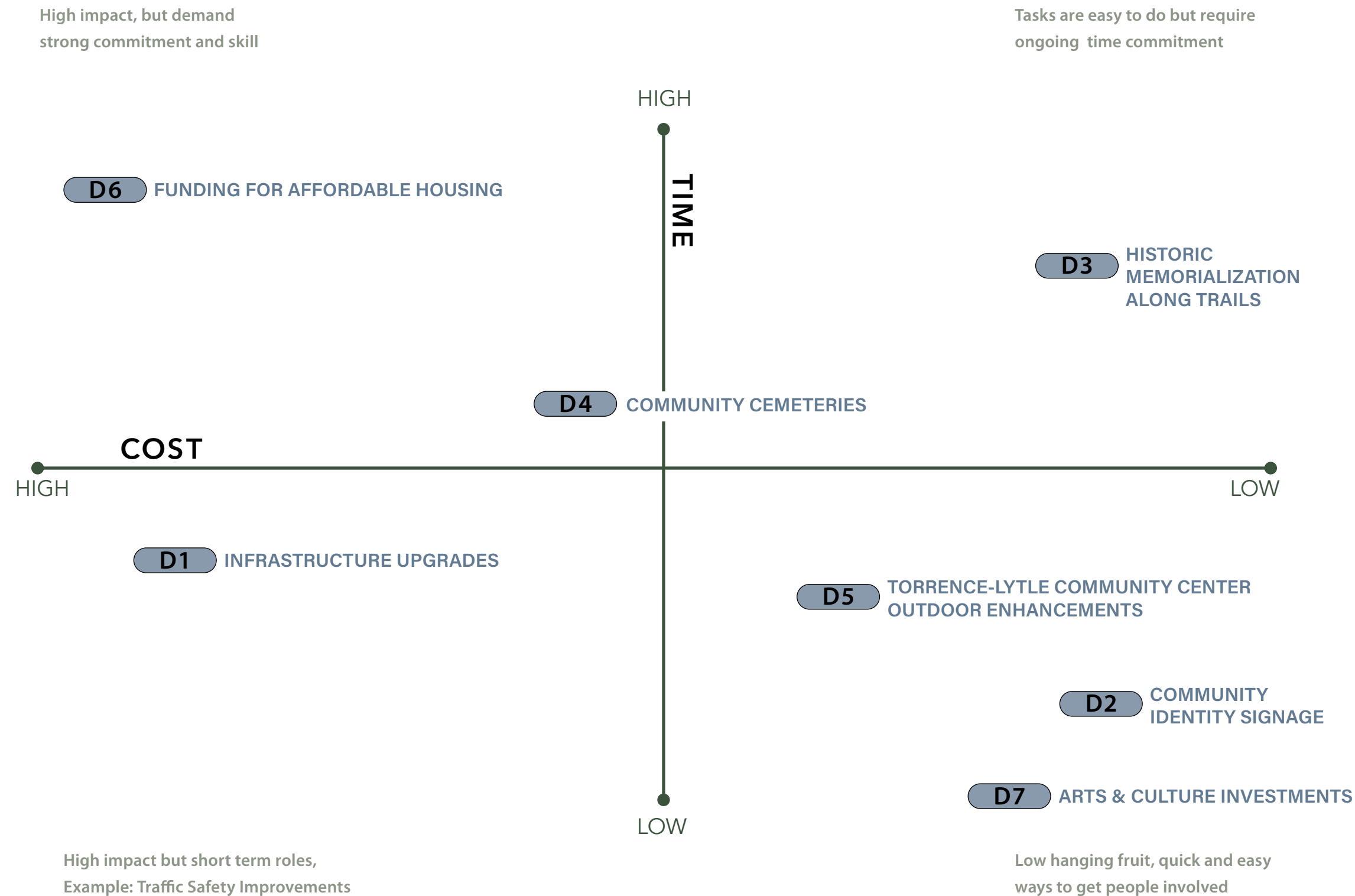
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation (NC): Grants focused on community development, cultural heritage, and strengthening community assets.
- 7

National Park Service – African American Civil Rights: Grants Funds projects that document, interpret, and preserve African American history, which can include Rosenwald School rehabilitation and cultural programming.
- 8

NC Office of State Archaeology – Cemetery Survey Program: Provides technical guidance and occasionally small grants or partnerships for mapping and documenting historic cemeteries.
- 9

UNC Chapel Hill’s Southern Historical Collection & Digital Heritage Center: May partner at times with communities through its initiatives to preserve records and oral histories.
- 10

Private, Faith-Based & Philanthropic Partners:
 - Foundation For the Carolinas (Charlotte-area focus): Often funds public space and cultural heritage projects that strengthen community identity.
 - Local Corporate Foundations (Duke Energy, Lowes, Bank of America, Truist): Regularly support community and cultural initiatives with built environment components.
 - Faith-Based or Denominational Foundations: Some denominations support preservation of affiliated cemeteries.



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

CONCLUSION

Nonprofit investment in the community, through a mixture of philanthropic, institutional and private sources, will always require a strong commitment to search for funding programs, including writing grant applications, and cultivating partners strategically. Community-Based Organizations can often get good at these tasks. The funding for things like affordable housing and cultural programming can come in waves, but organizing experience tells us that one win can quickly transform into another, granting a great boost to morale and community mobilization.

On the public sector side, the Seam Trail design work may take a while to manifest, but improvements and signage for community identity can provide good short-term project opportunities mobilized with the Town, laying the foundation to celebrate Pottstown by creating Pottstown as a history-telling destination on the regional trail system. The Town can also implement exterior improvements to the Torrence-Lytle Community Center (Dellwood Center) and continue to upgrade the infrastructure of the community. For the latter, the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan recommends incorporating all of the ETJ areas of Pottstown into the Town.

4.0 CONCLUSION



4.1 | IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The success of the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan depends not only on strong ideas but also on a clear, achievable path forward. This implementation timeline lays out a phased approach to ensure progress is both strategic and sustainable. It begins with “low-hanging fruit” in the first two years—early wins that build trust, address immediate needs, and lay the foundation for future work.

In years three through five, the focus shifts toward building momentum through stronger partnerships, new regulatory tools, and targeted investments that secure cultural and housing stability. Finally, in years six through ten, the plan emphasizes long-term strategies, institutional capacity, and sustainable funding mechanisms to protect Pottstown’s heritage and ensure lasting community impact.



LOW-HANGING FRUIT (YEARS 1–2, BY 2027)

The first two years focus on building momentum. A coalition of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) will spearhead preservation initiatives and strategic planning, collect oral histories, implement research projects, and engage with developers to strengthen dialogue. The Town of Huntersville may adopt preservation-based zoning regulations and incentives and explore enhanced review measures with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. Grassroots home repair efforts will expand through new and existing partnerships. Traffic calming measures will near completion, and the coalition will convene to discuss community identity signs/markers. Feasibility work for a Community Land Trust (CLT) will begin, alongside initiatives to document cemeteries, landmark schools, and historic homes. Workshops will also shape outdoor enhancements at the Torrence-Lytle Community Center (also known as the Dellwood Center).

Quick wins that could build credibility, address urgent needs, and establish the foundation for later work:

- **Process & Representation: Implement Toolkit A**
 - The coalition or CBOs (Pottstown Heritage Group, Mababu Live, partners) create a 5–10 year strategic plan and/or nonprofit business plan.
 - Begin structured oral history collection and mapping of cultural assets.
 - Institutionalize reporting and plan update processes (e.g., a “State of Pottstown” report at a community meeting).
- **Regulatory Tools: Exploration & Public Process**
 - Adopt Housing Stability regulations or incentives in the Zoning Ordinance (in an overlay or in the NR district) to reward rehab, adaptive reuse, and affordability.
 - Explore the feasibility of preservation-based zoning district enhancements or an overlay to strengthen neighborhood protections.
 - Undertake a public process to shape new regulations and adopt the amendments.
- **Housing Stability: Home Repair & Grassroots Housing Support**
 - Expand grassroots home repair efforts by partnering with organizations like Habitat for Humanity, Lake Norman CDC (and others) or leveraging weatherization programs in Mecklenburg County.
 - Secure donated materials and storage space.
 - Complete exploratory work to found a Pottstown CLT (Community Land Trust).
- **Public & Nonprofit Investments: Secure Preservation Partnerships**
 - Secure and improve, survey and research the historic cemeteries.
 - Add signage and tour/education program for Torrence-Lytle Community Center, Torrence-Lytle High School and other cultural anchors.
 - Work with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission and NC State Historic Preservation Office to initiate nominations for landmark designation of historic homes and cemeteries.
 - Host community design workshops for Dellwood/Torrence-Lytle Community Center outdoor enhancements.

Evaluation Checkpoint: At the end of Year 2, assess early successes (e.g., # of homes repaired, # of historic sites documented, \$ leveraged for repairs) and recalibrate goals.

SECURING MOMENTUM (YEARS 3–5, BY 2030)

This stage formalizes new tools and partnerships. Housing initiatives and financial coaching programs would launch, while residents, CBOs and churches gain training and support to use state and philanthropic resources for preservation. The first housing efforts would get started, providing affordable ownership opportunities for residents. Torrence-Lytle Community Center and other historic sites would undergo improvements and secure cultural programming, with new community identity and signage added, including an interpretive layer celebrating Pottstown along the Seam Trail.

The following items could be targetted for implementation within 5 years:

- **Process & Representation: Refine Toolkit**
 - Meet annually and celebrate victories.
 - Based on lessons learned from first meetings with developers, create an evaluation framework for projects, sharpen community processes and working groups, and govern through effective and unified advocacy.
- **Regulatory Tools: Complete Enhanced Controls and Incentives**
 - E.g., establish new tree canopy/environmental protections, enhanced demolition review period, etc.
- **Housing Stability: Secure Funding and Capacity for Strategies**
 - Create a Historic Home Repair Program supported by nonprofit + philanthropic partners.
 - Develop pipeline for residents to access state/federal preservation tax credits (SHPO training, technical support).
 - Using consultation through the Grounded Solutions Network, complete a business plan for a Pottstown CLT (Community Land Trust) based on a ground lease model. Ideally, by year five, also acquire the first properties for the CLT (Community Land Trust) and establish ground leases with the first pool of homeowners.
 - Through local Quarterback Orgs, link CLT or rehabbed properties to affordable housing programs with financial education and wraparound services.
- **Public & Nonprofit Investments: Secure Community Assets**
 - Complete first phase of Torrence-Lytle Community Center site improvements (namely: parking and driveway improvements).
 - Secure interpretive signage, historical markers and cultural programming, including art and cultural enhancements along the trail system (e.g., Seam Trail along the tracks).
 - Secure designation and rehabilitation/reuse or maintenance plans for historic homes, landmark building(s), and cemeteries.

Evaluation Checkpoint: By Year 5, prepare a Midpoint Report showing preserved/restored properties, homes repaired, ordinances amended, and funds disbursed. Use report to strengthen political support and attract grant funding.

STEADY BUILDUP FOR LASTING SYSTEMS (YEARS 6–10, BY 2035)

The final phase secures institutional capacity, such as a fully operational CLT or Community Development Corporation. Major Pottstown anchors, including historic schools and cemeteries, will be rehabilitated and protected. An annual “Preservation Awards and Update” meeting will sustain accountability and community voice.

