

## Community Vision Memo

May 7, 2019 DRAFT

This document summarizes several inputs as part of the engagement process for Forward Together, which was conducted between February and April 2019. Input was gathered from the following events and meetings.

- Stakeholder meetings conducted on February 21, 2019 and April 10, 2019
- Thought Leaders Panel Discussion held on March 26, 2019
- Two “Future of Facilities” public workshops held on April 11, 2019
- Online survey (April 12-28, 2019)

The memo includes the following:

1. Purpose
2. Outreach and Publicity
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4. Results
  - a. Thought Leader Panel Discussion
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  - c. Future of Facilities Workshop
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## 1. Purpose

In early 2019, Shaker Heights launched the Forward Together process to create a vision for community facilities. The City of Shaker Heights, the Shaker Heights City Schools and the Shaker Heights Public Library have come together to jointly fund and lead this process to develop a Coordinated Facilities Master Plan. With limited resources and high expectations, it is important to leverage and strengthen current relationships and look for new ways to collaborate and think creatively about the current and future state of the community facilities. Through the first several months, multiple opportunities were designed to provide a platform for everyone who cares about Shaker Heights to get involved and share their thoughts on the future of facilities.

This engagement lays the groundwork for development of the vision document which will contain a vision statement, goals and short-term and long-term actions (programs, policies and projects).

*“This is a wonderful process which gives me great hope for our future.”*

workshop participant

## 2. Outreach and Publicity

Extensive outreach was conducted to spread the word broadly about the opportunity to participate in the Forward Together process. The process capitalized on existing networks through each of the three entities (City, Schools, Library).

- 2,500 printed rack cards distributed throughout the community
- Email notifications sent by the City, Schools, Library
- Included in March edition of the Mayor's Report
- Blow-in card included in April edition of the *Shaker Life Magazine* (mailed to every resident)
- Flyer in backpacks of all K-6 students at Shaker schools (2 rounds)
- Social media posts by the City, Schools, Library
- Shared at Neighbor Night event in Moreland Neighborhood
- Display on digital signage board at Main Library
- Press release
- Online articles at Cleveland.com and Freshwater Cleveland
- News and event updates on the project website, [www.ForwardTogetherShaker.com](http://www.ForwardTogetherShaker.com)

## 3. Engagement Overview

The kick-off public event for the Forward Together process was a Thought Leaders Panel Discussion which brought together leaders in the industries to discuss the future of cities, libraries and education. This initial event was designed to inspire and encourage creative thinking about what the future of facilities could be in the community. After a short presentation by each of the panelists there was a moderated question and answer session which also included questions from the audience. Roughly 100 people attended the event.

Two and half weeks after the Thought Leaders Panel Discussion, two public workshops were conducted. The two workshops were identical in format and substance but conducted at different locations and different times of day to make it convenient for people to attend. Workshop activities included a smart phone live polling survey, mapping exercise that asked people to share what they wanted to see improved or added to existing facilities, a group brainstorm to seek out big ideas for the future of facilities, and headline activity asking people to share what they hoped the headlines would be in Shaker regarding facilities in the next 10 years. Workshop activities were conducted in small groups of 5-8 at a table, with a trained table facilitator documenting input. Online engagement mimicked the workshop activities through a web-based survey and was available for several weeks after the workshops. In total, 300 people participated either at the workshop or online.

A series of stakeholder meetings were conducted with staff and employees from each of the entities as well as with representatives from Shaker Heights private schools, religious institutions and other social service organizations. In total, roughly 25 people attended four different stakeholder meetings.

## 4. Results

This section summarizes the input collected. It draws from what was learned from each engagement activity so far in the process. Over 2,850 pieces of public input were collected during this phase of the work.

### Thought Leader Panel Discussion

Below is a summary of key takeaways shared by the panelists at the Thought Leaders Panel Discussion which serve as an underpinning for the work.

