

A Comprehensive Demographic Profile of the Cherry Hill Community in Baltimore City

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A Comprehensive Demographic Profile of the Cherry Hill Community in Baltimore City

In late 2013, the Cherry Hill Development Corporation (CHDC) approached the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University (IUR) with a request to prepare a comprehensive demographic profile of the Cherry Hill Community in Baltimore City. The staff of the IUR agreed to do this and funds were secured from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development via Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. of Washington D.C. and the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development.

A series of meetings were held involving over 200 members of the Cherry Hill Community during the period between September 2014 to May, 2015. Data sources included town hall meetings, in-person and online surveys, demographic analyses, mapping, focus groups and existing documents regarding the Cherry Hill Community. Staff members of the IUR also attended several meetings of the Middle Branch Planning Committee and other institutions thought to be relevant to understand the demographics and future of the community.

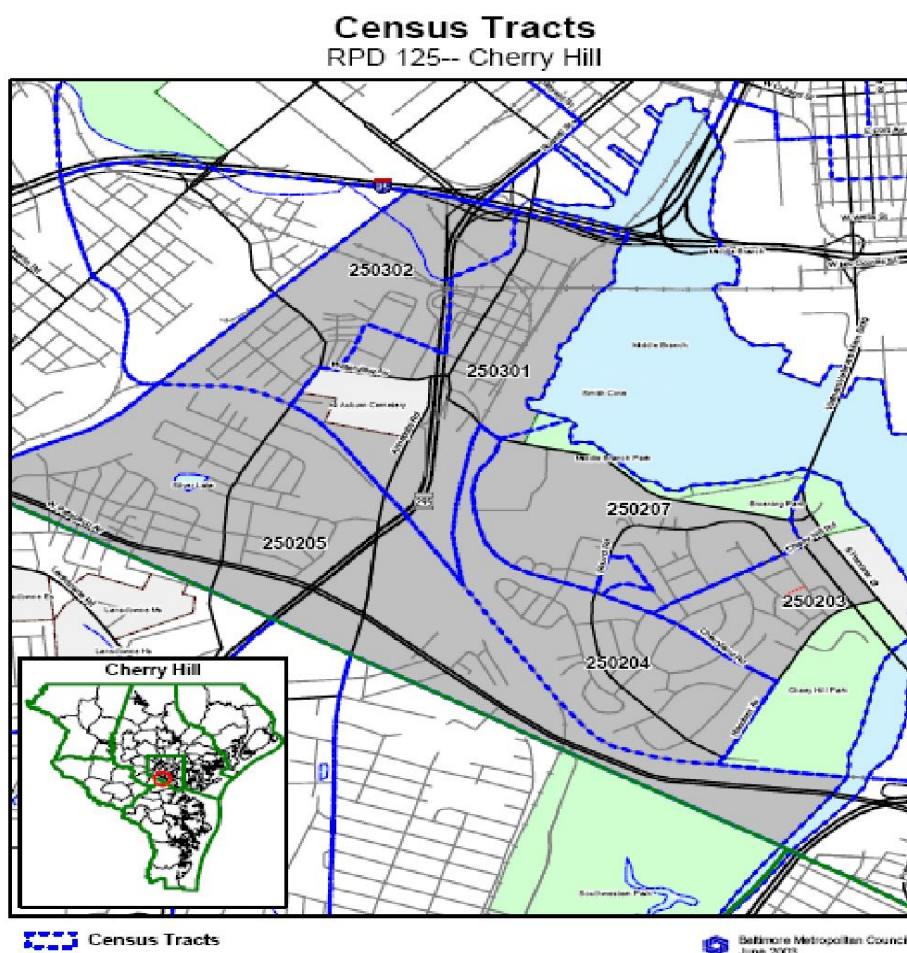
In addition to this, a short but updated history of the first planned American African suburb in the nation was also written since many of the existing histories of Cherry Hill are outdated.

Analyses of these data show a deep community pride by residents of one of the most historic American African communities in the United States. The data also show that residents are rightfully concerned about gentrification and existing and future plans made by Baltimore City that have been developed with little input from the residents and leaders of the community. There has been a long-history of public neglect in specific areas of Cherry Hill and the residents articulated this in several of the data sources. Issues involving transportation, recreation, public housing maintenance and food deserts were all discussed during focus groups and reflected in the surveys.

The IUR closely examined the 2008 Cherry Hill Community Master Plan developed by the Baltimore City Department of Planning and concluded that it is the best plan to date of the community, but remains “shelved” and ignored, even though a five-year goal was set for the plan to be fully implemented by Baltimore City. This 2013 goal was missed by city planners and the IUR strongly urges that it 1) should be revisited, 2) those accountable for implementation provide an update and 3) that any future development in the community adhere to the recommendations contained in the plan.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CHERRY HILL COMMUNITY

The Cherry Hill community is geographically located in the southern section of Baltimore City. Cherry Hill covers more than 300 acres south of the Middle Branch of the Patapsco River and west of Hanover Street. It is located just over the Hanover Street Bridge, which is really at the foot of the city. The Cherry Hill community is bounded by the Middle Branch, north of the Patapsco River, Hanover Street, Waterview Avenue and the west and south ends of the Baltimore Light Rail system. The area is comprised of Census Tracts 2502.03, 2502.04 and 2502.07. The community is located south of the Inner Harbor/Central Business District of Baltimore City.



A brief history of Cherry Hill quoted from the Cherry Hill Master Plan:

“In the 17th century, the land now known as Cherry Hill belonged to several Maryland pioneer families such as the Yates, Kinsey, Roper, and Cromwell families. These families

never pursued development; they only manipulated their land on paper. In the 18th century, there were two failed attempts to develop the area. John Moale, who emigrated from England to this area in 1719, thwarted the first effort to develop the Middle Branch shoreline. He owned the land which is now South Baltimore and “Moale’s Point”, the current site of the southern end of the Hanover Street Bridge. Asked to subdivide part of his landholdings for a new town, Moale refused. He preferred to mine the land for iron and harvest the forest for fuel to stoke the iron furnaces. In Colonial Maryland, African Americans, both slave and free, made up a large percentage of iron-workers. These African Americans, despite the nefarious institution of slavery, became highly skilled workers that demanded and many times received their freedom. Their effort and skill contributed to Baltimore’s African American community. The second effort to develop the Cherry Hill area occurred right after the American Revolution but the development never materialized. By 1785, Baltimore Town built a hospital to quarantine smallpox patients and laid out a potter’s field to bury its poor.

The area remained isolated from Baltimore throughout most of the 19th century. In 1852, the Long Bridge connected South Baltimore to Brooklyn, located on the east shore of the Patapsco. The southern shoreline of the Middle Branch and the area of Cherry Hill still remained isolated from Baltimore. By the mid-1800s, however, the rural characteristics of Cherry Hill and its close proximity to Baltimore attracted many amusement parks with names such as Kirby Park, Klein’s Park, Meeter Park, and Starr’s Park. Lincoln Park and Fish House exclusively served African Americans. All the parks offered music, eating, drinking, swimming, and fishing. By the 1890s, an electric railway ran from Westport to the amusement parks on Waterview Avenue. In addition, the shoreline provided African American Baptist churches a place for total immersion baptisms. Inland from the shoreline, several truck farms thrived, and several industries located along the Curtis Bay Branch line of the B&O Railroad. By 1915, a small subdivision was laid out for the building of suburban cottages. In 1918, Baltimore City annexed this area, and the Middle Branch shoreline gave way to industry. Other events occurred: the Maryland Yacht Club was built in 1920 on the current site of Harbor Hospital, the Hanover Street Bridge was erected in c.1920, and the City zoned the area for industrial activity in 1923. During the 1930s, the area became quiet as the depression lingered from 1929 to around 1939 when Baltimore began to build up for WW-II.”