Long-term strategies requiring sustained investment and institutional support:

- **Process & Representation: Secure the Future of Community Stewardship Systems**
 - Establish a Pottstown CLT or an equivalent nonprofit holding entity for affordability and preservation.
 - If pursuing, achieve SHPO Certified Local Government (CLG) status for Huntersville, opening access to direct federal pass-through grants.
- **Housing Stability: Continue to Secure Affordable Home-ownership for Pottstown Community Members**
 - Expand homeownership opportunities in partnership with CLT/nonprofits + banks/CDFIs + philanthropy.
- **Public & Nonprofit Investments: Secure the Future for Community Anchors**
 - Full rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic schools as cultural/educational centers.
 - Secure long-term conservation plans and designations for historic cemeteries.

Evaluation & Renewal: Conduct a Decade Review (2035) with Town + CBOs/coalition to assess milestones, reset goals, and identify new opportunities.

4.2 | ACTION STEPS BY TOOLKIT

TOOLKIT A | PROCESS & REPRESENTATION

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
A1 – Community Coalition	1	Convene community-wide meeting	CBOs, community leaders	\$	🕒
	2	Recruit members (CBOs, faith groups, residents)	Coalition organizing team	\$	🕒
	3	Hold first official meeting & set priorities	Coalition	\$	🕒
	4	Establish name, governance, admin workgroup	Coalition	\$	🕒
	5	Capacity building: grants, governance, law training	Coalition + United Way, County, nonprofits	\$\$	🕒
A2 – Community & Developer Discussions	1	Create a developer-community dialogue process	Coalition	\$	🕒
	2	Develop project dialogue tools + meeting processes	Coalition	\$	🕒🕒
	3	Hold voluntary developer meetings	Developers + Coalition	\$	🕒

TOOLKIT A | PROCESS & REPRESENTATION

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
A3 – Community Resource Webpage	1	Build community info webpage	Coalition + Town IT input	\$	🕒
	2	Maintain project updates & engagement	Coalition	\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
A4 – Annual Awards & Update	1	Plan annual preservation awards	Coalition	\$	🕒🕒🕒
	2	Present updates with Town/Agency partners	Coalition + Town/Agency staff	\$	🕒
	3	Recognize success & set new goals	Coalition	\$	🕒
A5 – Advisory Boards	1	Residents enroll in Huntersville 101	Community members	\$	🕒
	2	Track advisory board vacancies & encourage Pottstown reps to join	Coalition	\$	🕒
	3	Town appoints reps & provides training	Town Board	\$	🕒
	4	Advisory members report back on Pottstown matters	Community reps	\$	🕒

4.2 | ACTION STEPS BY TOOLKIT (CONT.)

TOOLKIT B | REGULATORY TOOLS

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
B1 – Preservation Zoning Overlay / Enhancements	1	Hold public workshops	Town Planning	\$\$	🕒
	2	Draft Zoning Ordinance Amendment	Town + Coalition	\$\$	🕒
	3	Adopt overlay / ordinance changes	Town Board	\$	🕒
B2 – Green Development Policies and Standards	1	Research & analysis of growing environmental risks (Huntersville-wide)	Town Staff	\$\$	🕒
	2	Draft local policy & standard updates	Town Staff	\$\$	🕒🕒
	3	Public hearing & adoption	Town Board	\$	🕒

TOOLKIT B | REGULATORY TOOLS

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
B3 – Protection & Conservation of Historic & Cultural Assets	1	Community, with Charlotte-Meck. Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) and NC State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), researches historic homes and cemeteries for historic designation	Coalition + HLC + SHPO	\$\$	🕒
	2	Coordinate historic designations & any enhanced protections with HLC	Town + HLC + SHPO	\$\$	🕒🕒
	3	Adopt any enhanced protections (for any new regulations beyond what is already in place today) into policy, procedures and/or Ordinance (see Tool B1)	Town Board	\$	🕒

4.2 | ACTION STEPS BY TOOLKIT (CONT.)

TOOLKIT C | HOUSING STABILITY

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
C1 – Property Tax Relief	1	Advertise County’s tax relief program (HOMES)	Coalition/CBOs	\$	🕒
	2	Counsel household in applying for HOMES	CBOs + nonprofits	\$\$	🕒
C2 – Home Repair & Weatherization Programs	1	Expand grassroots repair (Habitat, CDC partners)	CBOs + Agency/nonprofit partners	\$\$\$	🕒
	2	Secure donated materials & storage	CBOs + nonprofits	\$\$	🕒
	3	Deploy weatherization workshops & programs	CBOs + Agency/nonprofit partners	\$\$	🕒🕒
C3 – Utility Service Fee Reductions	1	Survey residents to understand the needs to keep up with utility bills	CBOs	\$	🕒
	2	Negotiate and secure discounts with providers	CBOs or Coalition	\$	🕒🕒
	3	Publicize discounts	CBOs	\$	🕒

TOOLKIT C | HOUSING STABILITY

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
C4 – Real Estate & Financial Counseling Services	1	Survey residents for housing and legal needs	CBOs	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
	2	Publicize and provide counseling services	CBOs + nonprofits	\$	🕒
C5 – Targeted Economic Empowerment & Ownership Support	1	Community employment needs assessment	CBOs + nonprofits	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
	2	Partner with work boards, etc.	CBOs + Town support	\$	🕒
	3	Launch soft second mortgage program	CBOs + philanthropy + banks/CDFIs	\$\$\$	🕒🕒
	4	Approve Zoning Ordinance changes to allow limited economic development uses for community in vacant nonresidential structures	Town + Coalition + Town Board	\$\$	🕒

4.2 | ACTION STEPS BY TOOLKIT (CONT.)

TOOLKIT C | HOUSING STABILITY

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
C6 – Legal Aid & Tenant-Owner Mediation	1	Establish partnerships with advisor nonprofits	CBOs	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
	2	Facilitate housing mediation services	CBOs + County + nonprofits	\$	🕒
	3	Publicize tenant rights & support resources	CBOs	\$\$	🕒🕒
C7 – Community Land Trust (CLT)	1	Feasibility & business plan	Coalition + Town support	\$\$	🕒🕒
	2	Acquire first properties	CLT + banks/CDFIs + philanthropy	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
	3	Establish ground leases w/ homeowners	CLT Board	\$\$	🕒🕒🕒

TOOLKIT C | HOUSING STABILITY

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
C8 – Nonprofit Housing & Community Development Corporation (CDC)	1	Launch a CDC	A CBO + banks/CDFIs	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
	2	Or: Partner with nonprofit housing developers	Coalition + Town + nonprofit developer	\$	🕒
	3	Secure land and housing	CBO + nonprofits	\$\$	🕒🕒
C9 – Partner with a Community Quarterback Organization	1	Perform a demographic study	CBOs + Town/Agency support	\$\$	🕒
	2	Coordinate programs with providers regionally	Coalition + regional Agencies	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
	3	And/or: Partner with Quarterback org.	Coalition + Ada Jenkins Center	\$	🕒

4.2 | ACTION STEPS BY TOOLKIT (CONT.)

TOOLKIT D | PUBLIC AND NONPROFIT INVESTMENT

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
D1 – Infrastructure Upgrades	1	Hold workshops to identify & discuss infrastructure needs	Town + Community	\$	🕒
	2	Prioritize & select projects	Town + Community	\$	🕒
	3	Implement projects & update community on status	Town	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
D2 – Community Identity & Signage	1	Document histories and assets	Community + historians	\$	🕒
	2	Integrate art & history interpretation	Town + artists + nonprofits	\$\$	🕒
	3	Coordinate installations with the Town; install & maintain	Town + Community	\$\$	🕒🕒🕒🕒
D3 – Historic Memorialization Along Trails	1	Document histories and assets to memorialize	Community + historians	\$	🕒
	2	Integrate art & history interpretation	Town + artists + nonprofits	\$\$	🕒
	3	Coordinate installations with the Town; install & maintain	Town + Community	\$\$	🕒🕒🕒🕒

TOOLKIT D | PUBLIC AND NONPROFIT INVESTMENT

Tool	Sub-item	What (Action Step)	By Whom / Lead	Cost (\$)	Time (🕒)
D4 – Community Cemeteries	1	Survey & document cemetery sites	churches + SHPO & historians	\$\$	🕒
	2	Secure designations & protections	HLC + SHPO	\$	🕒🕒
	3	Establish conservation plans and education programs	Community + churches	\$\$\$	🕒🕒
D5 – Torrence-Lytle Community Center Outdoor Enhancements	1	Design workshops for Outdoor Enhancements	Town + Community	\$\$	🕒
	2	Design & construct outdoor/site improvements, coordinating with the County	Town + County	\$\$	🕒🕒
	3	Program outdoor uses with the Community	Town + Community + programming partners	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
D6 – Funding for Affordable & Mixed-Income Housing Development	1	Assess housing needs for community members	Coalition + Nonprofit	\$	🕒
	2	Identify funding sources + coordinate with Agencies	Town + Agencies	\$	🕒
	3	Launch partnerships + development	Coalition + nonprofits	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒
D7 – Arts & Culture Investments	1	Identify priority cultural programming to implement	Community	\$	🕒
	2	Implement arts & culture initiatives	Community + programming partners	\$\$\$	🕒🕒🕒

4.3 | CLOSING REMARKS

Throughout this process, residents reminded us of what makes Pottstown special. It lives in the voices that fill its churches on Sunday mornings, in the laughter and meals shared across porches and kitchens, in the pride of schools and gathering places that shaped generations, and in the determination of neighbors who laid their own water lines to improve the entire community. These stories are not just history; they are the foundation for the future this plan seeks to protect.

The strategies outlined across Process & Representation, Regulatory Tools, Housing Stability, and Public & Nonprofit Investments are designed to carry that foundation forward. Together, they provide a framework for ensuring that as Huntersville grows and changes, Pottstown remains whole—a place where families can stay, culture is honored, and history continues to shape the future. The goal is not simply to manage growth, but to make sure it strengthens rather than displaces the community.

The main priority shall be to formalize the Pottstown coalition. This may involve joining forces with existing CBOs or partnering with other agencies to strengthen the group.

A unified voice, representative of all of Pottstown, will be key to carrying this Preservation Plan forward. The coalition will review the tools in this plan, determine priorities, and engage neighbors while working closely with the Town and other agencies to build understanding and trust.

Achieving these priorities will take persistence, shared responsibility, and partnership between residents, Town leadership, and local allies. Pottstown can also draw on successful local programs, resources, and leaders for guidance and support as highlighted in Toolkit A. By acting with unity and purpose, the people of Pottstown can guide change without erasing what makes the neighborhood home. In doing so, preservation becomes more than protecting buildings—it becomes a commitment to protecting people, traditions, and the bonds that make Pottstown’s story worth carrying forward for generations to come.

It has been an honor to get to know you, Pottstown. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Neighboring Concepts



APPENDIX A

POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY





POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

COMMUNITY MEETING 01

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND



COMMUNITY MEETING 01:

LISTENING SESSION

Introduction

The goal of Community Meeting 01 was to engage community members in shaping a shared vision for Pottstown’s future by preserving its unique character, addressing current challenges, and exploring new opportunities.

