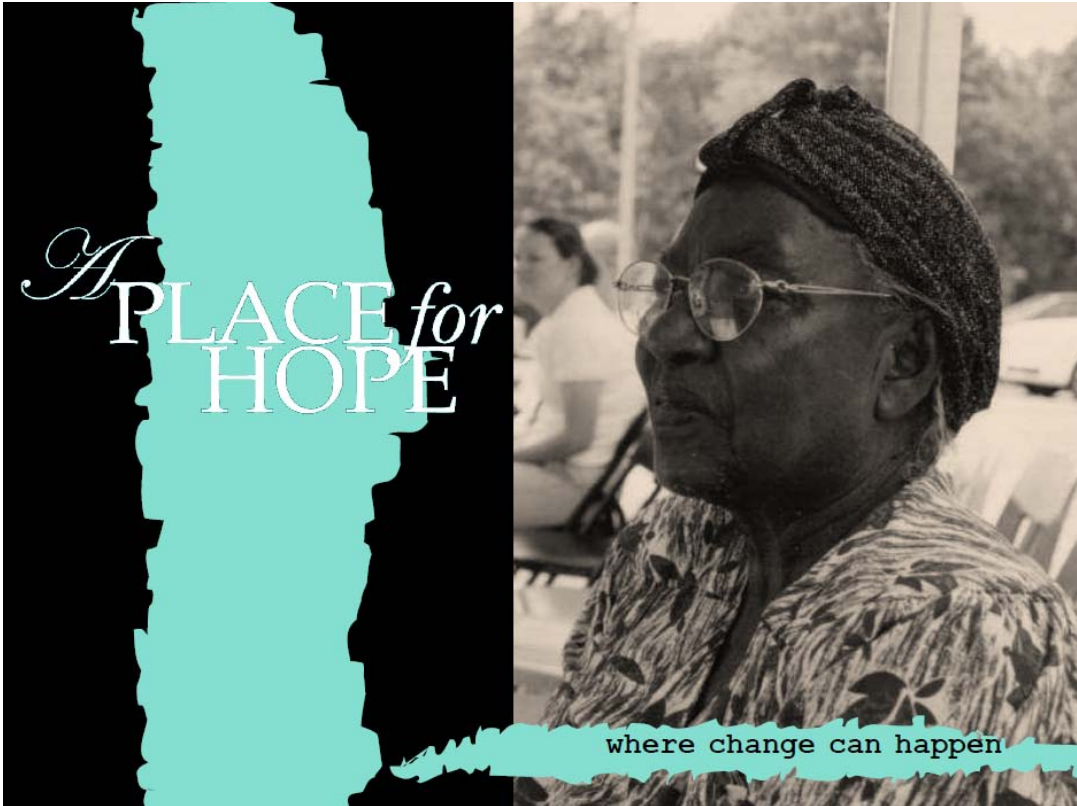




Blackmon Road Community Neighborhood Master Plan



Recommended for Approval by the
York County Planning Commission

INSERT DATE HERE

Adopted by the
York County Council

INSERT DATE HERE

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A LASTING PARTNERSHIP (1989 – 2009)

The following timeline spans two decades and chronicles the relationship between York County, residents and supporters of the Blackmon Road community, and Catawba Regional Council of Governments (CRCOG).

1989 Catawba Regional began working with York County to look for funding sources to extend water and sewer services to the Blackmon Road community.

1991 CRCOG prepared a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application to request \$500,000 to construct water and sewer lines to the Blackmon Road community. There were 20 households at that time and 13 had no indoor plumbing or bathrooms. In order to receive CDBG funds, indoor facilities have to be provided as part of the project, making the total project cost over \$608,000. There were not enough grant funds to construct the water and sewer lines and the bathrooms, so Habitat was approached about the possibility of adding the bathrooms. At that time, Habitat for Humanity was unable to do this. There was also the concern that if water and sewer service was available, there were few households that could afford the fees. Therefore, York County withdrew the CDBG application.