With the industrial buildup to World War II, Baltimore increasingly struggled with a housing shortage problem. Thousands of southerners, both American Africans and Whites, migrated to Baltimore, attracted by its high-paying industrial jobs. The Cherry Hill community was established in the late 1940s when the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) chose it as

the site of a federal project for American African war workers migrating from the South. This location was selected because it was a relatively isolated “peninsula” and after several other options were opposed by whites who did not want American Africans moving too close to their neighborhoods. Some of the greatest opposition stemmed from whites in Lakeland, Morrell Park, and English Consul who all threatened to take their complaints to the federal government in Washington, DC to prevent American Africans from living in Mt. Winans. The opposition was clearly fueled by racism as evidenced by statements like:

“Traditionally, people in Maryland have known their places.”

“This is not the time to try to break down barriers at home.”

-- *Stated by a pastor in opposition to American Africans moving to Herring Run.*

The Cherry Hill location was actually proposed by the Herring Run opponents along with a site at Turner’s Station. The NAACP, Urban League, CPHA and the *Afro-American* all appealed to Mayor McKeldin in an attempt to avoid placing American Africans in Cherry Hill due to unsuitable environmental conditions including: the presence of industrial plants, polluted water, environmental hazards, and the presence of the city incinerator. Cherry Hill was also a less than ideal location due to its isolation from other communities and the limited land for future expansion based on the waterfront boundaries.

As a result of the white protests, Cherry Hill was selected to become the first planned “Negro Suburb” in the nation. The *Baltimore Sun* called it a “model Negro village.” Cherry Hill’s close proximity to industry first attracted private development in the early 1940s. Three private developers had pushed ahead with plans of their own to construct a total of more than 670 units. These developers, the Myerberg Company, Jerome Kahn, and the Welsh construction company, built mostly rowhouse development for African Americans. In October of 1943, the HABC, along with the United States War Housing Administration, announced they would build 600 housing units for African American War workers. Before the federal housing was ready, however, the war had ended. The project was launched in 1944 and was officially opened for occupancy in December 1945, amidst a scene of mud and snow. War veterans had preference among applicants. Settlers there included a number of servicemen who were studying under the GI Bill and who would go on to productive careers.

Shortly after the war, the Cherry Hill Homes were converted to low-income housing. According to a September 1945 report by the HABC entitled, “Effects of the Post-War Program on Negro Housing”, there was a need to prevent the continued expansion of “Negro” communities by making their current locations more densely populated. This was to avoid “very violent neighborhood resistance to any in-migration of Negroes.” In 1950, the Baltimore City Council

approved the urban renewal project. The Federal Racial Relations Office warned the Baltimore Housing Authority that such a plan would present a “triple threat”:

1. Negro clearance;
2. Conversion of a racially flexible area to one of racial exclusion;
3. Reduction of land areas available for Negro residence.

The following year, the HABC once again found reasons to continue building in the Cherry Hill area, rejecting 39 alternate locations seeing Cherry Hill as the “only politically acceptable vacant land site for Negro housing.” They continued, “Any other site would either be highly undesirable from a planning point of view or would precipitate a major political controversy.” Mostly populated by displaced families from the Broadway/Hopkins urban renewal project and the Russell Street expressway project, Extension II or Cherry Hill 17, became the latest addition to the Cherry Hill community and a reiteration of white supremacy’s ability to dictate the life experiences of American African Baltimoreans. HABC added another 632 units in 1952 and 360 units in 1956.

The situation was not an isolated event, in fact, it was just one in a series of unfair housing practices forced upon American Africans throughout Baltimore and the United States. For example, the Fairfield housing project (then occupied mostly by white Baltimoreans) was under consideration for becoming public housing for “Negroes.” Fairfield was viewed as a viable option because it was in close proximity to other Black communities and also because white residents saw it as unfit for their own continued occupation.

As a result of the Brown decision, HABC relinquished its segregation policies and began to integrate many housing projects throughout the city, including: Fairfield, Latrobe, Perkins, and Westport (all white projects located close to Black communities.) As a result of this call for integration, these same, previously all white projects, became all Black. Cherry Hill, like the many other historically “Negro” projects, has never been subject to integration, and remains predominantly Black to this day.

Fast forward to the early 1980s, we find the HABC purchasing the Patapsco Park Apartments from the FHA. Another 121 units were added to Cherry Hill, making it one of the largest housing projects east of Chicago. The acquisition of this distressed property, renamed the Charles K. Anderson Village, brought the number of public housing units in Cherry Hill above 1,700; making it one of the largest concentrations of public housing on the east coast. Later in this same decade, 1987, families from the Fairfield projects were being relocated to the Charles K. Anderson Village due to “environmental hazards” found at their previous residence.

Ten years later, the residents experienced yet another disruption, under protest of the Cherry Hill Homes Tenant Council, when demolition began on Cherry Hill Extensions I and II, as well as the Charles K. Anderson Village. The 432 units destroyed in Cherry Hill were an attempt to decrease the concentration of public housing units in the area.

The pressures from the inner city, including the need to relocate families dispossessed by urban renewal, brought about far-reaching changes in the population makeup. A large percentage of new residents were fatherless households of people who were not going anywhere but were doing well to survive.

CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Cherry Hill is a community located in the southern section of Baltimore, Maryland. The area is generally bounded to the North by Waterview Avenue/Hanover Street, Southeast by the Patapsco River, Southwest by the City boundary and West by Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. The area is composed of census tracts 2502.03, 2502.04 and 2502.07. The community is located south of the Inner Harbor/central business district of Baltimore City. Cherry Hill is historically known for being home to one of the city's largest public housing project (Cherry Hill Homes). Before undergoing some recent demolition, Cherry Hill homes had over 1,000 housing units along with other low to moderate income apartment housing within the community. This demolition did create a pool of vacant lots and made the community prime for redevelopment.

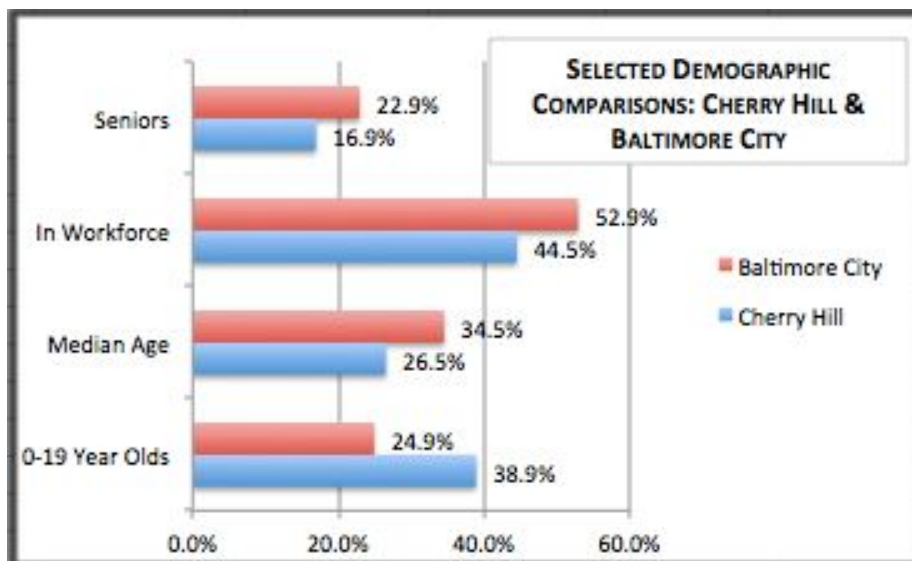
According to the 2010 Census, the Cherry Hill Community had a population of 8,367. This represents a 4% increase from its 2000 population of 8,023. This population is projected to increase by 2.3% to 8,561 by the year 2019. It is worthy to note that while Baltimore City continues to lose population, the Cherry Hill community has gained population over the last ten years.