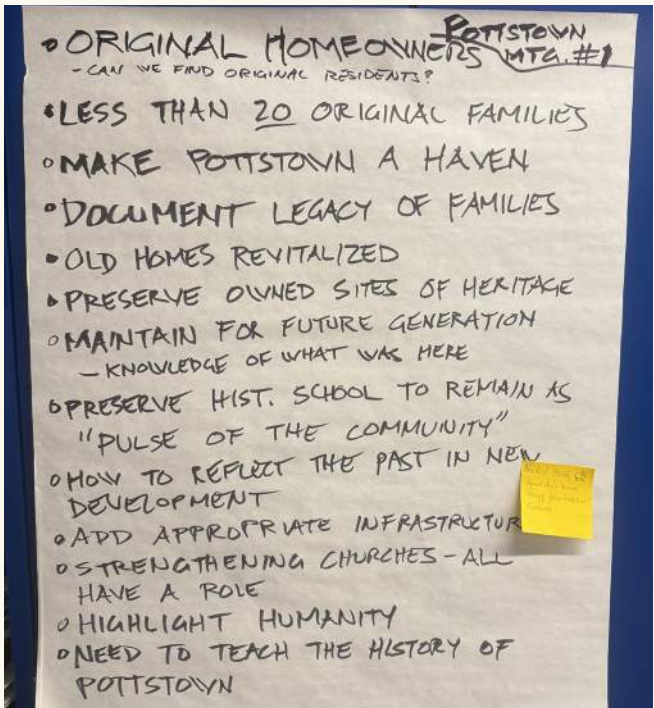
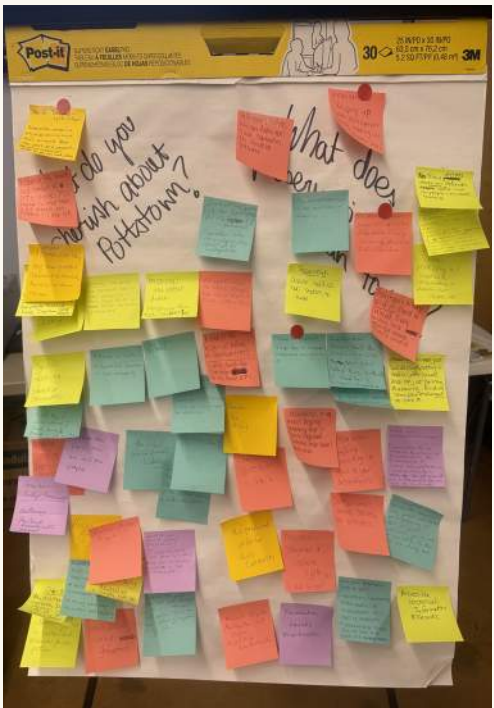
Neighboring Concepts conducted a 2-hour interactive meeting in the evening and all community members of Pottstown were welcomed. Community members were reached by yard signs, post-card mailings, and posts on the Town website. The tools used in the meeting were asset mapping, discussion through post-it mapping, and small group break out discussions.

Goals

1. Understand values, priorities, and expectations for the Pottstown Preservation Plan
2. Listen to the community members discuss what they cherish about Pottstown.
3. Discuss what preservation means to the community members of Pottstown.
4. Understand the best strategies of engagement.



We work with communities to effectively blend their visions with a new or existing environment while maintaining their community’s unique qualities and history.





PLACES IMPORTANT TO POTTSTOWN

Upon arriving at the Listening Session, participants were invited to engage in a place-based asset mapping exercise. They were asked to consider locations of personal significance, their homes, and places they wished to preserve. They marked these locations on a printed map with sticky dots visually capturing their connections to the community, fostering collective storytelling, and insights into valued community spaces

IMPORTANT THEMES

POTTSTOWN VALUES

This graphic illustrates key themes from the sticky note exercise—the larger the bubble, the more frequently it was mentioned. From a deep appreciation for African American history and community identity, to the preservation of historic homes, neighborhood character, and cherished community assets, these reflections highlight what makes Pottstown special and worth protecting for future generations.



WHAT DO YOU CHERISH ABOUT POTTSTOWN?

Task

Neighboring Concepts invited participants to write on sticky notes what they cherish most about Pottstown. Responses highlighted the Pottstown’s close-knit community, historic charm, and the value of family generations. These reflections underscored the unique elements that make Pottstown a place of pride for its residents.

Summary

The Community believes that Pottstown is cherished for its deep-rooted history, strong sense of community, and enduring cultural heritage, particularly its African American legacy. Residents take pride in the people, relationships, and shared experiences that define the town, valuing its historic homes, landmarks, and spaces that foster connection. Faith institutions, schools, parks, and multi-generational family ties contribute to a sense of belonging, resilience, and hope for Pottstown’s future.

African American History Culture & Community Identity

- African American culture
- Rich history
- Hometown heritage - Community
- Pottstown’s culture
- The people and pride for their community
- Resilience beyond the adversity
- Excitement for the future

Human Dignity: Protection & Justice

- Their desire to see Pottstown thrive for future generations

Neighborhood Character

- Original home character
- Acres passed through the generations
- Long lasting history of creating development
- Historical neighborhoods
- Small town scale and layout
- Charm of the Pottstown’s streets

Community Assets

- The Churches (3)
- Dellwood Center & Rosenwald School (3)
- Torrence - Lytle School (8)
- David B. Waymer Center (3)
- David B. Waymer Park (3)

Community & Family Relationships Neighborliness

- The relationships
- The shared struggle & shared neglect
- Small family-friendly community
- Strong family and community values
- Childhood memories
- Long-lasting relationships that have lasted 49 years
- Rich family history and continued presence

* The number in parentheses next to the word indicates how many times it was mentioned in the sticky note exercise.

WHAT DOES PRESERVATION MEAN TO YOU?

Task

Participants were then asked to reflect on and write what preservation meant to them. Many expressed a desire to protect the Pottstown’s historical architecture, safeguard sacred spaces, and honor its cultural heritage. The exercise fostered thoughtful conversations about balancing preservation with progress to maintain Pottstown’s identity for future generations.

Summary

The Community believes that preservation means honoring and sustaining Pottstown’s cultural and historical identity while ensuring its growth remains inclusive and respectful of its past. It involves protecting historic buildings, stories, and traditions while fostering spaces for future generations to thrive. Preservation is about maintaining affordability, advocating for justice, and safeguarding the essence of the community—ensuring that progress does not erase the legacy of those who came before but rather enhances and uplifts the people who call Pottstown home.

African American History Culture & Community Identity

- Makers of the struggle
- Pottstown’s culture, African American history, segregation, etc. should be preserved
- Traditions that honor the roots
- Sustaining a community for generations to come
- Our history and stories need to continue
- Retelling stories of ancestors
- Accessible historical information and records

Community Assets

- Revitalize community amenities and infrastructure

Human Dignity: Protection & Justice

- Allowing community members to age in place
- To acknowledgment of the positives in humanity
- Strong advocacy groups
- Fighting gentrification
- Preserve affordability in the community
- Affordable housing
- Preserve the people and the air

Neighborhood Character

- Restoring the older homes
- Celebrate and acknowledge the original home owners
- Balancing the progression of development, while keeping the history and people involved. “Holding on to mama’s home”
- Preserve and maintain buildings, houses, undeveloped acreage
- Restoring
- Connects the past and present when implementing spacing to eat, live, work, and play
- Retaining places from the past in the midst of a changing environment
- Lower speed limit on Holbrooks so people can continue to walk safely
- Preserve the land



*“We are history. We are
Pottstown and we have a
wealth of history to give.”*

-Commissioner LaToya Rivers

BREAK OUT GROUPS

Goal

The participants broke into smaller teams of 6 to 8 participants, each led by a Team member who facilitated discussions focused on key questions: who to engage, when to involve them, and how to approach outreach effectively. The goal was to identify strategies for connecting with the stakeholders who would have the greatest influence on the Pottstown Preservation Plan. The following captures what was heard.

WHO TO ENGAGE?



HOW TO ENGAGE?



PLUG INTO THE COMMUNITY

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- 1

February: Black History Month Celebration
Date: Saturday, February 15, 4-8 pm
Location: David B. Waymer Center Innovation
- 2

April: St. Phillips Friends and Family Fish Fry
Date: TBD
Location: TBD
- 3

June: June Fest
Date: Saturday, June 7
Location: David B. Waymer Center

Recurring Meetings

- St. Phillips Church
Meets every 2nd Tuesday, 3 pm

Events With Unknown Dates

- Revival Night (local churches)
- Family and Friends Day (local churches)
- Clean-Up Day
- Block Party
- Juneteenth
- Storytelling Group

WHEN ARE THE BEST TIMES TO ENGAGE?