- Our society is in a new culture of sharing
- Being modular, flexible, and nimble is the way of the future
- New and different partnerships are desired and necessary
- A community's social infrastructure = resiliency
- In the future we must use what we have more efficiently
- It is important that our buildings and infrastructure multi-task

### Stakeholder Meetings

The following are the critical questions raised as part of the discussion with stakeholders

- How can school facilities be more accessible to community members? There are fundamentally no barriers, but many logistics to work through.
- Is there a way to formalize a process for the three entities to collaborate, share ideas and work together in a consistent way? This planning process is the beginning but there is a need for an ongoing approach.
- What types of recreation and amenities do people want to get within Shaker Heights versus taking advantage of the surrounding areas and larger Cleveland metropolitan area?
- Where and how can additional connections be made to facilities and parks with trails and paths, so it is safer and nicer for people to walk and bike between neighborhoods and facilities?
- When thinking about repurposed school buildings in the future, it is important to consider that Shaker Heights is fundamentally neighborhood based. How does that affect decision making moving forward?
- How can we strategically reconsider specific locations around the community? (i.e. Colonnade at Lee and Van Aken is underutilized; Thornton Park will likely need large scale funding in the coming years; bus garage location; Community Building and Library have never been strategically considered together)
- How can we connect all residents to school facilities even if they don't currently have students in the system?
- How do we engage the private schools and facilities (i.e. Cleveland Skating Club) in the conversation?
- Should a separate entity be created that is more community based? A "Shaker Foundation" or "Friends of Facilities" organization that collaborates on facilities across all entities?
- How can we better communicate all the events going on in the community? There is a need for a one-stop shop for information in both digital and print format.

## Future of Facilities Workshops

Below is the summary of the key themes and ideas that were shared as part of the public workshops and online survey. This section is organized into five sub-sections Participation and Satisfaction; Key Question Polling; Key Themes from Idea Database; Activity Hubs Key Ideas; and Themes from the Headline Activity.

### Participation and Satisfaction

Participants at the Future of Facilities Workshops expressed a high level of satisfaction with the meeting format and overall process. 300 people participated in the workshops and/or filled out the online survey. Participants filled out an exit questionnaire about their experience and themselves. Of those who participated, roughly 91% filled out the exit questionnaire. The following insight is based on the responses.

- 21% of people heard about the workshops through an email from the City. 19% heard about it from a social media platform and 17% through word of mouth or personal invite.
- 100% of people felt their input was heard and recorded accurately
- 99% of people indicated they felt comfortable completing the meeting activities
- Participants were diverse, but not as diverse as the community. 12% of participants identified as African American, compared to 33% in the whole community.
- There was participation from a wide range of ages; however, people aged 18-34 year were underrepresented at 6% compared to 23% in the whole community.
- Participants had high levels of education, with 56% having a Masters/PhD and 33% having a Bachelor's, compared to 39% and 25%, respectively.

### Polling Results

The following summarizes the answers to the key question polling questions asked as part of the workshops and online engagement.

- Most frequented community facilities:
  - i. Library (30%)
  - ii. School building or playground (30%)
  - iii. Natural park area (22%)
- On a scale of 1 being not important to 5 very important, the average response to the question about how important it is to be able to walk or bike to a community facility was **4.41**, indicating this ability was very important to people.
- Top community amenities/recreation opportunities people wanted to have access to within Shaker Heights:
  - i. Walking/hiking trails (33%)
  - ii. Central recreation facilities (28%)
  - iii. Cultural/performing arts facilities (11%)
- On a scale of 1 being not important to 5 very important, the average response to the question about how important preserving the historic character of Shaker's Community buildings was **3.96**, indicating this was of importance to participants.

### Summary of Key Themes from Idea Database

The following section highlights 7 themes or areas of focus that emerged during analysis of responses from the workshops, focus group meetings and online input (939 comments). Participants were asked: 1) to think about what they would like to see improved or added to each “activity hub” \* 2) to share big ideas for facilities in the future and 3) to determine ways community facilities and resources can function better. The themes are:

1. **New Facility Type/Use/Amenity:** How new facility types, use, or amenities can provide new and different recreation and community gathering and programming space.
2. **Utilization/Access:** How the current facilities are being used, how accessible and inclusive they are, and thoughts about how to improve or change current usage.
3. **Programming:** How additional types of opportunities and activities and for certain demographics (youth, senior, etc.) can be developed.
4. **Connectivity:** How the community connects facilities and residents to each other and to existing neighborhoods.
5. **Maintenance/Operations:** How facility functions can be improved, expanded, or their historic character maintained.
6. **Collaboration:** How public and private community organizations can come together to share resources, programming and amenities.
7. **Economic Development:** Funding ideas to maintain and expand facilities, amenities and programming.