In 2010, the community was predominantly American African (94.7%). While the Black population has remained constant over the last ten years, it is projected to decrease slightly over the next five years to 93% by 2019. It is to be taken into consideration that having diverse communities is very pertinent to growth and quality life experiences. America continues to grow in racially and culturally diverse traditions. Diversity helps citizens better understand each other and become more accepting and tolerant of each other.

Age Breakdown

Cherry Hill has a young population relative to the rest of Baltimore City. In 2010, the population subgroup that grew the most was the age group 0 to 9 year olds; that age group accounted for

more than 22% of the total population of Cherry Hill, while in Baltimore City, that age group accounted for only 12.3% of the total population. This trend can also be seen when we look at the combined children and youth aged 0-19 years (Cherry Hill = 38.9% versus Baltimore City = 24.9%). As a result, the median age in Cherry Hill was 26.5 years as compared to Baltimore City's median age of 34.5 years. On the other hand, the percentage of the age group in the workforce category in Cherry Hill (44.5%) is lower than the same rate for Baltimore City (52.9%). The Cherry Hill senior population was 16.9% of the total population; Baltimore City had a senior population of 22.9%. The large children and youth population in Cherry Hill suggests the need for daycare services, educational/after school programs, as well as, an

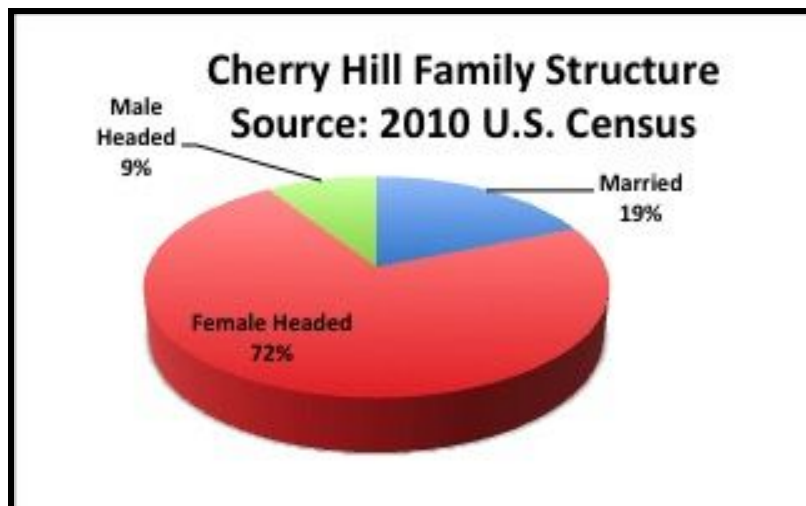


enhanced recreational program. In addition, the characteristics of the Cherry Hill community suggest the need for local employment opportunities and job training programs.

Family Structure

The 2010 census reflects a total of 3,199 households in the Cherry Hill Community. This shows an increase of 188 households over the ten year period from 2000 to 2010. A breakdown of this reveals that 65.5% of the total households in the Cherry Hill Community were regarded as family households, while 34.5% were regarded as non-family households. The family household is broken down as follows: 9% were male-headed, 72% female-headed and 19% were married couples. In Baltimore City, 53.6% of the households were family household while 46.4% were non-family household. The family households in Baltimore City are broken down as follows: 11% male headed, 44% female headed and 45% married couples. It is important to note that the rate of female-headed households in Cherry Hill is much higher than that of Baltimore City. It

has been established that female-headed households are more likely to live in poverty, as compared to married couple families: In 2012, nearly 31% of households headed by a single woman were living below the poverty line, a rate almost five times the 6.3% poverty rate for families headed by a married couple (*Poverty in the United States: A Snapshot*, National Center for Law and Economic Justice, 2013). Given that the rate of female-headed household is so high in Cherry Hill, there is a higher risk among these women for living in poverty.



Education

Education plays an important role in attaining and maintaining employment that pays a living wage. According to Census 2010, only 7.1% of the Cherry Hill community residents had a bachelor's degree or higher, a number dramatically lower than the Baltimore City rate of 26.1%. In Cherry Hill, about 17.9% of the population attended some high school but did not graduate. The percentage of Cherry Hill residents 25 years and over who attained a high school diploma (36%), is much higher than the same rate for Baltimore City (24.4%). This low percentage of residents with less than college degree is a major cause for concern in the community since several studies have shown a strong relationship between educational attainment and employment/earnings. In their study of educational attainment and estimate of work-life earning, Day & Newburger (2002) found that earning increases with educational level.

Income and Employment

There are major differences in income and poverty levels between Cherry Hill and Baltimore City as a whole. According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey, the median household income for Cherry Hill was \$22,716. During the same time period, Baltimore City's median household income was \$40,803, nearly double the level for Cherry Hill. Further analysis reveals that 40.7% of the households in Cherry Hill had incomes below the poverty level as compared to Baltimore City's poverty rate of 21.6%. This high poverty rate resulted in 47.6% of Cherry Hill households participating in the Supplementary Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), as compared to only 20.0% of Baltimore City households. Similarly, 18.9% of households in Cherry Hill received public assistance income versus 6.0% of Baltimore City households.

The 2014 ESRI data estimates that 78% of the civilian population who were 16 years and older were employed in 2014 while 22% were unemployed. During the year in Baltimore City, 87% of civilian population 16 years of age and older were employed and 13% were unemployed. Further analysis of employment by industry shows that majority of those employed were in the service industry (55%), transportation and utilities (13%) and retail trade (10%). This trend is similar to that of Baltimore City, where more than half (58%) of the employed civilian population worked in the service sector.

Housing

According to the census data, the total number of housing units in Cherry Hill increased from 3260 in 2000 to 3453 in 2010. This shows a 5.9% increase over the ten year period. Housing units are projected to increase to 3507 in 2019. It is notable that in Cherry Hill, there are low levels of home ownership: rates decreased from 23% in 2000 to only 16% in 2010. During the same period, home ownership in Baltimore City decreased from 50 in 2000 to 40 in 2010. A housing estimate data for 2014 assessed the median home value in Cherry Hill at \$163,506 while in Baltimore City, the median home value during the same period was assessed at \$198,658.

The continued low levels of home ownership in Cherry Hill continue to threaten the stability of the community. Since a large percentage of the residents in Cherry Hill are renters, it is important to look at rent value in the area. According to the 2008-2012 American Community Survey, the median contract rent in Cherry Hill was \$541 while in Baltimore City, the median contract rent was \$725 for the same time period. With such a low median rent, it becomes attractive to rent in Cherry Hill than in other parts of the City. However, because much of the rental housing stock is public housing and of low quality, renting in Cherry Hill may not be the best solution for persons of low income who are searching for quality housing. It is true that

there needs to be investment made in development of new housing in Cherry Hill, there must be a commitment made to assuring that the housing is affordable for the current residents of the community.

Crime

Crime or the perception of it is a significant problem throughout Baltimore City. The Baltimore City Police Department data reveals that between 2005 and 2009, there were 35.4 homicides committed in Cherry Hill for every 10,000 residents as compared to 20.9 homicides committed in Baltimore City. For non-fatal shootings between 2005 and 2009, the rate of 96.3 shootings for every 10,000 residents in Cherry Hill was twice as high as the rate of 46.5 for Baltimore City. There is a perception among Cherry Hill residents that crime among youth in their community is higher than in the rest of the city. However, between 2005 and 2009, it was shown that in Cherry Hill, the arrest rate was 149.0 arrests per 1,000 youths aged 10-17, as compared to a rate of 145.1 arrests in Baltimore City. The high rate of crime in Cherry Hill calls for concerted effort between the Community, City and business owners to forge a united front to curtail this trend.