RULE OF THUMB

- 1

After church services on Sundays
- 2

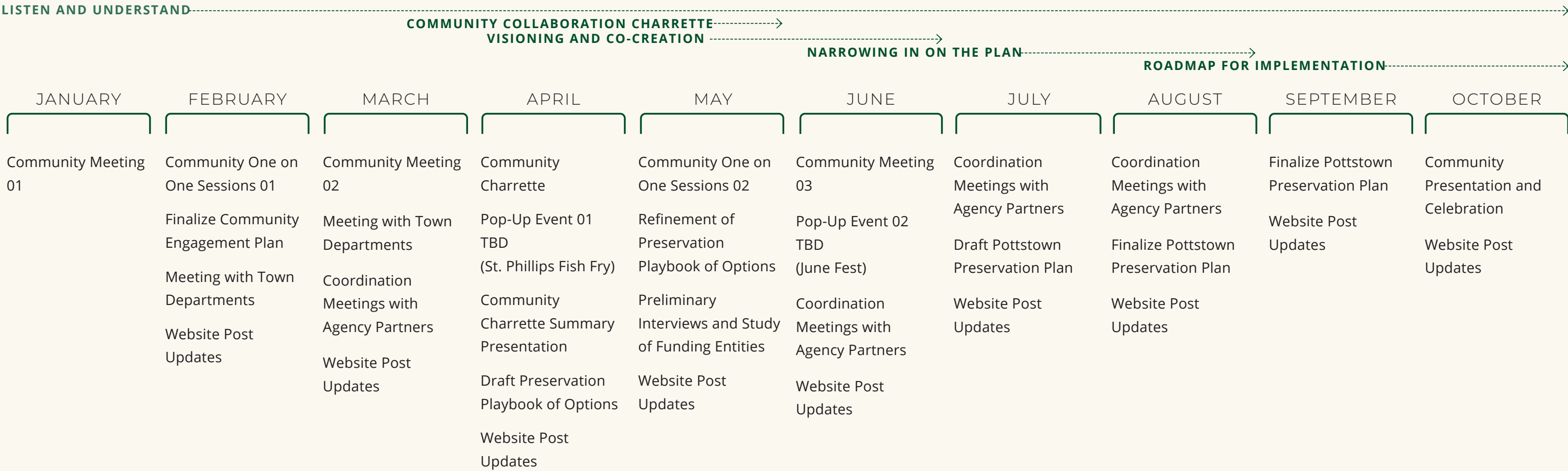
Saturdays 11 am - 2 pm
- 3

Monday evenings
- 4

The Community meetings should meet every month

ENGAGEMENT PLAN

UPDATED SCHEDULE: JANUARY 2025 - OCTOBER 2025



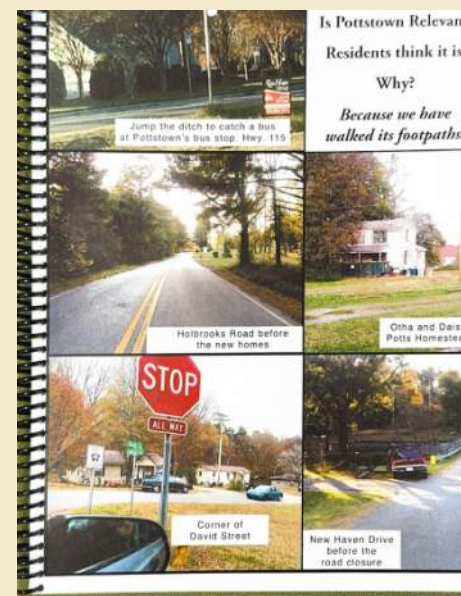
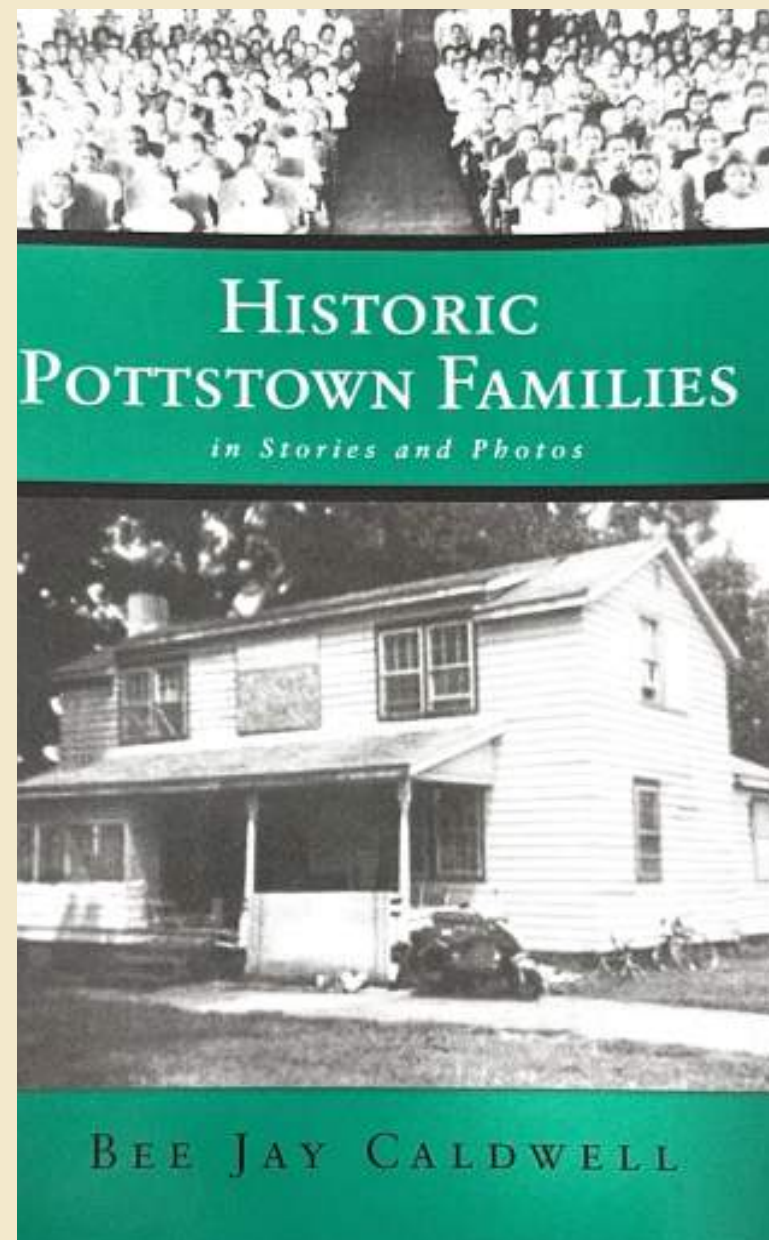


POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS

LISTEN AND UNDERSTAND





ONE-ON-ONE SESSIONS

Introduction

The goal of the One-on-One Sessions were to gain a deeper understanding of and provide support for the Pottstown community by engaging in focused discussions with leaders from various neighborhood groups and initiatives. These sessions served as a platform for exploring goals, objectives, backgrounds, challenges, and community aspirations while incorporating diverse perspectives.

Neighboring Concepts facilitated 30-minute individual meetings with community leaders and members in the morning. Outreach efforts included email invitations and flyers posted on the Pottstown website to maximize participation.

Goals

1. Understand Community Needs & Challenges
2. Strengthen Community Engagement
3. Document Historical & Cultural Perspectives
4. Identify Opportunities for Growth & Development

LEON LADDA

POTTSTOWN HERITAGE & LEADERS GROUP

Introduction

Leon Ladda is a dedicated community member with deep historical and familial roots in the area. Residing on Central Avenue, his family once owned 10 acres of land, contributing to the region’s agricultural heritage. Since moving back in 2000, he has been actively involved in preserving the community’s history, advocating for engagement among younger generations, and working to maintain cultural and historical landmarks.

Takeaway

Leon Ladda is a committed community advocate with a strong sense of history and family ties to the region. Ladda’s passions include revitalizing community events like cookouts, promoting local arts and crafts, and working towards the development of parks and historical landmarks. His vision for the future aligns with the Pottstown Preservation Plan, emphasizing continued community involvement, preserving cultural and historical assets, and ensuring younger generations connect with the town’s rich legacy.

01 HONORING HISTORY & CULTURE

- Local cookouts primarily attended by elder community
- Elder community hold deep knowledge about community’s history
- South of Pottstown used to be a cotton field
- Local arts and craft initiatives using ice cream sticks, toothpicks and pencils into hats, brooms, and other crafts
- Waymer Center as community engagement destination

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Revive past events like cookouts
- Engage younger generations to ensure community growth and continuity

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Creation of a park to preserve the community history
- Historical tree near landfill remains a notable landmark in the area
- Natural spring to be converted into a golf course
- Tree trimming suggestion along Central Avenue due to overgrowth and falling hazards

04 VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- Continued community engagement efforts
- Initiatives that connect younger generations with the cultural and historical legacy of Pottstown

JANELLE HARRIS

MABABU LIVE GROUP

Introduction

Janelle Harris is a passionate community leader dedicated to preserving history, fostering youth engagement, and advocating for sustainable development in Pottstown and the greater Huntersville area. Through her work with Mababu Live and various community organizations, she strives to maintain the neighborhood's cultural identity, empower future generations, and promote intergenerational wealth.

Takeaway

Janelle Harris is dedicated to preserving history, promoting growth, and advocating for sustainable development in Pottstown and Huntersville. Her efforts align with the Pottstown Preservation Plan, focusing on local heritage, education, and housing. By encouraging investment and community engagement, Harris helps preserve Pottstown's cultural legacy while fostering economic and social growth for future generations. Her work is essential to sustaining the area's history and culture, playing a key role in Pottstown's future.

01 HONORING HISTORY & CULTURE

- Mababu Live embodies the idea of “ancestors live through us”
- Supports heritage preservation efforts, including written and oral history, and artifacts
- Advocates to reuse the Torrence Lytle High School
- Revive the Debutante Ball to teach young men life skill lessons

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Leads an annual neighborhood cleanup
- Organizes monthly community meetings
- Supports homecoming reunions through block parties and tailgating events
- Engages youth through sponsorships and programs
- Intends to expand Torrence Lytle scholarship fund to provide educational support for local students

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Advocates for sidewalk improvements
- Strengthens partnerships with organizations such as Huntersville Park & Rec, East Huntersville Community Outreach, and Smith Coalition
- Works with local boards to address housing challenges and affordable housing development
- Collaborates with organizations to promote home repairs, and services to people

04 VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- Encourages returning- residents to invest in the neighborhood, fostering economic and social growth
- Aims to rebuild and expand community participation, focusing on door-to-door outreach and volunteer involvement

VARONA WYNN

TORRENCE-LYTLER ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Introduction

Varona Wynn is a committed community leader and active member of the Torrence Lytle School Alumni Association. She is committed to preserving the legacy of Torrence Lytle High School, supporting youth through scholarships, and ensuring that the history of the community is documented and celebrated. Through her work with the alumni group and her personal efforts, Varona is passionate about creating opportunities for future generations while preserving the rich cultural and historical identity of Pottstown and its surrounding areas.

Takeaway

Varona Wynn is a dedicated community leader committed to preserving Pottstown’s history and culture through her work with the Torrence Lytle School Alumni Association. Her efforts to engage the community through meetings, fundraising, and newsletters support local initiatives and cultural preservation. Wynn’s vision includes restoring landmarks like the Torrence Lytle auditorium, creating an Arts Center for youth, and establishing a historical library. By promoting intergenerational involvement, she ensures the community’s rich history is celebrated for generations to come.

01 HONORING HISTORY & CULTURE

- Scholarships to help students to attend college
- Annual Blue & Gold Weekend fundraiser includes dinner dances and memorials to honor alumni and teachers.
- Community is deeply tied to local history, with families like the Sherrells, Ladda, Gastons, and Bosts having deep roots in the area.
- Proper documentation of oral histories and local stories needed to preserve the community’s culture

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Monthly meetings allow alumni and community members to gather and support local initiatives.
- Quarterly newsletters keep the community updated on events and fundraising efforts.
- Hosts fundraising activities at local events such as the June Fest
- Active engagement with families to document and preserve community history.

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Advocates for preserving historical landmarks, including the Torrence Lytle High School
- Plans for a historical library and archive at the Dellwood Center
- Proposes hiring a dedicated historian to verify and collect community history, including research at archives like the North Carolina State Archives and Freedmen’s Bureau records.

04 VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- Aims to restore the middle building’s auditorium for cultural events such as plays, talent shows, and community programs.
- Seeks to establish an Arts Center to provide affordable creative opportunities for youth.
- Strong emphasis on intergenerational involvement to sustain historical preservation efforts for future generations.

BEE JAY CALDWELL

TORRENCE-LYTLER ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Introduction

Bee Jay Caldwell is a dedicated community organizer and advocate for historical preservation, committed to honoring her ancestors and promoting unity despite facing challenges like gentrification and a lack of recognition. As an active member of local initiatives, she continues to push for community development, historical preservation, and inclusive spaces that support the well-being of future generations. Her vision includes revitalizing the Torrence Lytle campus, creating spaces for art and social engagement, and improving community access to resources.

Takeaway

Bee Jay Caldwell has worked to raise awareness and preserve the Torrence Lytle campus while addressing challenges like gentrification and limited recognition. Her vision aligns with the Pottstown Preservation Plan, aiming to revitalize spaces like the Dellwood Center and transform the Torrence Lytle campus into multifunctional areas for future generations. By focusing on youth, art, and social development, Caldwell’s efforts foster connection and collaboration within the community, calling for greater involvement from local businesses and residents to ensure a vibrant and sustainable future for Pottstown.