1993 The plight of the Blackmon Road community became more visible and leaders in York County and the City of Rock Hill became aware that there were more problems besides the need for water and sewer – education, jobs, health care, housing, child care, transportation, and counseling. At this time, Reverend Ronal King became involved in the area by delivering food. A group of representatives from York County, the City of Rock Hill, Catawba Regional and local leaders began meeting to look at avenues to help the area. One of the ideas was to relocate the residents to public housing, in cooperation with the Rock Hill Housing Authority. Reverend King met with the residents and reported that they did not want to move. Churches became involved to offer assistance to Reverend King with providing meals and organized efforts to provide clothing, heating assistance and other services.

2000 CRCOG began working with Westminster Church to create a care center in order to apply for a CDBG grant to extend water and sewer services to the center. After meeting with the SC Department of Commerce on numerous occasions, it was determined that since a church was involved, CDBG funds could not be used. It was suggested that a non-profit be organized.

2001 CRCOG prepared a CDBG application for York County to undertake a comprehensive study of the Blackmon Road area in order to assess the needs and identify strategies to address the needs of the residents of the area. The application was approved and the study began.

2001 Donna Berry founded *A Place for Hope* in the Blackmon Road neighborhood as a resource center to provide educational and job training programs, food, clothing and other services needed for the residents. A Place for Hope was located in a mobile unit, which was donated and placed on a parcel of land that is leased at no cost.

2003 A Place for Hope received its 501(c)(3) non-profit status.

2003 CRCOG completed the Blackmon Road Study Project and began taking steps to develop an eligible infrastructure project for CDBG funding.

2003 York County directed county staff to form a Blackmon Road Community Builders Committee, under the direction of County Manager Al Greene, to gather representatives from York County, the City of Rock Hill, CRCOG, the York County Sheriff's office, the York County Department of Social Services, the York County Council on Aging, York Technical College, Winthrop University, Rock Hill School District, Clinton Junior College, Habitat for Humanity, Keystone, York County Home Builders Association, Catawba Mental Health, the Employment Security Commission, the Rock Hill Housing Authority, the Fort Mill Housing Authority, the North Family Medical Center, the SC Centers for Equal Justice, York County Baptist Association, various area churches and other interested citizens, including several residents of the Blackmon Road community. This committee met consistently from 2004 to 2008 and has been instrumental in formulating ideas to address infrastructure, housing, social and community needs.

2004 CRCOG prepared a CDBG application for York County to request funds to extend water and sewer lines and a road to A Place for Hope. The project was awarded in December 2004 and work began in 2005. The original project budget was \$553,308, which included \$500,000 from the CDBG funds and \$53,308 from local funds.

2005 A Place for Hope hires its first part-time manager and gets an Americorps VISTA worker.

2006 A Place for hope hired its first full-time executive director.

2007 The CDBG project to extend water and sewer lines and a road to A Place for Hope is completed. The project cost was greatly increased from the proposed budget in the application due to encountering rock along the construction route. The final project cost was \$879,838, which included \$610,001 from CDBG funds, \$268,454 from York County and \$1,383 from the City of Rock Hill.