\* “activity hub” refers to geographically concentration of current facilities in Shaker Heights (see page 8)

	Total	
<b>New Facility Type/ Use/ Amenity</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Utilization/Access</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Programming</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Connectivity</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Maintenance/Operations</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>12%</b>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>7%</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>3%</b>

The next section provides an overview of themes heard during the workshops, as well as the focus group meetings and online input. Comments were analyzed to determine where participants wanted the community to focus efforts in uplifting, expanding, updating, and introducing new concepts and spaces.

### **1. New Facility Type/Use/Amenity (26%)**

- Consider construction or creation of community center, multipurpose recreation center, or teen center
- New indoor pool for all ages, seasons and variety of activities
- Reconfigure schools and reuse buildings for new facilities
- Leverage lake access to create new opportunities (canoe launch, amenities, etc.)
- Examine potential for new amenities such as dog parks, outdoor performance space, splash parks and other spaces that can draw people together within the community.

### **2. Utilization/Access (20%)**

- Evaluate buildings and spaces to ensure they are being efficiently used
- Consider expanding or changing usage of certain facilities (open longer, publicly accessible)
- Create more open space for community events (outdoors)
- More active programming and recreation use of the Shaker lakes
- Allow for diverse populations/ages/activities within facilities
- Establish ADA design standards throughout community

### **3. Programming (18%)**

- Create activities for all ages
  - Establish programs for teens after school
  - Senior focused programming
  - Youth centered spaces that provide basketball, swim time, play lots
- Match programming within neighborhoods (i.e. after school activities where kids already are)
- Introduce more activities for the community that draw from all over including yoga, physical activity and unique opportunities such as art walls or cultural exchanges
- Use water bodies to provide active programming such as kayaking, canoeing, paddle boats
- Encourage flexible spaces that offer a diversity of programs and activities

### **4. Connectivity (15%)**

- Make pedestrian/bike friendly improvements throughout the community by enhancing existing pathways and increasing safety, lighting, and infrastructure
- Create more connection between parks and community spaces
- Connect neighborhoods to one another and to facilities
- Install WiFi access throughout City
- Explore RTA public transportation options and pricing/routes for Shaker Heights residents, focusing on students

**5. Maintenance/Operations (11%)**

- Equip indoor spaces to have air conditioning/up-to-date infrastructure so space can be used all year successfully
- Continue to upgrade and maintain indoor pools at schools
- Improve general maintenance and beautification of outdoor spaces including fields, parks, pathways, playgrounds
- Install more light and safety features around community facilities

**6. Collaboration (7%)**

- Capitalize on regional collaborations to support programs and facilities
- Join forces within the community between entities, organizations, and private schools and consider sharing resources to be most efficient
- Establish communication efforts to share events and opportunities online and provide calendar of happenings throughout City
- Formalize collaboration with joint funding, joint levies, permanent improvement funds, etc.

**7. Economic Development (3%)**

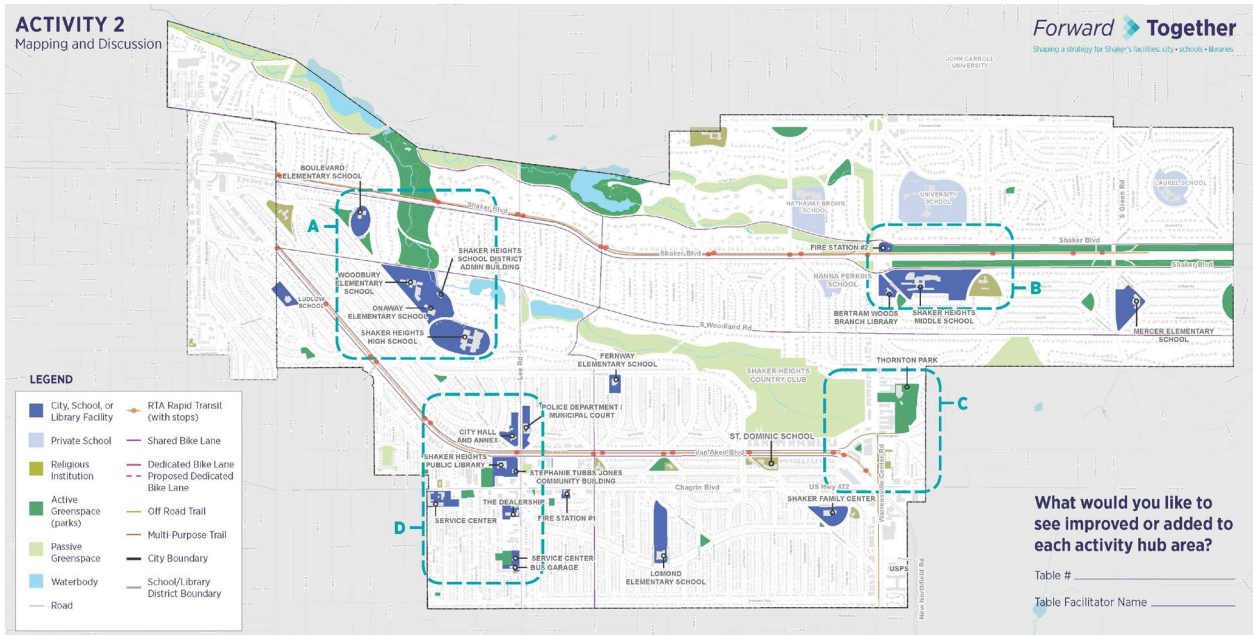
- Leverage economic development potential through corridors, such as on Lee Road, to reduce tax burden
- Explore joint funding opportunities