01 HONORING HISTORY & CULTURE

- Actively involved in history-telling initiatives, conducting interviews with various groups
- Strong belief in the interconnectedness of people and the importance of collective responsibility
- Committed to honoring her ancestors and preserving community culture

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Faced challenges with community organizing, creating Agape Love-In Sessions to engage the various churches in the area.
- Struggles with feeling unheard when engaging with the broader community, highlighting the need for more support and recognition.

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Attended town board meetings related to the redevelopment of the Torrence Lytle campus, voicing concerns about property division and community impact.
- Aims to preserve the Dellwood Center as a place for youth engagement in arts, dance, and social development.

04 VISION FOR THE FUTURE

- Torrence-Lytle High Schools’ cafeteria refurbished into a multifunctional space, including a community store, an administrative unit, library and classrooms.
- Seeks greater involvement from local businesses and the community to help fund and bring these ideas to fruition.
- Proposed a senior residency facility with amenities such as an exercise room, meeting spaces, and beauty/barber shop.



Central Avenue in 2016



TOWN DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The Town Department Heads Sessions were designed to foster a deeper understanding of Pottstown's needs and provide meaningful support. These 30-minute discussions allowed department leaders to share insights on goals, challenges, and initiatives while aligning their efforts with community priorities. Neighboring Concepts facilitated these focused conversations, ensuring diverse perspectives were heard. To encourage participation, outreach efforts included email invitations and flyers posted on the Pottstown website.

Goals

1. Align Department Initiatives with Community Needs
2. Strengthen Community Engagement and Transparency
3. Enhance Unified Strategic Planning
4. Identify Challenges & Opportunities

ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The Huntersville Administration and Communication Department plays a vital role in keeping residents informed and engaged with town policies, community development, and local initiatives. Their efforts focus on educating the public and facilitating open communication between residents and town leadership.

Takeaway

The Huntersville Administration and Communications Department remains committed to fostering a well-informed, engaged, and thriving community through transparent communication and meaningful initiatives. These efforts will also be directly connected to the ongoing discussions about the Pottstown Preservation Plan, ensuring that historical preservation, community development and resident concerns are addressed in a comprehensive and inclusive manner.

01 RESIDENT EDUCATION & AWARENESS

- Tax Implications & Analysis (In-town vs out-of-town), including Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) and Town considerations to educate residents
- Education about Historic Status Restrictions

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Community Cleanup Initiatives
- Public Hearing in Traffic Calming
- Town celebrated 150th Anniversary and interviewed Pottstown residents
- Members from the Torrence-Lytle Alumni Association have attended to Town meetings, like Varona Wynn and Bee Jay Caldwell

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Home Restoration Assistance
- Oral History Integration
- Art Trail & Historical Preservation
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application

04 CHALLENGES

- Lack of a Dedicated Economic Development Staff Member
- Resident Pushback or varying feedback
- Sidewalk Integration vs. Senior Community Needs

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Introduction

Since the late 1980s, the Police Department has been instrumental in maintaining the safety and well-being of the community. While crime rates have remained relatively low over the years, the department remains committed to strengthening trust and promoting fair and equitable law enforcement. With many longtime families still residing in the area, the community has continued to grow, and the police department continues actively engaged in supporting its residents.

Takeaway

The Police Department is committed to ensuring that public safety remains a cornerstone of the Pottstown Preservation Plan. By fostering meaningful community engagement and addressing local concerns, this initiative prioritizes the voices of residents, ensuring that all perspectives contribute to a thriving and preserved neighborhood

01 EMERGENCY & PUBLIC SERVICES

- Coverage beyond town or extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) limits
- Neighborhood Watch Programs

03 CHALLENGES

- Increased speeding on Dellwood Dr and Hollbrooks St, with many utilizing these roads to get to Vermillion development
- Dump truck issues
- Illegal dumping behind the school

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- National Night Out
- Waymer Center Activities
- Police hosted Trunk or Treat for 3 years
- Community Engagement Crew - team focused on outreach and community relationship
- Desires to manage traffic on a Paint Sidewalk Event
- Involvement in community cleanups
- Engagement in additional community initiatives

ENGINEERING & PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The Engineering & Public Works Department is dedicated to maintaining and improving the town’s infrastructure to support a safe, accessible, and thriving community. The department works to ensure that streets, sidewalks, and public utilities are modernized while remaining affordable and beneficial for all residents. By prioritizing long-term community needs—rather than solely catering to new development—the department plays a crucial role in shaping a more walkable, connected, and livable Pottstown.

Takeaway

The Engineering & Public Works Department supports the Pottstown Preservation Plan by prioritizing infrastructure improvements that benefit longtime residents while planning for future growth. Through traffic calming, pedestrian-friendly projects, and utility partnerships, the department helps create a connected, livable, and historically preserved community.

01 TRANSPORTATION & STREET SAFETY

- Traffic calming measures at Dellwood Ave and parts of Dellwood
- Dellwood vs. Gibson crossing closure
- Potential street parking at Church AME Zion
- Sidewalk project along Central
- Right-of-Way Considerations

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Public engagement through door-to-door flyers
- Elected people were communicating with the community

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Stormwater study planned. Area currently relies on sheet drainage with no immediate concerns
- Potential for community art to be incorporated in future traffic calming projects, like painted crosswalks or widened turns.
- Seam Trail Project along Church extension project

PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The Parks & Recreation Department is dedicated to maintaining and expanding public spaces that serve as the heart of the community. With a focus on accessibility, preservation, and programmatic growth, the department collaborates with local government agencies, community organizations, and residents to ensure that parks, historic landmarks, and recreational facilities remain vibrant and welcoming for all.

Takeaway

The Parks & Recreation Department plays a vital role in the Pottstown Preservation Plan by ensuring that public spaces remain accessible, well-maintained, and reflective of the community's heritage. Through investments in park improvements, recreational facilities, and historic landmarks, the department helps preserve the cultural and social fabric of Pottstown while promoting opportunities for community engagement.

01 ONGOING INITIATIVES

- Paved Walking Trail
- Updated Basketball & Hokey Rink
- Splash Pad at Waymer Park to be completed by Fall 2025
- Playground & Park Upgrades by County

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Elected Officials used to host meetings at Dellwood Center
- Monitoring community needs like youth sports program
- Hosted Tree Planting Event in the past
- Use of Waymer Center and Park increased with Vermillion development

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Dellwood Center Restoration
- Potential Passive Nature Trail behind Waymer Park

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Introduction

The Planning Department plays a crucial role in shaping the town’s development, ensuring that growth is sustainable, inclusive, and aligned with the needs of both longtime residents and new community members. Through zoning regulations, land-use planning, and targeted initiatives, the department is committed to preserving Pottstown’s historic communities while fostering economic opportunities and generational wealth.

Takeaway

The Planning Department’s efforts are closely aligned with the Pottstown Preservation Plan, working to ensure that both historical preservation and community development are prioritized in a way that benefits the entire community. By integrating the goals of the preservation plan, the department is focused on maintaining the town’s rich history while also encouraging sustainable growth and revitalization. Their initiatives aim to strike a balance between honoring Pottstown’s heritage and supporting modern development, ensuring that the needs and concerns of residents are addressed through a thoughtful, inclusive approach.

01 HOUSING INITIATIVES

- Attainable Housing Initiative
- Attainable Housing Policy
- Emphasis on Homeownership
- Housing Study through Development Financial Institution (DFI)
- Historical Overlay to encourage affordable and profitable living

02 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SUPPORT

- Law Enforcement Involvement
- Key Partners - Rebuilding Together, She Built this City, Habitat
- Community Engagement Growth

03 PRESERVATION & DEVELOPMENT

- Exploring Micro-Transit Options
- BUILD (formerly RAISE) Grant - Future Seam Trail Expansion
- Home Repair & Maintenance Support
- Affordable Housing Development

04 CHALLENGES

- Zoning Constraints
- Affordability for Local Workers



POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PLAN

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

VISIONING AND CO-CREATION



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

VISIONING SESSION

Introduction

The goal of the Community Workshop was to actively engage Pottstown residents in shaping a shared vision for the future, one that honors the community’s rich heritage, addresses current needs, and explores new opportunities across four key focus areas in Pottstown.

Neighboring Concepts hosted a two-day, interactive, drop-in style event designed to encourage open participation and creative thinking. Day One focusing on co-designing and dreaming and Day Two focusing on visualization and critique.

Goals

- 1. Engage Residents in Visioning
- 2. Showcase Preliminary Concepts
- 3. Collect Feedback to Inform Next Steps



By directly engaging and involving the people who use the spaces we design, we are able to better understand what they are looking for.

Focus Areas

- Torrence-Lytle School
- South Section of Waymer Park
- Dellwood Drive Vision
- Vacant Land Along NC 115

These focus areas were guided by early community input in response to the question: “What do you want to preserve, and what do you cherish in your community?” The places people named helped highlight areas that hold meaning, history, or potential. While many other topics are important to the community, identifying these key locations helped us explore ways to reflect shared values in future planning.

Key Engagement Tools Included

- **Case Study Analysis:** Presenting relevant cultural precedents
- **Community Design Workshops:** Facilitating co-creation of site concepts.
- **Voting and Visual Aids:** Documenting preferences through public feedback.

These tools allowed us to collaborate with community members to identify priorities, envision future uses for the site, and collect qualitative data, allowing us to identify recurring themes and prioritize program elements.

DAY 01

Community Workshop

Day One focused on design, dreaming, sketching, and understanding community priorities. Participants shared ideas, voiced concerns, and imagined possibilities for the future. To support this visioning process, we introduced several precedent case studies, examples of how other historically significant cultural buildings and spaces have been successfully restored and re-purposed to serve community needs.

Community Celebration

Day two was a community celebration to honor the collective efforts and active participation of residents throughout this process. The event was designed to foster a welcoming environment where neighbors could connect through casual conversation, enjoy food together, and ask questions in an open setting.

Goals

- Building Trust and Straightening Relationships
- Recognizing the Value of Everyone's Contributions
- Reflect on the Progress Made
- Reaffirm the Shared Commitment to Persevering Pottstown

DAY 02

Community Workshop

Day Two built upon the insights gathered on the first day. It provided an opportunity to vote on proposed ideas helping residents understand and visualize their suggestions. This allowed the community members to provide feedback and refine the concepts.



TORRENCE-LYTLER SCHOOL

FOCUS AREA 01

The Torrence-Lytle School, was the first and, for many years, the only public high school available to African American students in rural Mecklenburg County. Since its closure in 1966, the building has remained vacant and is now in a state of significant deterioration. Despite this, it continues to hold deep emotional and historical significance for generations of families in the Pottstown area. For decades, community members have voiced a clear and consistent desire: to restore the school in a way that honors its legacy and reestablishes it as a source of pride, possibility, and purpose.

Currently, the Torrence-Lytle School is owned by the Mecklenburg County Historic Landmarks Commission. The school is undergoing structural stabilization in preparation for a forthcoming Request for Proposals (RFP) aimed at its redevelopment. This process presented a key moment to engage the community. We hope to maintain a collaborative relationship with the Commission with the shared goal of having the community voice present in the RFP regarding the future of a historically and symbolically important site, as the property transitions to new ownership.

TORRENCE-LYTLER SCHOOL

FOCUS AREA 01 - DAY 01

Similar Example Projects

These case studies guided our discussions with the Pottstown community, showing how spaces with difficult histories can become inclusive, future-facing assets. Inspired by this, the community envisioned bold, creative ways to revive Torrence-Lytle School, connecting the past and future.