On June 2, 2015, Cherry Hill celebrated its 400th day without a homicide. The robust implementation of Baltimore's Safe Streets Program and groups like the Disciple Street Team are directly responsible for this encouraging statistic. What is even more impressive is that the 400 days without a homicide occurred during a dramatic increase in homicides throughout the rest of Baltimore City.

SUMMARY OF CHERRY HILL LISTENING SESSIONS

Between October 2014 and March 2015, researchers from the Institute for Urban Research (IUR) conducted a series of five public "listening sessions" in the Cherry Hill community. Focus groups are often used to document community perspectives. However, focus groups are limited as a methodological tool because they privilege the researcher's perspective since a set of questions the researcher wants answered drive the conversation. At the beginning of the study, the research team made a decision to use a listening session model, which affords for greater voicing of community concerns and issues.

Listening sessions were held in community halls and churches, and were scheduled across a range of times throughout the week in order to accommodate community members' schedules. Community members were recruited through distribution of recruitment flyers advertising the sessions, word-of-mouth, and announcements made by various Cherry Hill community associations. The number of participants attending each session ranged from a high of 135 community members to a low of 5, for a total number of 194 participants across all sessions.

Efforts were made to recruit residents from a variety of housing situations, ranging from rental properties (including Cherry Hill Homes), and homeowners occupying single-family homes.

With the exception of the initial informational session, each listening session followed the same format. The IUR staff and student research assistants, when present, welcomed community members, thanked them for coming, and asked how they heard about the meeting. In addition, for sessions where food was served, participants were invited to help themselves to refreshments. After a brief introduction of the purpose of the listening session by one of two community leaders (Michael Middleton & Anne Chapman), the IUR staff members were introduced. At that point, the consent form process was reviewed, and participants were invited to complete a brief paper-and pencil-survey. Researchers proceeded to ask study participants about their perceptions on local community assets, challenges, and needs. Participants were also asked to discuss their vision for the future of Cherry Hill.

After allowing community residents to voice concerns about Cherry Hill and the future of Cherry Hill, researchers probed more deeply in the areas of education, employment and economic development, housing, crime and public safety, and daily living. Community members raised several concerns about equal and fair access to transportation, healthy food and housing. A summary of the reported community input is as follows.

Transportation

- Several residents reported a limited Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) bus schedule.
- The #27 bus is the only bus which travels outside of Cherry Hill.
- The #52 bus only runs during the week and stops service at 8:00 p.m., which is too early.
- The #29 bus goes in a circular route, never leaving the Cherry Hill community, and merely serves as a feeder bus to the light rail trolley system.



- There is a methadone clinic located next to the light rail station. Residents expressed concern about the people who use the clinic, most of whom are not Cherry Hill residents, because they hang out by the light rail and make local residents feel unsafe.
- Older women who must rely on public transportation to obtain food from the grocery store reported being disrespected by MTA bus

drivers who often pass them by. These residents are not allowed to ride the bus with their grocery bags strapped in their carts and have been threatened with being denied future bus service unless they are able to remove all of their bags of groceries from their cart and break down the cart before boarding the bus.

- The Charm City Circulator bus (operated by Veolia) provides free transportation throughout Baltimore's downtown region. The bus yard is located at 1400 Cherry Hill Road, which is two blocks from the Cherry Hill light rail stop and connected to MTA bus routes 27, 29, and 51. While the bus terminal is located in Cherry Hill, none of the passenger routes come to Cherry Hill throughout the day. Ironically, Cherry Hill residents are unable to board the Charm City Circulator bus to ride into the downtown area at no cost even though the terminal is located in the community.

Education and Youth Development

Most residents expressed favorable perceptions about Cherry Hill Schools. One resident who was critical of the schools reported that students were very far behind academically; a few others described the need for the schools to take better care of their grounds and to clean up the trash that littered school property.

- Most residents were unaware of the relocation of the Maritime Industries Academy High School from Northeast Baltimore to Cherry Hill in 2015.



- Residents reported favorable perceptions of the recently implemented early childhood program in Cherry Hill.
- While several residents reported a greater need for after-school programming and parental support activities, many people

described successful programs already in existence. This gap suggests a communication and information gap, as many residents were unaware of existing resources and regularly scheduled activities for children and families.

- There is a need to adopt safe school program in Cherry Hill schools.
- Cherry Hill needs to invest in the future of the youth.
- Cherry Hill's schools need teachers who can relate to American African children.

Employment and Economic Development

- Residents reported low skills, poor quality education and criminal records as barriers to employment. Many residents described how friends and relatives applied for jobs at the newly opened Horseshoe Casino, yet most were turned down for a position.
- Residents want help with criminal record expungement but are skeptical, describing a broken promise by an individual who had worked with community members to help residents clear their criminal records.
- Residents requested that they be granted an opportunity to work in the new recreational center which is slated to be built in the community.
- Residents indicated that they need an active workforce development center.
- Residents indicated that they would like Cherry Hill to petition to be approved as a community benefits district that would allow them some leverage for negotiation on future development.

Environment

- Mold, flooding, and rats were repeatedly reported as concerns, particularly by residents of Cherry Hill Homes public housing.

Housing

- Many residents described how the construction of segregated public housing in Cherry Hill during the 1940s and 1950s continues to impact the community today, because there is limited single family housing available in Cherry Hill for residents who want to stop renting, yet remain in the community.
- Residents were frustrated that while they are asked to pay up to \$600 per month in rent payments to live in the subsidized housing, they cannot control their own utilities and are expected to pay outrageous heating and cooling bills. Residents are allowed only 200 kilowatts per month, and anything above that, the residents will be charged, although they did not have the ability to cut on or cut off their air conditioners or heat.

- There were several concerns about mistreatment reported by public housing tenants. Several residents shared about being relocated to other units throughout the public housing homes. They said that the residents had not been given an option about relocation; rather, they were instructed by the Housing Authority that the Cherry Hill residents HAD to move immediately for up to several months, with little explanation other than there were repairs to be done on the existing homes. They were moved to different units, but many of the relocation units did not have functional kitchen appliances or air conditioning during the summer. One woman shared that when she finally moved back to her old residence after several months of displacement, her old residence was infested with rats. There had been large holes left in the walls which were not there when she had lived there, and water/sewage pipes were left disconnected. She repeatedly asked for repairs to be done, but her requests went unanswered by the Housing Authority.
- Multiple residents complained about the time that they were displaced from their public housing units, they were barred from returning to their homes, under threat of arrest. One woman shared a story of returning to her home to retrieve medications. On the trip back to the old residence, a housing inspector told her that she could not go into her home, or he would have her arrested by the police. She argued that it was her home, and that most of her belongings were there. He argued back that the unit was now under the control of the Housing Authority and they would have her arrested for trespassing. She said that she felt powerless.
- Reports of a shaky relationship between Housing Authority management and the residents. There is a poor rapport between the housing management and tenants of public housing.
- Many of the residents indicated that they are unaware of the plan for the development of a private housing complex named Fishers Cove around the 800 block of Cherry Hill Road. They expressed interest in having the developer include several mixed income units that will be targeted to families in the low to moderate income category.
- Residents need homeownership counselling programs which aim to get renters into their own homes in Cherry Hill.