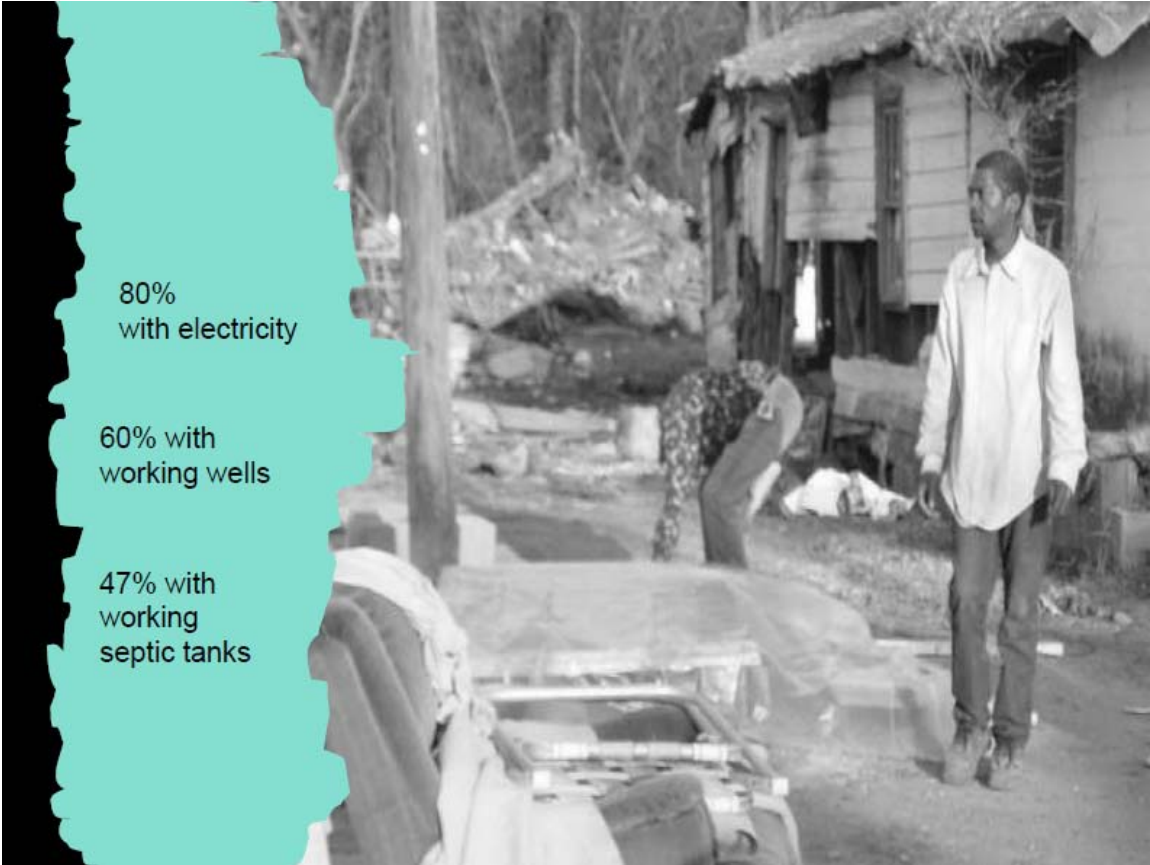
2008 York County contracted with CRCOG to prepare a Blackmon Road Neighborhood Master Plan in response to County Council's desire to support A Place for Hope. This effort would update the 2003 plan and identify a variety of infrastructure and housing projects, along with strategies for funding the improvements.

2009 A Place for Hope received an EPA grant to form a healthy housing committee to "empower, educate and train" its members to "take a stronger, respected, and realistic part in the decision making process."