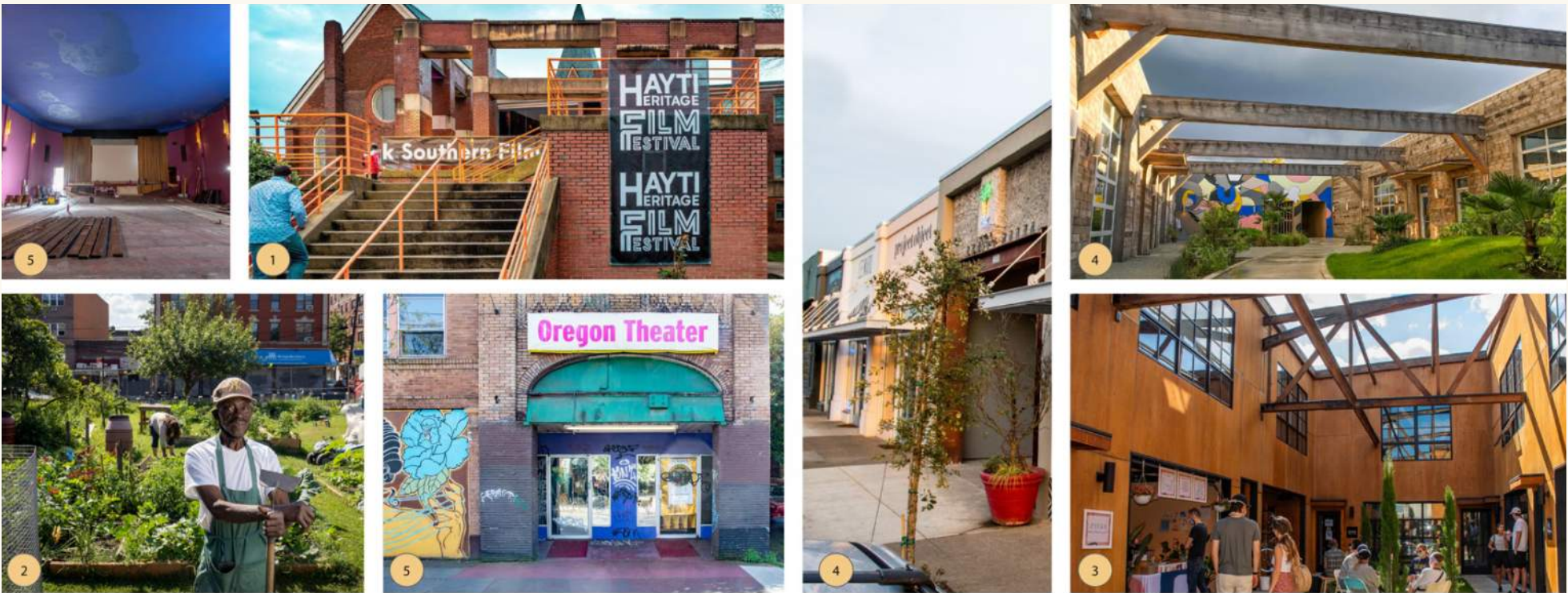
Two Notable Examples

The Hayti Heritage Center (Durham, NC)

- Formerly St. Joseph’s AME Church, this historic site was preserved and transformed into a thriving cultural arts center, hosting exhibitions, performances, educational programs, and community gatherings, while honoring the legacy of Durham’s historic African American neighborhood.

The Double Scrub Oregon Theater (Portland, OR)

- Originally a segregated movie theater, this building was reclaimed and reimagined as a community arts and social justice hub, acting as a resource for creative expression, activism, and cultural memory.



1. Hayti Heritage Center 2. Tagwa Community Farm 3. Pioneer Lavada Jones 4. New Crusher Court 5. Double Scrub

TORRENCE-LYTLE SCHOOL

FOCUS AREA 01 - DAY 02

Brainstorming and Organizing Data

At the Community workshop, community members shared many suggestions and brainstormed ways to preserve and revitalize the school, and four main themes emerged.

EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY

Community members emphasized the importance of continuing the site’s legacy of learning.

There was strong support for creating a Trade School or vocational training center, framing education as a tool for economic empowerment and intergenerational advancement.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL GATHERING

The idea of creating spaces for food, conversation, and connection was central.

The “Cook Out” Park and the “Front Porch” Plaza were envisioned as outdoor areas where families can gather, eat, and share stories.

ELDER INCLUSION AND AGING IN PLACE

A proposal for Senior Living Housing came from discussions on displacement and generational continuity.

There is a strong fear of being priced out of their communities and being displaced. The idea present a goal to allow elders to remain embedded in the neighborhood fabric and continue their role as knowledge-bearers and mentors.

ECONOMIC SELF-DETERMINATION

Residents supported walkable, small-scale retail options that favor local, “mom-and-pop” businesses.

This approach to retail was more favorable because it discourages gentrification and supports community wealth-building through entrepreneurship and economic participation.

TORRENCE-LYTLER SCHOOL

FOCUS AREA 01 - DAY 02

Results of Preference Survey (Number of Votes)

The diagram below reflects the community's feedback on which program elements would best serve Pottstown. Each option includes the number of votes it received during the event, highlighting the community's priorities. The most strongly supported program items were the Trade School, the Library, Food Trucks, and Pergolas/Shading Structures.





DELLWOOD DRIVE VISION

FOCUS AREA 02

The Dellwood Center — also known as the Little School — served as a critical educational site for African American children during segregation and still holds cherished memories for many residents. Designated as a historic landmark in 2022, the site is now receiving new signage to formally recognize its significance. The area surrounding the school is largely open and undeveloped, framed by nearby homes and St. Phillips Missionary Baptist Church, and holds promise as a connective and commemorative space that honors the educators, students, and legacy of the school. Nearby, a 31-acre tract owned by the County adds to the potential of the broader area. Although this land is considered culturally significant to residents of Pottstown, it was purchased with park funds and is expected to be used for park purposes. The County manages its own separate planning process for this site, which limits the role of this plan in shaping its future use.

DELLWOOD DRIVE VISION

FOCUS AREA 02 - DAY 01

Similar Example Projects

To help shape the vision for Dellwood Drive, case studies were shared to envision how spaces can preserve and exhibit Pottstown’s history while also fostering education, engagement, and community connection opportunities.

Two Notable Examples

Siloam School (Charlotte, NC)

- The Siloam School, a 1920s one-room schoolhouse for African American students, has reopened after an eight-year restoration by the Charlotte Museum of History, highlighting the legacy of Black education and community resilience in Mecklenburg County.

Second Ward Alumni House (Charlotte, NC - Concept, not built yet)

- Second Ward High School, opened in 1923, was Charlotte’s first public high school for African American students until its closure in 1969 due to urban renewal. A potential public space where artifacts from the school can be stored, preserved, and exhibited, offering visitors a place to learn about and engage with its history.



1. Siloam School 2. Second Ward Alumni House 3. Pottstown Historical Artifacts

DELLWOOD DRIVE VISION

FOCUS AREA 02 - DAY 02

Brainstorming and Organizing Data

At the community workshop, residents shared thoughtful ideas focused on honoring and enhancing the Dellwood Center and its surroundings- without altering the historic building itself. From those conversations, four key themes emerged.

PRESERVE AND PROTECT THE DELLWOOD CENTER

The Dellwood Center is a historic and cultural landmark, deeply valued for its legacy as a former elementary school, also known as the Little School.

The community strongly emphasized that the building should remain untouched and preserved as a symbol of pride, resilience, and continuity.

RESPECTFUL SITE ENHANCEMENTS

While major changes are not desired, residents supported modest improvements to the surrounding site—such as upgraded parking, historical trail, or an outdoor gazebo—that make the space more usable while preserving its historic character.

CELEBRATE LEGACY THROUGH COMMUNITY TRADITIONS

Rather than adding new structures, the community favors honoring Dellwood’s history through traditions and creative activities, such as painting parking spaces to commemorate local stories and hosting events that keep its legacy alive.

ALIGN WITH THE CHURCH’S LONG-TERM VISION

The future of Dellwood is closely tied to the 10-year plan of St. Phillip Missionary Baptist Church.

Community members supported efforts like cemetery expansion and improved pedestrian access that align with the church’s ongoing role as a neighborhood anchor.

DELLWOOD DRIVE VISION

FOCUS AREA 02 - DAY 02

Results of Preference Survey (Number of Votes)

The content below reflects the community’s feedback on the future of the Dellwood Center and its surroundings. Community input reinforced the importance of maintaining the Dellwood Center as-is, with thoughtful improvements to the surrounding area that celebrates and support its historic role. The visualization on the previous page incorporates concepts from the Historic St. Phillips Baptist Church 10-year plan, offering a glimpse into how the area could evolve while remaining true to its heritage. Community members were invited to vote for their top 3 favorite ideas across three thematic categories: Social Amenities, Traffic Calming, and History Telling & Nature Trail Enhancements.

Community Comments

- Concerns about usability and effectiveness of Mini Circle
- Interest of adding a gazebo space
- Keep the original historical function of the site
- Historical signage at parking areas
- Skill building classes
- Stream & Trees restoration/conservation
- Gardening
- Expanded driveway and parking access
- Desire for a trail through the 31-acre area connecting Dellwood & Holbrooks