Crime and Public Safety

- Residents described low light and overgrown shrubbery and trees and providing conditions conducive to inviting criminal activity.
- Residents complained about increased police harassment, as well as lack of police presence where they are actually needed, e.g., bus stops, shopping center, etc.

- There needs to be more involvement of youth in recreational activities in order to deter crime.
- Residents want to see a change in the overall negative stigma of Cherry Hill.

Daily Living

Community residents report great dissatisfaction with accessing basic needs such as food and health care.

- Access to quality, affordable food was a consistent concern voiced by community members. Many residents without access to transportation were limited to shopping at the local Family Dollar store where the only food available is highly processed and packaged.
- A representative from the Virtual Supermarket, attended many meetings and described the services for fresh food available through the Virtual Supermarket. Many residents reported being unfamiliar with this service. Those that state that they were familiar with the service said that they didn't want to use the Virtual Supermarket because they wanted to be able to select their own produce in person.
- While Cherry Hill has a family health care center, some residents described experiences of misdiagnosis, or felt disrespected by healthcare professionals working at the center.
- Many residents, expressing concerns about “riff raff” hanging out at the Cherry Hill shopping center, felt discouraged about shopping there.
- Community residents expressed a desire for a café or other casual restaurant where people can sit down and have a meal.
- Residents expressed the need for a full service bank.
- Residents complained that the library is too small and does not have enough learning resources.
- There was a suggestion that Cherry Hill Development Corporation should enter into a partnership with Harbor Hospital to assist in health screening programs with residents of Cherry Hill senior housing.
- Department of Social Service case workers should be more involved in motivating parents since many of them have some connection with their families.

Desired Services

When asked what they envisioned for the future of Cherry Hill, many long-time residents described the past days when Cherry Hill had movie theaters, clothing and shoe stores and a bowling alley. Many residents described wanting these kinds of amenities, as well as a full-service bank, supermarket (which they suggested built on Waterview Avenue in order to attract more traffic and shoppers), a dry cleaners, a hardware store, and café or restaurant space where people can sit down to eat without having to rely on carrying food out or having it delivered. Residents also stressed the need for improved public transportation, including access to the Charm City Circulator.

FOOD ACCESSIBILITY AND MARKET SPENDING POTENTIAL

Cherry Hill is designated as a “food desert”. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food deserts as:

“urban neighborhoods and rural towns without ready access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food. Instead of supermarkets and grocery stores, these communities may have no food access or are served only by fast food restaurants and convenience stores that offer few healthy, affordable food options. The lack of access contributes to a poor diet and can lead to higher levels of obesity and other diet-related diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease.” (United States Department of Agriculture)

Using the USDA geographic classification for food deserts, urban census tracts qualify as food deserts if they meet low-income and low-access thresholds:

1. They qualify as "***low-income communities***", based on having: a) a poverty rate of 20 percent or greater, OR b) a median family income at or below 80 percent of the area median family income; AND
2. They qualify as "***low-access communities***", based on the determination that at least 500 persons and/or at least 33% of the census tract's population live more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store.

The percent of households living below the poverty line in the years 2008-2012 is 41%. There are currently no supermarkets or grocery stores within one mile of Cherry Hill's census tracts. Despite this area being designated a food desert, it does not mean that the residents do not desire to purchase quality food, nor would be willing to spend money on it. An analysis of market research data will examine shopping trends and market potential for the Cherry Hill community.

2014 Grocery Shopping Trends

Market potential data were analyzed to assess the grocery shopping trends of Cherry Hill residents. ESRI's U.S. Market Potential data tell about the products and services consumers want and the civic attitudes they have. The database provides the expected number of consumers. Market Potential identifies thousands of items in 35 categories. The information originates from consumer surveys compiled by GfK MRI.

TABLE: Percent of population expected to shop at specific grocery stores during a 6 month period, by location; 2014.

Grocery Store	Cherry Hill	Baltimore City
Aldi (%)	13.2	9.2
Food Lion (%)	14.4	8.8
Giant (%)	5.9	5.4
Safeway (%)	4.5	9.9
Save-A-Lot (%)	32.0	14.2
Stop & Shop (%)	5.7	7.4
Trader Joe`s (%)	5.6	11.3
Walmart Supercenter (%)	61.8	48.0
Wegmans (%)	5.9	3.6
Whole Foods Market (%)	5.7	9.3

The expected number of adult consumers for a service in an area was generated based on applying the service consumption rate across 67 types of market segments. (Esri, 2014) Expected percentages of adult shoppers for various grocery stores were computed for the Cherry Hill community, and for Baltimore City as a comparison.

The greatest percentage of Cherry Hill residents (62%) were expected to shop at Walmart for their groceries during a 6 month period in 2014. This level is nearly 12% higher than Baltimore City as a whole. While Walmart can be justified as an affordable grocery option, it is the most accessible option to Cherry Hill residents via the Maryland Transit Authority bus system. Two miles away, this store is a 7 minute car drive from Cherry Hill, or a 17 minute bus ride.

Thirty-two percent of Cherry Hill residents were expected to shop for groceries at Save-A-Lot, a rate nearly 18% higher than Baltimore City. The nearest store is at 5007 Ritchie Highway, which is around 3.3 miles from Cherry Hill. By car, this trip is about a 10 minute drive, but takes 30 minutes on the bus.

Aldi and Food Lion were each expected to be used by 13%-14% of the Cherry Hill residents during 2014, which are higher rates than Baltimore City as a whole. Aldi is located at 3140 Washington Blvd, about 3.5 miles from Cherry Hill, or a 12 minute car drive. Food Lion is located 5.5 miles from Cherry Hill at 7069 Baltimore-Annapolis Blvd in Glen Burnie; a 12-18 minute car drive.

Other full-service grocery stores were expected to be used less often by Cherry Hill residents. A lower-cost grocery, Stop and Shop, was projected to be visited slightly less often by Cherry Hill residents than the rest of Baltimore



City (6% vs 7%). This store is a 20 minute car drive from Cherry Hill in the Dundalk community and requires a toll payment. Mid-level stores such as Giant and Safeway were expected to be visited by only 5%-6% of Cherry Hill residents. Giant is 20-30 minutes away by car in Glen Burnie or 35 minutes via light rail. Safeway requires a 20-30 drive into Baltimore City or to Arundel Mills Mall. Grocers which are considered more upscale or boutique, such as Trader Joe's, Wegmans, or Whole Foods, were projected to be visited by about 6% of Cherry Hill residents. Trader Joe's and Wegmans each require a 25 minute car drive, and Whole Foods requires a 16-20 minute drive. It is notable that a higher percentage of Cherry Hill residents shop were projected to shop at Wegmans than Baltimore City residents overall.

Market Sale Potential

Market potential data were used to estimate the number of dollars actually spent in food stores, as well as the sales potential that exists, given the spending patterns of Cherry Hill and Baltimore City. The category of "grocery stores" includes store types of supermarkets and convenience

stores. Currently, Cherry Hill only has 3 grocery stores, none of which are supermarkets. It was projected that for 2014, actual retail sales for these stores in Cherry Hill was approximately \$1.25M. However, given the spending power of Cherry Hill's residents, there is the retail spending potential of nearly \$5.7M for grocery stores, which could surely support at least one full-service supermarket.

TABLE: Estimated retail sales and retail sales potential for food stores, by location; 2014.