**Summary of Key Themes by Activity Hub**

A summary of key themes by activity hub in response to the question “what would you like to see improved or added to each activity hub area?” are listed in the following section.

	A. Tri-Schools Area		B. Middle Schools and Bertram Woods		C. Thornton Park and Van Aken District		D. Community Building and Main Library		E. Other Areas	
<b>New Facility Type/ Use/ Amenity</b>	1	2%	18	29%	27	35%	29	31%	24	21%
<b>Utilization/Access</b>	17	27%	19	30%	7	9%	25	26%	29	26%
<b>Programming</b>	15	24%	13	21%	17	22%	24	25%	16	14%
<b>Connectivity</b>	21	34%	9	14%	14	18%	8	8%	31	27%
<b>Maintenance/Operations</b>	8	13%	5	6%	9	12%	5	5%	10	9%
<b>Collaboration</b>	0	0%	0	0%	3	4%	0	0%	2	1%
<b>Economic Development</b>	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	4	4%	2	2%

**ACTIVITY 2**  
Mapping and Discussion



Map of Activity Hub Locations

**Area A: Tri-Schools Area**

- Improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure throughout to connect with rest of community
- Update facilities to have air conditioning, lights on football field, and investigate potential for artificial turf
- Expand programming at schools to be all year and multigenerational
- A small-scale conference center to generate additional money for schools (up to 80 attendees)

**Area B: Middle Schools and Bertram Woods**

- Expand access to Middle school facilities such as the pool
- Repurpose middle school as recreation or community center with fitness equipment/etc.
- Collaborate to provide programming for teens after school
- Dog park
- Sports fields/facilities
- Create campus between school and library to establish a community center for all



### **Area C: Thornton Park and Van Aken District**

- Improve the appearance and condition of current facilities such as tennis courts, batting cage, pool, hockey rink, gym equipment, showers
- Introduce unique programming such as yoga, pickleball, roller skating, and youth-oriented programs that are affordable/free
- Create a connection between Thornton and rest of community, especially Moreland
- Dog park in Thornton Park
- Create an all seasons recreational center, including indoor pool
- Create a senior center

### **Area D: Community Building and Main Library**

- Improve pedestrian and bike experience along Lee Road, especially at the Van Aken intersection
- Continue investment and development on Lee Road
- Update community building and evaluate new uses, services, and programming
- Consider possibilities of Colonnade such as sports fields or outdoor theatre
- Examine area around bus garage, potentially move or repurpose to increase access and use at Chelton Park
- Flexible meeting spaces
- Dog park
- Multipurpose center, civic “hub”
- More access to green space (Moreland), recreational fields
- Café in library
- Community garden, reading garden

### **Area E: Other Areas**

- Create bike lanes along major roads including Van Aken and Shaker Boulevard
- Create outdoor performance space or install gazebo at Horseshoe Lake

### **Themes from Headline Activity**

Participants were asked “what do you hope the news will say about the community facilities in Shaker Heights in 10 years? How will the facilities be different?” Themes from those responses are shared below.

- Modern and innovative while respecting historic character
- Inclusive and accessible to all
- Multipurpose and multifunctional
- Efficient with respect to costs and the environment
- Collaborative in the broadest sense
- Leader, model and visionary