01. SOCIAL AMENITY THEME

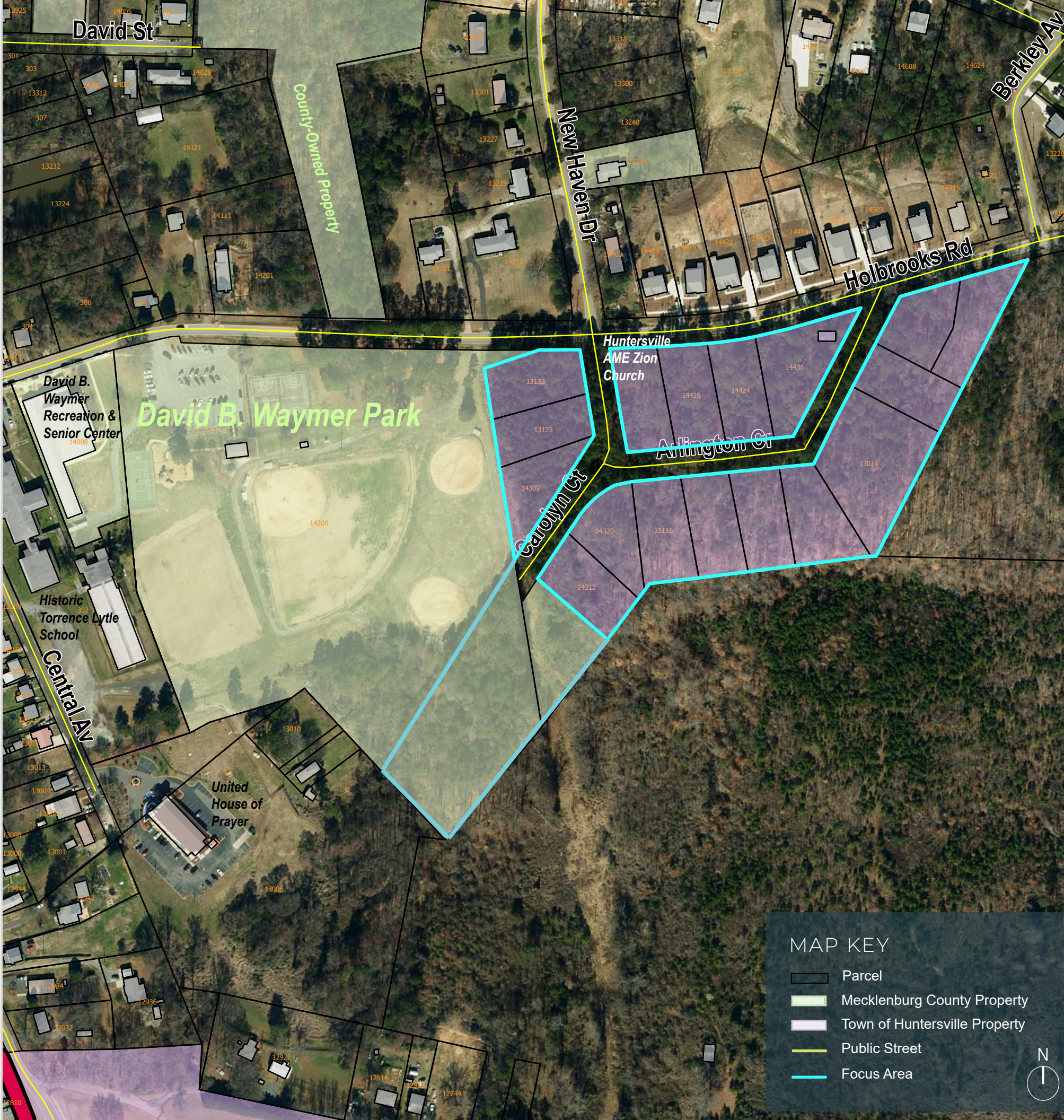
OUTDOOR PLAY  x5	STORY GATHERING AREAS  x1	PICNIC FACILITY  x4
--	---	---

02. TRAFFIC CALMING (CENTRAL & HOLBROOKS)

RAISED INTERSECTION  x1	MINI CIRCLE  x3	DECORATIVE PAVING  x1
SPEED HUMP/TABLE  x7	CHOKER/CHICANE  x1	PAINTED CROSSINGS  x5

03. HISTORY TELLING & NATURE TRAIL THEME

INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE  x1	NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION  x7	OUTDOOR CLASSROOM  x3
TIMELINE WALK  x3	TRAILHEAD  x2	BOARDWALK TRAIL  x13



SOUTH SECTION OF WAYMER PARK

FOCUS AREA 03

Located just southeast of David B. Waymer Park and tucked behind the historic Torrence-Lytle School and Waymer Center, this largely wooded area includes a mix of County- and privately-owned parcels. Surrounded by established neighborhoods, a historic church, and natural features like woodlands and a creek, the site offers a peaceful, ecologically rich setting with deep community roots. While initial development considerations focused on the parcels a bit further east, feedback from the Day 01 workshop revealed greater opportunity within the County-owned land to the south of Waymer Park. This area is represented on the map to the right. Though currently undeveloped, this land presents a rare and exciting chance to shape something meaningful for Pottstown's future—a place where people of all ages can live well, connect to community life, and perhaps even return to raise the next generation.

SOUTH SECTION OF WAYMER PARK

FOCUS AREA 03 - DAY 01

Similar Example Projects

To guide the vision for the South Section of Waymer Park, case studies were shared to highlight successful transformations of similar sites. These examples offer insight into strategies for thoughtful, inclusive revitalization in Pottstown.

Two Notable Examples

Legacy at Carr Heights (Charlotte, NC)

- Legacy at Carr Heights honors Nathaniel and Lizzie Carr, founders of Carr Heights neighborhood for Black homebuyers. This 120 unit complex offers wellness, recreational, and communal amenities. This project models Creative Partnerships through the collaboration of the West Boulevard Neighborhood Coalition, Westside Community Land Trust, City of Charlotte, local businesses, and Soho Housing Partners/The Paces Foundation.

Three Sisters Co-op (Charlotte, NC)

- For years, Charlotte's West Blvd corridor has been a food desert. In response, residents created the Three Sisters Market, a 15,000 SF food co-op that will offer fresh food, community event spaces, cooking classes, and a co-working area to support local economic growth.



1. Three Sisters Co-Op 2. Smithville Community Plan 3. Legacy at Carr Heights 4. The Renaissance

SOUTH SECTION OF WAYMER PARK

FOCUS AREA 03 - DAY 02

Brainstorming and Organizing Data

At the community workshop, residents shared a variety of ideas and priorities for the future of the South Section of Waymer Park. From these conversations, four main themes emerged that reflect the community’s vision for thoughtful growth, connection to nature, and respect for local history.

DEVELOPMENT ROOTED IN NATURE & HISTORY

Residents emphasized that any future development should reflect the area’s rural character and cultural history.

Proposals like a food co-op, garden space, and outdoor amphitheater highlight a desire to reconnect with the land, celebrate local heritage, and preserve the natural environment, especially by saving trees and maintaining open green space.

HOUSING THAT RESPECTS SCALE & COMMUNITY NEEDS

If housing is pursued, the community supports small-scale, affordable options like a pocket neighborhood with homes under 1,500 sq ft that meet the needs of current residents without inviting large-scale change.

There was a strong interest in creating opportunities for aging in place and multigenerational living, ensuring that longtime residents can stay rooted in the community.

WELLNESS, GATHERING, & EVERYDAY CONNECTION

The vision includes places where people can connect, reflect, and recharge—whether through peaceful green spaces, trails, or a small community pool.

Residents stressed the importance of mental and emotional well-being, and the desire for spaces that are safe, welcoming, and promote social connection.

INFRASTRUCTURE & ACCESS FOR COMMUNITY GROWTH

Improved infrastructure, such as roads, ADA-accessible trails, and basic utilities, was seen as a necessary foundation for any future development.

However, community members were clear that these upgrades should serve the needs of the current population and support thoughtful, community-centered growth rather than major expansion.

SOUTH SECTION OF WAYMER PARK

FOCUS AREA 03 - DAY 02

Results of Preference Survey (Number of Votes)

The concepts below highlight the community feedback recieved for Focus Area 03, located in the southern section of Waymer Park. This Mecklenburg County-owned site, identified for potential collaboration with the Town of Huntersville and other partners, offers a valuable opportunity to reimagine underutilized open space as a dynamic community hub. At the Community Showcase event, residents explored a range of conceptual ideas, including an Amphitheater/Performance Venue, Farming Heritage, Pocket Neighborhood, and Recreational Uses. Attendees were invited to vote for their top three ideas across these four categories, helping to shape a shared vision rooted in both creativity and community priorities.

Community Comments

- Concerns about parking for amphitheater
- Promote mixed-age and appropriately scaled housing, avoiding large-scale developments that may disrupt community character.
- Facilitate a meeting between Pottstown residents, town representatives, and county officials to clarify ownership responsibilities, address concerns, and define roles and next steps.





VACANT LAND ALONG NC 115

FOCUS AREA 04

This vacant, County-owned land along the proposed LYNX Red Line corridor is located at the edge of the Pottstown neighborhood, between Verhoeff Drive and Holbrooks Road. Positioned across from residential communities and adjacent to key landmarks such as the Torrence-Lytle School and David B. Waymer Park, the site naturally serves as a gateway into the neighborhood.

In conversations with residents, many recalled memories of walking along the tracks to travel between home, school, or friends' house, especially from the more remote areas of Pottstown. In broader American culture, railroad tracks have often symbolized division, sometimes used to label neighborhoods as "the other side of the tracks," a phrase frequently tied to low-income or minority communities and used to reinforce negative stereotypes.

Although this site is currently underutilized, its prominent location presents a unique opportunity to reshape that narrative. As an entry point into Pottstown, it has the potential to reflect the community's history, resilience, and pride. It has the ability to transform it into a welcoming space that honors the past while looking toward the future.

VACANT LAND ALONG NC 115

FOCUS AREA 04 - DAY 01

Similar Example Projects

To support the gateway vision, we shared case studies illustrating how communities use walkways, trails, and architecture to celebrate their history and identity. These examples offered strategies for educating visitors and creating a strong sense of place.

Two Notable Examples

The Atlanta Beltline (Atlanta, GA)

- An urban redevelopment project that repurposed former rail corridors into trails, parks, and public art, promoting walkability and connectivity, while highlighting Atlanta’s history through storytelling and community programming.

Purposeful Walk at The Pearl (Charlotte, NC)

- Located in Charlotte’s Innovation District (The Pearl), this pedestrian pathway integrates signage and landscape design to share the story of Brooklyn, a once-thriving Black neighborhood lost to urban renewal. Curated by original residents, it honors the legacy and ensures its history remains a visible part of the district’s future.



1. Charlotte Innovation District - Purposeful Walk 2. The Atlanta Belt Line 3. Matthews Historical Trail

VACANT LAND ALONG NC 115

FOCUS AREA 04 - DAY 02

Brainstorming and Organizing Data

At the Community Workshop, residents shared a wide range of ideas and suggestions for reshaping the entry points to Pottstown and creating meaningful landmarks that reflect the town’s identity and presence. From these conversations, three main themes emerged.

OLD HOSPITAL SITE

The vacant lot across NC 115 was once the site of the old hospital—a place that many Pottstown residents relied on for care and where many also worked.

While the hospital is no longer in operation and the site lies just outside Pottstown’s official boundaries, it holds connections to the community. Because of its history and location, this could once again serve the people of Pottstown.

Community members have suggested using the space for resources that reflect local needs and priorities, such as a health clinic, a public park/ flower garden, unique local retail or senior housing.

NATURAL HERITAGE

A consistent theme that emerged when speaking with residents about the town’s entrance was the desire to activate space through nature and thoughtful landscaping.

Many shared that creating beauty through planting can uplift the spirit of the community and create an inviting space. Suggestions included planting flowers, starting a community garden, and adding more greenery throughout the area.

Residents also envisioned the landscape space that invites connection—places to play chess, sit and watch the train pass, or simply gather with a neighbor.

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

Pottstown is a historic town with a rich heritage and a strong sense of identity. As part of ongoing community engagement efforts, residents have expressed a desire to establish a landmark that acknowledges and celebrates the town’s presence.

Placing a welcoming marker at the community’s entrance is viewed as a meaningful step toward increasing visibility and fostering community pride. Potential landmarks could include wayfinding elements that guide visitors to key sites, decorative street toppers, billboards, or a public art wall that shares the stories and events in Pottstown.