TYPE OF STORE	Cherry Hill	Baltimore City
Grocery Stores (NAICS 4451)		
Number of Businesses: Grocery Stores	3	584
Amount of Retail Sales: Grocery Stores	\$1,250,592	\$769,835,553
Amount of Retail Sales Potential: Grocery Stores	\$5,663,677	\$876,636,908
Food and Beverage Stores (NAICS 445)		
Number of Businesses: Food and Beverage Stores	5	878
Amount of Retail Sales: Food and Beverage Stores	\$3,098,056	\$945,262,658
Amount of Retail Sales Potential: Food and Beverage Stores	\$6,438,101	\$1,005,067,835

In the category of “food and beverage stores”, this encompasses grocery stores, specialty food markets, and beer, wine, and liquor stores. In 2014, there were 5 of these stores, which include the aforementioned grocery stores. It was projected that Cherry Hill residents spent \$3.1M on purchases from food and beverage stores in 2014, with a spending potential of \$6.4M.

It is clear that while the residents of Cherry Hill live in a food desert, they desire access to full service grocery supermarkets. It has been questioned whether the poverty levels present in Cherry Hill would be able to financially support such a market in close proximity to the community. These market analyses show that finance may not be as much of a barrier as is transportation. When a supermarket is accessible via public transportation, many residents of Cherry Hill are likely to shop there, such as the WalMart Supercenter. A major challenge presented with that particular store is that the Under Armour corporation has recently purchased the parcel of land which houses the WalMart. While the store currently remains open, it is not clear what will happen to that store in the future. If Cherry Hill residents cannot reach WalMart via public transportation for their shopping needs, where will they shop?

It is difficult to conclude definitively whether Cherry Hill residents are less likely to shop at some of the more expensive grocers because of food cost, or because these grocers are not easily accessible to the community without use of a car. The market potential data show that there are

many disposable dollars available for spending in the Cherry Hill community. If a supermarket retailer would be willing to make an investment in this community, they may be surprised to find that the residents of Cherry Hill are just as willing as other Baltimore City residents to invest in healthy food options, if just given the chance.

THE CHERRY HILL NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

The Cherry Hill Needs Assessment Survey was designed to identify the needs of the community in order to help leaders and policy makers to develop an effective and efficient plan for improving the community. The responses gathered are valuable for understanding the critical areas of socioeconomic development in Cherry Hill. After receiving individual informed consent from participants, the responses were collected and analyzed. Strict confidentiality was maintained for all surveys which contained no information that could identify individual respondents. They were administered during meetings with residents and were also available online. Forty-six Cherry Hill residents responded.

Demographics

Tables 1 presents demographic background of the respondents—age, gender, education, marital status, employment status and household size.

Age: Slightly over 60% of the respondents were over 50 years old only 4.3 percent were in age group 20-29.

Gender: 75% of the respondents were female.

Marital status: Slightly more than 25% of the respondents are married, 40% are either divorced or widowed, and 33% are unmarried.

Education: 51% of the respondents had education beyond high school, with nearly 25% of the respondents having either a Bachelor's or Master's degree.

Employment: 40% of the respondents are currently employed and about the same percent are either retired or not looking for a job, and about 25% unemployed.

Household size: 25% of the respondents live alone, and 50% of them live with one or two people in the household.

TABLE 1: Demographic background of respondents, Cherry Hill Needs Assessment Survey, 2015.

CHARACTERISTIC	NUMBER	PERCENT
Age		
20-29 years	2	4.3
30-39 years	8	17.4
40-49 years	8	17.4
50-59 years	15	32.6
60 + years	13	28.3
Gender		
Male	11	25.0
Female	33	75.0
Marital status		
Married	10	27.8
Unmarried	12	33.3
Divorced/widowed	14	38.9
Highest Education Completed		
Some high school	10	22.2
High school/GED completed	12	26.7
Some college	12	26.7
Bachelor's degree	5	11.1
Master's degree	6	13.3
Employment status		
Employed	16	38.9
Unemployed	10	23.8
Not looking for job	5	11.9
Retired	11	26.2
Household size		
One person	11	25.0
Two persons	11	25.0
Three persons	11	25.0
Four or more persons	11	25.0

Transportation

About 25% of the respondents travel everyday to some other part of Baltimore City, and 75% travel “when they need to.” Most of them travel by bus, and 43.5 percent reported traveling by car. Only 4.3% use a taxi regularly .

Although about 31% riding public transportation reported that buses run every hour, a vast majority reported that the community has highly unreliable bus service. About half of the respondents travel to other parts of the city for shopping, grocery, health services, and other businesses, and small percent for work on a regular basis.

TABLE 2: Transportation trends among respondents, Cherry Hill Needs Assessment Survey, 2015.

CHARACTERISTIC	NUMBER	PERCENT
How often do you travel to other parts of Baltimore City?		
Daily	10	24.4
Every other day	6	14.6
As and when needed	25	61.0
Type of transportation used most often		
Drive car	20	43.5
Take bus	24	52.2
Take taxi	2	4.3
What is the frequency of the bus? (among those using public transportation)		
Every hour	8	30.8
Irregular	2	7.7
Other	16	61.5
Purpose of travel (multiple selections allowed)		
For work	5	8.5
For shopping	6	10.2
For health services	4	6.8
For other business	5	8.5
To buy groceries	7	11.9
To visiting friends or to attend church	1	1.7
All of the above	31	52.4

The respondents were asked to describe major problems associated with public transportation. Respondents have a large number of complaints about the buses that run in Cherry Hill, i.e., Routes 27, 29, and 51. The following is a summarized list of the problems (data not shown):

- Irregularity of service
- Not enough buses in service
- Buses do not stop at the light rail station
- Buses on weekends are *very* infrequent
- Buses are old and dirty and do not have a lift for plus size seniors
- Not enough bus routes
- Disrespectful manner of bus drivers with young people and seniors
- Not enough bus stop shelters

Policymakers and planners can address these issues with the simple allocation of resources and courses in courtesy for the drivers.

Schools and Education

Respondents were asked whether the schools in Cherry Hill provide good education for their children. More than fifty percent disagreed that they did. They were then asked to state the problems associated with providing good education for the children. The following is a summarized list of the problems (data not shown):

- Class sizes are too large
- Not enough teachers with cultural competency teaching in the schools
- Teachers are not well-trained
- Children are disrespectful to teachers
- Inadequate involvement of parents who discipline their children
- Not enough resources for afterschool programs
- Gangs

Stores and Services in Demand

The respondents were asked what type of stores and services Cherry Hill does not currently have and they would like to see come to the community. The following is a summarized list of these stores and services.

- Grocery store
- Drug store/ Pharmacy
- Super market

- Clothing store
- Shoe store
- Hardware store
- Bank
- YMCA
- Post Office
- Legal services
- Day care center for children and adult

Owners of businesses usually consider the demand of commodities and potential earnings for the company. The Cherry Hill neighborhood has about five thousand households. This number is adequate for opening some of the businesses listed above, but may not be adequate for other businesses because of higher fixed cost.

Community Activities and Further Expectations

The respondents were asked about community activities which typically occur in Cherry Hill throughout the year. Below is the summarized list of the activities:

- Boat races, waterfront festivals
- Football
- Block parties
- Cookouts
- Picnics
- Reunion
- Dances
- Church events
- Jazz night
- Carnivals, Festivals
- Back to school
- Fireworks
- Parent Café
- Health fair

Respondents were subsequently asked whether they participate in these activities. Over two-thirds of them reported participation, while the rest reported that they did not participate for personal reasons. They were also asked what additional activities they would like to have in the community. The summarized responses are as follows:

- Community picnic

- Educational activities
- Fishing classes
- Girls scout, Boys scout
- Tennis and Basketball courts
- Recreation center for children and adults
- Parent enrichment activities
- After school program for children
- Job training program for young adults

The listed desired additional activities for the community have great potential to improve quality of life for children and adults. These activities can be achieved for the community with some support from both the public and private sector.