VACANT LAND ALONG NC 115

FOCUS AREA 04 - DAY 02

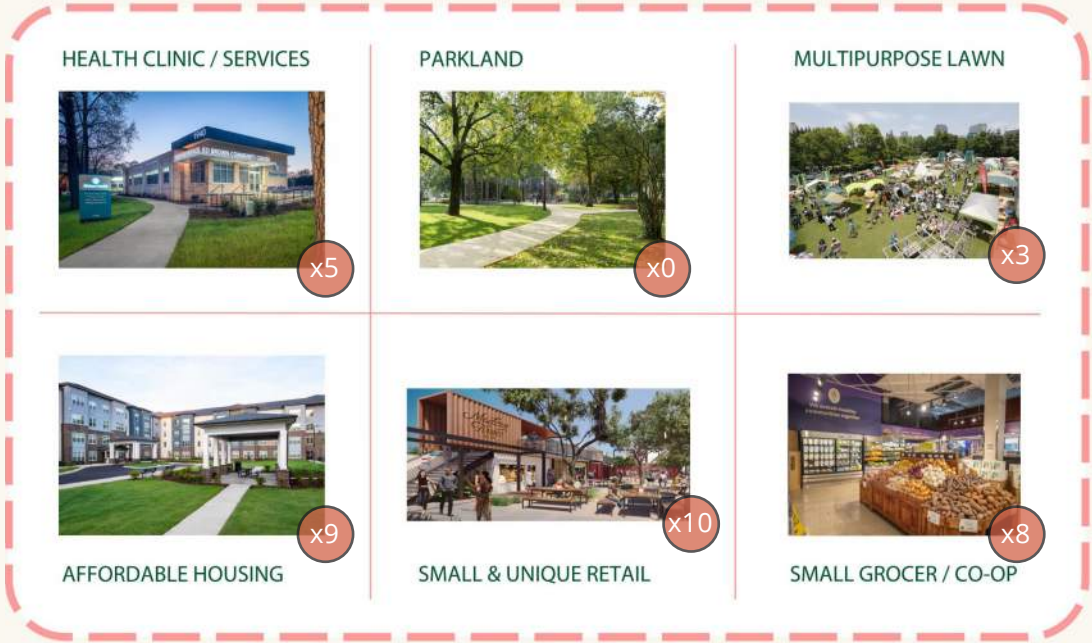
Results of Preference Survey (Number of Votes)

The concepts below reflect community feedback from a visualization board about the first day of engagement for Focus Area 04. The Mecklenburg County-owned rail right-of-way and the old hospital site (owned by Atrium Health and the Southside Neighborhood) offer partnership opportunities to transform underutilized space into community landmarks and a resource hub. Residents expressed strong interest in affordable housing and local retail at the hospital site, along with pole banners, historic plaques, and decorative street toppers. Seasonal entry decorations at the HC 114 site were also well received.

Community Comments

- Street sign toppers are already in progress.
- Provide clearer communication about the distinctions between workforce housing and affordable housing.
- Emphasize interest in a small, locally operated grocer or co-op rather than a large chain store.
- Recommend installing a traffic signal and safe pedestrian access (bridge or crosswalk) at the Holbrooks Road and Old Statesville Road intersection.
- Preserve or acknowledge the community tree traditionally decorated for Christmas.

01. OPTIONS & USES FOR OLD HOSPITAL SITE



03. NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY FEATURES



02. NATURAL HERITAGE THEME



DOOR TO DOOR ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

This engagement was developed to directly connect with residents and raise awareness about the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan. Guided by community input, it focused on reaching those unlikely to attend public meetings by visiting them at home. Neighboring Concepts facilitated the outreach, discussing residents' values and hopes for Pottstown's future. To build trust and promote participation, the team used flyers, social media, and word-of-mouth, and walked with a trusted neighborhood advocate to ensure informed and authentic connections.

Goals

- Identify and reach underrepresented voices and encourage continued participation
- Build trust and deepen relationships with residents
- Ensure resident voices shape the preservation plan
- Strengthen awareness of upcoming events and engagement opportunities

Successful Engagement Conducted

- **Wednesday, May 14th**
11:30am - 1:30pm
Accompanied by Ms. Varona Wynn
(Torrence-Lytle Alumni Association)
- **Saturday, May 24th**
9:00am - 11:30am
Janelle Harris (Mababu Live)
Hosted Community Clean Up
- **Tuesday, June 3rd**
4:00pm - 6:00pm
Accompanied by Janelle Harris (Mababu Live)
and Agustin Hinojosa (Pottstown Heritage Group)



POP UP EVENTS

Introduction

These were created to meet residents at local events and gatherings, fostering casual, welcoming connections and sparking natural conversations about the Community Preservation Plan. At each event, the team used large notepads for live notes, sticky-dot voting, and one-pagers outlining project and contact information. These quick, accessible, and interactive activities helped residents of all ages share ideas, priorities, and concerns, reinforcing a sense of inclusion and momentum for Pottstown's future.

Goals

- Increase visibility and awareness of the Pottstown Community Preservation Plan
- Create low-barrier opportunities for residents to provide input in informal settings
- Build trust and show presence at events organized by and for the community
- Capture diverse perspectives and highlight shared values, needs, and hopes for Pottstown

Successful Engagement Conducted

- **Community Resource Fair**
Saturday, October 19, 2025
10:00am - 1:00pm
United House Of Prayer For All People
Huntersville, NC
- **HCDA Festival**
Saturday, June 7th, 2025
10:00am - 1:30pm
David B. Waymer Park
Huntersville, NC
- **Juneteenth Celebration Block Party**
Thursday, June 19th, 2025
6:00pm - 9:00pm
Veterans Park
Huntersville, NC

POTTSTOWN RESIDENT MEETING

DAVID B. WAYMER CENTER

Introduction

In response to community feedback, the session was held without Town representatives present, creating a space for open and honest dialogue among neighbors. Facilitated by Neighboring Concepts, the meeting brought together residents, local leaders, advocates, and representatives from various neighborhood groups- such as the Torrence Lytle Alumni Association, the Pottstown Heritage Group, and Mababu Live- to speak candidly about the challenges and opportunities facing Pottstown. There is a strong need to feel seen, heard, and valued, especially amid fears of displacement and erasure.

Takeaway

The insights collected reflect ongoing challenges around governance, annexation, service equity, representation, and the need for meaningful community engagement. Residents have expressed a strong desire for greater visibility, recognition of past injustices, and a more collaborative relationship with the Town and County.

01 GOVERNANCE AND ANNEXATION

- Residents expressed frustration over town and county meetings being scheduled at the same time, possibly to limit participation
- Residents called for clearer communication around town boundaries and ETJ reform, noting that essential services like trash pickup and streetlights are only provided within town limits. There’s a need to clearly outline the differences in taxes and services, with separate strategies for residents inside and outside the town.
- Residents call for dedicated liaisons between Pottstown and both the Town of Huntersville and County leadership to improve communication and accountability.
- Interconnectedness of people and the importance of collective responsibility

03 REPRESENTATION AND VISIBILITY

- Suggestion was made to modify signage (as in Gibson Park) to clearly define the neighborhood boundaries
- Residents requested a community entrance sign or monument to reflect pride and recognition.
- Interest in identifying a community historian or consultant to document Pottstown’s legacy, gather oral histories, and preserve cultural assets (e.g., graveyards).
- Interconnectedness of people and the importance of collective responsibility

02 COMMUNITY NEEDS AND DESIRES

- Residents emphasized the need for Community Benefit Agreements, reinvestment, and protections against displacement.
- There is a strong desire for community voice in land use and housing decisions.
- Seniors advocated for access to tax relief programs like the Homestead Act.
- Resident concerns about new development led to suggestions for housing size caps (e.g., 1200 sq ft).
- Interconnectedness of people and the importance of collective responsibility

04 PRESERVATION

- Community emphasized the importance of being more engaged “on foot” and through accessible in-person efforts.
- Residents expressed the need for a secure, accessible space to preserve historical documents and memorabilia, without requiring a formal museum.
- Seniors would like to engage the next generation (30–40-year-old age group) more effectively to empower for the future

POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM

Introduction

The Community Leaders Forum served as a panel discussion that brought together experienced organizers, local stakeholders, and Pottstown residents to explore strategies for preventing displacement and strengthening community power. Building on momentum from earlier workshops, the forum focused on practical tools and organizational structures to advance a shared, community-led vision for Pottstown’s future.

Neighboring Concepts convened the panel, featuring seasoned organizers Shamaiye Haynes, Rickey Hall, and Tiffany Capers- each of whom has successfully led efforts to resist gentrification in their own communities. The conversation created space for these leaders to share hard-earned insights on how Pottstown can remain rooted and resilient amid the pressures of rapid change.

Goals

- 1. To build on ongoing efforts of engaging the community and brainstorming anti-displacement tools
- 2. To learn insights and lessons from peer communities
- 3. Strengthen local leadership, vision, and alignment
- 4. Inspire collective action rooted in community values

PANELISTS

Shamaiye Haynes | Shamaiye@QCFamilyTree.org

Executive Director of QC Family Tree

Encouraged neighbors to organize collectively- reminding that “you only get what you organize for” and emphasized that building true community power requires patience and long-term commitment.



Rickey Hall | rickey@westblvdnc.org

Senior Board Chair of West Boulevard Neighborhood Coalition and Westside Community Land Trust

Champions the Community Land Trust (CLT) model as a tool to preserve affordability and urged residents to understand the systems at play- push for edification instead of gentrification.



Tiffany Capers | tiffany.capers@crossroadscorporation.org

Executive Director, CrossRoads Corporation for Affordable Housing and Community Development

Highlighted the importance of starting with shared understanding (“Inaba”) before diving into action and advocated for asset-based mindsets.



POTTSTOWN COMMUNITY LEADERS FORUM

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Conclusion

As Rickey Hall shared, “We’ll embrace change and growth, but we won’t embrace gentrification.” Moving forward will require organizing around strategies that protect community, culture, and place. Establishing a trusted leader or organization to steward this work, while staying in close conversation with experts and using available resources, will be key to ensuring that preservation efforts are community-led, rooted in care, and built to last.

Call to action

- Decide on a shared priority (ex: access to homes that are affordable on a fixed income)
- Establish or form a 501(c)(3) CDC to lead the effort
- Connect with mentors in land trusts, real estate, and nonprofit strategy
- Partner with existing land trusts to build capacity
- Advocate for community-led planning and anti-displacement protections
- Ensure developers engage directly with the community before building

01 COMMUNITY-LED ORGANIZING

- Commitment, transparency, and strong neighbor-to-neighbor relationships are foundational
- Create a culture of shared responsibility and vision
- Advocate for planning frameworks driven by the community
- Interconnectedness of people and the importance of collective responsibility

02 ANTI-DISPLACEMENT TOOLS

- Explore Land trusts. Would require at least 10 committed people to form a Board of Directors, a strategic plan, and possibly an Executive Director
- However, Land trusts are complex to build from scratch, so partnering with an existing trust, like the West Side Community Land Trust, may be the most effective path forward
- Deed restrictions can preserve generational ownership of land and homes
- Shared equity models of ownership would be an option but the community should consider tax implications

03 DEVELOP LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Community Quarterbacks are individuals or entities with deep knowledge of housing, planning, or organizing who help guide strategy and ensure coordination. While they are not the same as a CDC, Pottstown would benefit from identifying or bringing in a trusted quarterback to help lead and manage these complex efforts
- Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are nonprofit organizations that can own property, apply for funding, and serve as formal community representatives in development decisions
- Both are key to managing land, securing funding, and making development decisions. interconnectedness of people and the importance of collective responsibility

04 TRANSIT AND DEVELOPMENT

- Prepare for potential TOD zoning by prioritizing a community-led Transit Plan
- Push for community benefits and early engagement from developers
- Any development must consider the community as an ecosystem with existing needs, voices, and values