Crime and Safety

The respondents were asked how they view crime and safety issues in Cherry Hill. Forty percent of interviewed residents viewed crime and safety as a “very big problem”, while another 49 percent viewed it as “somewhat of a problem” in the community. Twelve percent of the interviewed residents did not see crime and safety issues as a problem at all.

Resident were asked to list the crimes that they consider as serious for the community. Their responses are summarized as follows:

- Drugs and drugs related violence
- Vandalism, e.g., breaking in houses and cars
- Robbery
- Gang violence
- Killing or murder
- Assault and battery
- Theft

The most frequently mentioned crime was drug and drug related violence. Such violence is also related to gang and gun violence. Breaking and entering and car theft were also concerns of the respondents.

Issues on Public and Private Housing

The respondents were asked about housing problems in Cherry Hill. Their open responses are summarized here:

- Houses built before 1950 lack modern facilities
- Heating system noisy and often does not work
- Gas and electricity included in the rent price
- Too many men living with women in public housing
- Multiple families living in one housing unit
- Too many non-community members
- Need new affordable private housing for middle class
- Provide ownership opportunities
- Trash is thrown on the street
- Sewage system often does not operate properly
- Complaints in public housing are not addressed in time

Some of the residential housing units require complete rehabilitation.. The community needs more public and private housing units. The city planners and community leaders should jointly address these issues to improve the living conditions in the neighborhood.

Private housing: Respondents living in private housing were asked about the problems they face in living there. Only four people responded to these questions. They are concerned about the property values, and taxes. They are also concerned about the vacant and abandoned houses in the neighborhood. Respondents said that voucher recipients do not take pride in living in the neighborhood; they carry a preconceived negative notion about the community.

Cherry Hill and Middle Branch Development Plan

Questions were asked related to future development plans in Cherry Hill. These questions were related to participation in community planning, community organizing, and understanding of proposed development plans for the Middle Branch area. Very few respondents (n = 6) answered these questions.

The respondents showed a lack of knowledge of Baltimore City's plan on Middle Branch development that includes Cherry Hill. They stated that they needed to be involved in the decision-making process and that residents of the community should organize in order to protect their interests. As Cherry Hill residents, they look forward for more affordable housing in the community so as to have more homeowners in the community.

Survey Conclusions

The Cherry Hill Needs Assessment Survey provides insight of the issues to be addressed in development plans to enhance quality of life of the residents in the Cherry Hill community. To address some of these issues will require allocation of resources by Baltimore City or the State of

Maryland. Some of the reported issues should would require a large allocation of resources; others a joint effort of community leaders, city planners and law enforcing agency. The following are the highlights of the issues needed to address the quality of life and standard of Cherry Hill.

Transportation: It is evident from the responses of the respondents that only three buses, Routes 27, 29, and 51, run in the neighborhood of Cherry Hill on a fairly reliable basis. Irregular schedules were a major complaint by the respondents. These buses, as reported, do not stop at the light rail station, which reduces the flexibility and extension of mobility. These buses do not have operational plus size lifts for the disabled and elderly, and the drivers often show disrespectful manner to these people. Buses run even more infrequently on Saturday and Sunday. The respondents expressed a need of additional bus routes and stops with shelters. According to the residents, a better transportation system would make the residents more accessible to the job market, and thus impacting unemployment.

Schools and education: Residents feel that Cherry Hill schools suffer from large class size, an inadequate number of teachers who are often culturally illiterate when it comes to educating American African children with both contributing negatively to a quality education environment. Students need more after school programs to keep them engaged in activities and away from gangs. More parental involvement is required in order to discipline children who are often disrespectful to teachers, parents and the elderly.

Demand for essential stores and services: The neighborhood does not have many essential stores and services for which they have to travel to other parts of the city. These are: grocery stores, drug and pharmacy, super market, hardware store, bank, post office, and day care centers for children and elderly.

Community activities: Cherry Hill residents are involved with several community activities throughout the year. However, they also listed additional activities they think would be beneficial for the community such as a recreation center for children and adults, parent enrichment program, job training programs, boys and girl scouts, fishing classes, tennis and basketball courts.

Crime and safety: Most of the respondents consider crime as a serious problem in the Cherry Hill community. Drugs and drug related crimes were frequently mentioned in the survey. Other mentioned crimes were gang violence, assault and battery, vandalism, robbery and theft.

Housing: The Cherry Hill neighborhood is suffering from serious problem in public and private housing. Many of the houses in the community were built before 1950, without modern amenities. Heating system is often not operating and cannot be controlled by residents.

CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF CHERRY HILL

This report, requested by the Cherry Hill Development Corporation, revealed three basic themes among the community residents: 1) residents are very aware that their community is being targeted for gentrification; 2) residents are frustrated with the level of public service delivery to their community; and 3) residents take an immense pride in the history and culture of their community.

Gentrification

It is clear from both the quantitative and qualitative data gathered by the IUR during the research that the “Root Shock” described by Mindy Fullilove in her book of the same title, is present among the residents involved in this study. Anxiety on the possibility of “development” that would displace the residents was palpable during the focus groups and peppered discussions during the research. The research team was surprised that very few of the residents knew of the Middle Branch Master Plan that is being honed by city planners and policy makers at City Hall. Developed in 2007, during the Sheila Dixon administration, several iterations of the document have emerged and so it remains a “living document” with several moving parts. Members of the IUR staff attended meetings of the Middle Branch Planning Committee and were quite surprised that only a few members of the Cherry Hill community were present. This lack of attendance at these critical meetings that discuss the future of Cherry Hill, in no way should be construed as apathy on the part of the community. Instead, it represents Baltimore City government’s historic, 3-stage “process” of 1) planning 2) implementing and 3) explaining *ex post facto* what it has done and will do to poor Black communities in the city.

In 2004, the city of Baltimore approved plans for a townhome and condominium project called Waterview Overlook, but construction never started (*The Baltimore Sun*, 2011). The 8.8 acre parcel on Waterview Avenue between Westport and Cherry Hill with a view of Baltimore's harbor and skyline was sold at a foreclosure auction in February 2011 for \$715,000 to an unnamed buyer for development into residential use.

Beginning in 2004, a developer named Patrick Turner began assembling parcels along the Westport waterfront (adjacent to Cherry Hill), eventually paying more than \$10 million for

land on which he hoped to build 2,000 residences, a 65-story skyscraper, offices, a stadium, a beach, a kayak launch area and running paths connecting to nearby Middle Branch Park. The city agreed in 2008 to borrow \$160 million in bonds to help finance the development (The Baltimore Sun, 2015). Turner's plan was going to include the razing of public housing in the Westport community. However, due to the real estate market downturn of the late 2000's, Turner had to sell his investment. In early 2015, these parcels were sold to an unnamed buyer for development.

In nearby Port Covington, Under Armour CEO Kevin Plank announced in March 2015 that the company will build its new operations campus in Port Covington. While there are current plans for a distillery, mixed use residences for Under Armour employees, and upscale shopping, there is a high likelihood that the WalMart which currently resides on the purchased plot will have to relocate from its current location (SouthBMore.com, 2015). This will have a major impact on the residents of Cherry Hill, as a high percentage of the residents shop at this store, particularly due to its close location and accessibility via public transportation. Since the acquisition of this 128-acre parcel of land, there have been reports of real estate speculators attempting to purchase homes in Port Covington and Westport neighborhoods (Baltimore Business Journal, 2015). Residential speculation intensified in Westport after the purchase of the aforementioned waterfront land by an unnamed buyer. The question remains whether such real estate speculation and development will spread to Cherry Hill.

Neglect of Routine Public Services Delivery

The community survey, focus groups and community revealed an appalling indifference by Baltimore City in terms of public service delivery to the Cherry Hill community. Complaints concerning flooding, rodents, and public transportation are routinely ignored by respective city officials, despite Cherry Hill residents following protocol in lodging their grievances. One resident complained for several months about a hole in her kitchen where rats freely entered and exited. She called housing as well as the health departments to no avail and brought pictures to the meeting as proof of her complaints.

Another complaint was the rudeness of bus drivers who tell elderly citizens that they cannot bring bags of groceries on the bus. This poses an economic hardship on the seniors since they are forced to take taxis from far off grocery stores to their homes. The rudeness on the part of bus drivers extends to even bypassing residents who have a minimal amount of groceries to carry on the bus.

There was also a consensus that bus routes are dysfunctional in Cherry Hill since certain bus routes merely run in a large circle around the community, rarely on Sunday and

inconsistently throughout. The researchers and residents mused among themselves would such attitudes and work ethic be tolerated in predominantly white neighborhood and all of us agreed that they would not. It is impossible to separate this lack of proper public services for this community from the institutionalized racism that has plagued Cherry Hill from the very beginning.

History and Culture of the Community

Cherry Hill has a rich history dating back to the nineteenth century. As development and potential gentrification encroach on the community, it will be important to recognize and celebrate the rich history of Cherry Hill. In the 2008 Master Plan document for Cherry Hill, there were a set of recommendations established around preserving the history of the community. At one of the Middle Branch Master Plan meetings, residents had a chance to express their ideas about cultural preservation. The facilitator said that “the focus of cultural preservation had been natural resources and architecture.” When residents discussed the importance of preserving the community’s American African culture history and culture, the facilitator admitted that “he had never thought about this.” Cherry Hill’s Black history holds an important place not only in the history of Baltimore City, but nationally as well. Despite its racist beginnings, it was the first planned “Black suburb” in the United States.. Notable American Africans such as DeWayne Wickham, national columnist for *USA Today* was raised in Cherry Hill as was TV talk show host Montel Williams. This rich history of people places and events is important to the current residents and memorializing them should be a top priority in future development.

The Commission for Historical and Architectural Preservation (CHAP) has recommended to initiate the process of designating Cherry Hill as an historic district and studying the possibilities for additional landmark sites. A thorough study should be done to determine if Cherry Hill as a whole meets the criteria for historic district designation. In addition to consideration as an historic district, certain buildings could be considered for Landmark Designation. Local residents should make suggestions about sites that might have significant history. CHAP staff will then evaluate them to see if they meet local landmark criteria. Some sites which have been recommended for possible landmark designation:

1. **Cherry Hill Homes, 1001-1003 Cherry Hill Road** (among other addresses). Built c. 1944 by the Housing Authority of Baltimore City, in coordination with United States War Housing Association, and designed by local architect Lucius White, these structures represent the earliest public housing development in Cherry Hill and the first suburban-type garden apartment public housing for American Africans in Baltimore.

Today, there are significant changes to the structure that may impact the historic integrity of the buildings. While these public housing structures may be torn down for redevelopment, it could be argued that they should be preserved as historic landmarks.

2. **1000 block of Cherry Hill Road.** These are some of the oldest privately developed houses in Cherry Hill. Further research to see who lived in them will help determine their significance to Cherry Hill and Baltimore.
3. **The family home of the Murphy family,** a preeminent American African family producing two judges.
4. **DeWayne Wickham's childhood home.** Wickham is a celebrated American African journalist and author of many books, including *Woodholme: A Black Man's Story of Growing Up Alone*.
5. **Community Baptist Church,** 827 Cherry Hill Road.
6. **Hemingway Temple AME Church,** 2701 Woodview Road.
7. **St. Veronica's Catholic Church,** 806 Cherry Hill Road.

There have been several efforts to chronicle the history of Cherry Hill, including an extensive oral history project and history, *Cherry Hill: A Community History*, published by Loyola College professor John R. Breihan in 2003. The Master Plan recommends that the community celebrate their history with interpretive signage, displays, and brochures. Exhibits can be displayed in churches, community centers, schools, and the Cherry Hill shopping center (Cherry Hill Community Master Plan, 2008).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of large community surveys usually end with a set of recommendations based on the findings of the research. These recommendations usually receive considerable attention by policy makers at the time of their release, a flurry of public comment afterwards and then the final report is shelved. Policy makers, the surveyed, the researchers and ultimately the community itself all return to the status quo.

The Institute for Urban Research is departing from this tradition by recommending that the original Cherry Hill Master Plan developed by Baltimore City in 2008, should be revisited and implemented in 2016. The plan's recommendations were never fully implemented and the IUR staff feels strongly that they should. It should be viewed as a document not of a particular executive administration in Baltimore City, but one that is a living document of the city and therefore, should be, along with this study, used as guidelines for any marketing and development plans for the Cherry Hill Community. We have enclosed the entire 2008 plan in the Appendix.

The Cherry Hill Master Plan addresses ten themes around which implementation should be made. Across all of these themes, approximately 185 actionable recommendations were developed in 2008 to be carried out within 1 to 5+ years from the time of the Master Plan's publication. While some of these recommendations may have been completed since 2008, many still have yet to be implemented. The IUR believes that it is of paramount importance that each of these recommendations be revisited in order to decide which are still salient today for the improvement of the Cherry Hill community. The recommendations are summarized as follows:

Economic Development

- Keep dollars in the community.
- Eliminate loitering in the Town Center.
- Study the economic feasibility of offering healthier foods in local stores.
- Increase access to jobs for Cherry Hill residents.

Physical Development

- Analyze zoning of all areas that are currently used for anything other than housing.
- Inventory and develop a plan for upgrading community infrastructure.
- Upgrade, enhance, maintain, and promote parks, recreation, and public open space.
- Create an ongoing sanitation, beautification, and maintenance program for all of Cherry Hill.
- Create mechanisms to protect the interests of the Cherry Hill community related to future development. One such tool could be a community benefits agreement created by the community and a developer and recognized by the Planning Commission.

Transportation

- Improve transportation in and through Cherry Hill.
- Improve safety and security at all transportation facilities.

Historic Preservation

- Recognize and celebrate the rich history of Cherry Hill.

Housing

- Create affordable homeownership and rental opportunities.
- Upgrade existing housing units.

- Promote the value of living in Cherry Hill.

Health

- Coordinate, integrate and enhance health resources to take advantage of economies of scale.
- Promote the use of the community health center – Family Health Centers of Baltimore.
- Obtain comprehensive community hospital services.
- Create better marketing of services/educational opportunities available through various sources.
- Develop programs that will help to prevent chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, obesity, hypertension), prevent cardiovascular diseases and dental problems, and encourage good health practices.
- Promote health and fitness for area residents.
- Encourage parents to have their children prepared for school by having immunizations and physicals.
- Treat youth violence as a public health issue.

Public Safety

- Provide better overall organization of crime prevention activities. Increase Block Watchers/Citizens on Patrol.
- Provide better lighting in the community.
- Decrease speeding in certain areas.
- Continue to address the increasing number of automobiles in the community without tags or with for-sale information printed on the windshields.
- Continue to eliminate auto repairs on the street.
- Establish a Community Justice Center in Cherry Hill.
- Develop an emergency response and evacuation plan.

Education

- Involve parents more actively in the educational process.
- Ensure that students have a solid high school education so they can make the appropriate educational decisions or career decisions if continuing education is not a viable goal.
- Ensure that representatives from the educational system actively participate in the community where they work.

Youth

- Advocate for children and youth in Cherry Hill.
- Create apprenticeships and job opportunities for youth.
- Keep Recreation Centers open.
- Investigate developing a comprehensive youth center with longer hours.

Civic Engagement

- Attain 100% voter participation.
- Get younger voters to the polls.