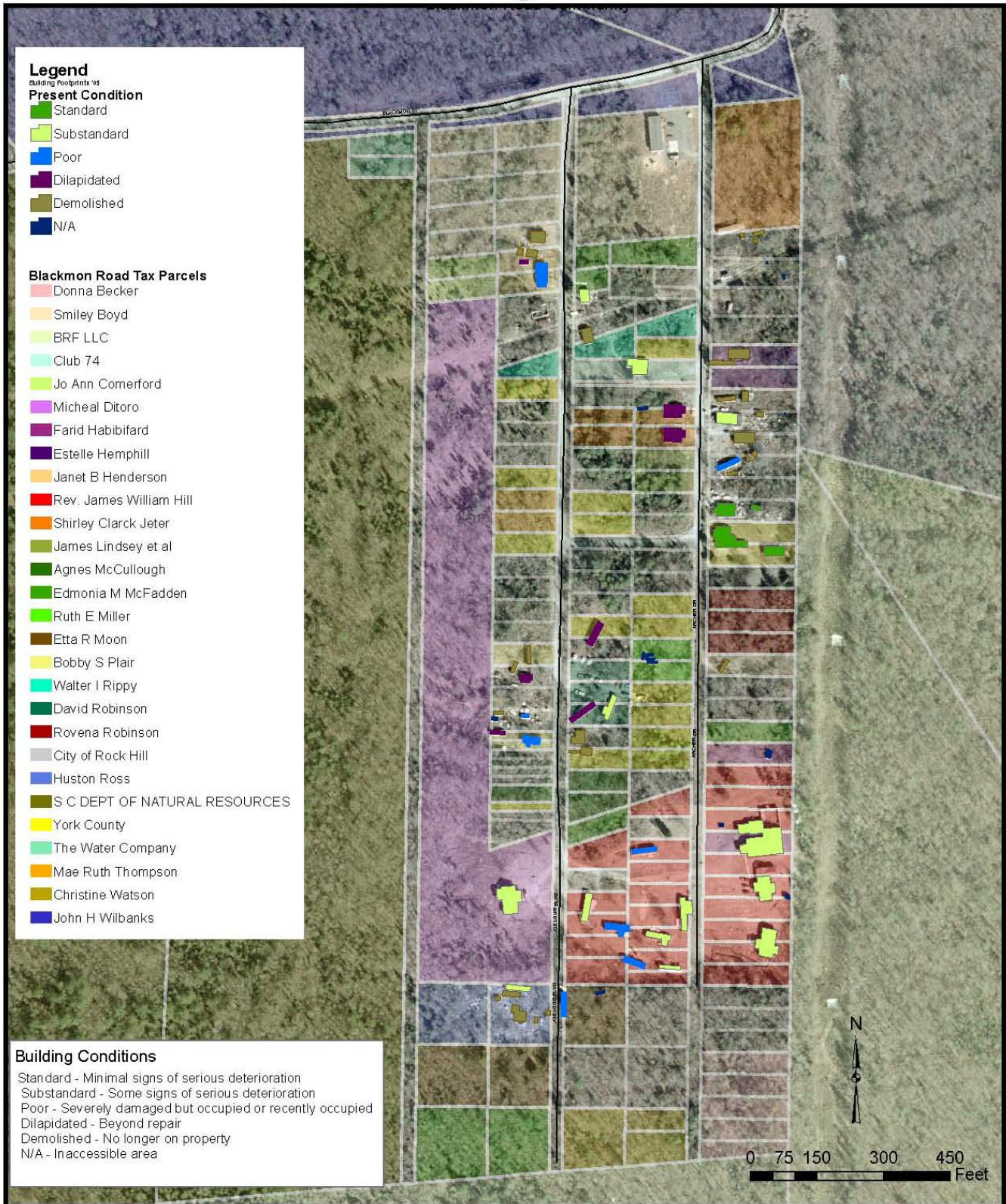
Mission Statement

A Place for Hope, Inc. (APFH) is the community resource center, meeting place, and outreach facility of Blackmon Road, providing educational support programming, life-skills learning, and job development training to empower the families of the Blackmon Road Community of York County, South Carolina. APFH acts as the resident-centered advocacy organization for the sustainable and healthy development of the BRC.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS



PROPERTY OWNERSHIP & BUILDING CONDITIONS



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The following characteristics provide a comprehensive view of the BRC that must be acknowledged before revitalization can occur.



Strengths

- Local champions: **A Place for Hope**, County Council & staff.
- **Active supporters** in greater Rock Hill community.
- Good relationship with Rock Hill School District Three and Belleview Elementary.
- Proximity to urban services—water, sewer, paved streets, etc.



Weaknesses

- Education & income levels of residents are lower than surrounding area.
- Land ownership complexities and narrow lot dimensions.
- **Deteriorating housing stock**, 93% of the housing is either deteriorated or dilapidated.
- Limited transportation choices.
- Topography and geology that do not support extension of gravity sewer lines into the central and southern sections of the neighborhood due to numerous rock outcroppings and 'Blackjacks' soil.



Opportunities

- Proximity to Rock Hill and city services—street lights, garbage collection, police and fire protection, etc.—after annexation into city jurisdiction.
- Nearby schools (The Children’s School and Phoenix Academy).
- Introduction of new housing standards: roof pitch, style, massing, materials, etc.
- Revise land use map and zoning district(s) to reflect neighborhood planning efforts.
- **York County Access** ‘check point’ transportation service.
- Wilbanks property (60+ acres) for master planned development.
- City of Rock Hill former landfill as a redevelopment area.
- Widening of Albright Road to a 5-lane highway.
- **Rock Hill Blackjacks Heritage Preserve** and SC Department of Natural Resources partnership.



Threats

- Continual decline of housing stock.
- Nearby rock quarry.
- Generational poverty.
- **High unemployment rate**, 50% of workers are without jobs.
- York County’s Urban Development (UD) zoning and City of Rock Hill’s Heavy Industrial (IH) zoning classifications.



LIVABILITY PRINCIPLES

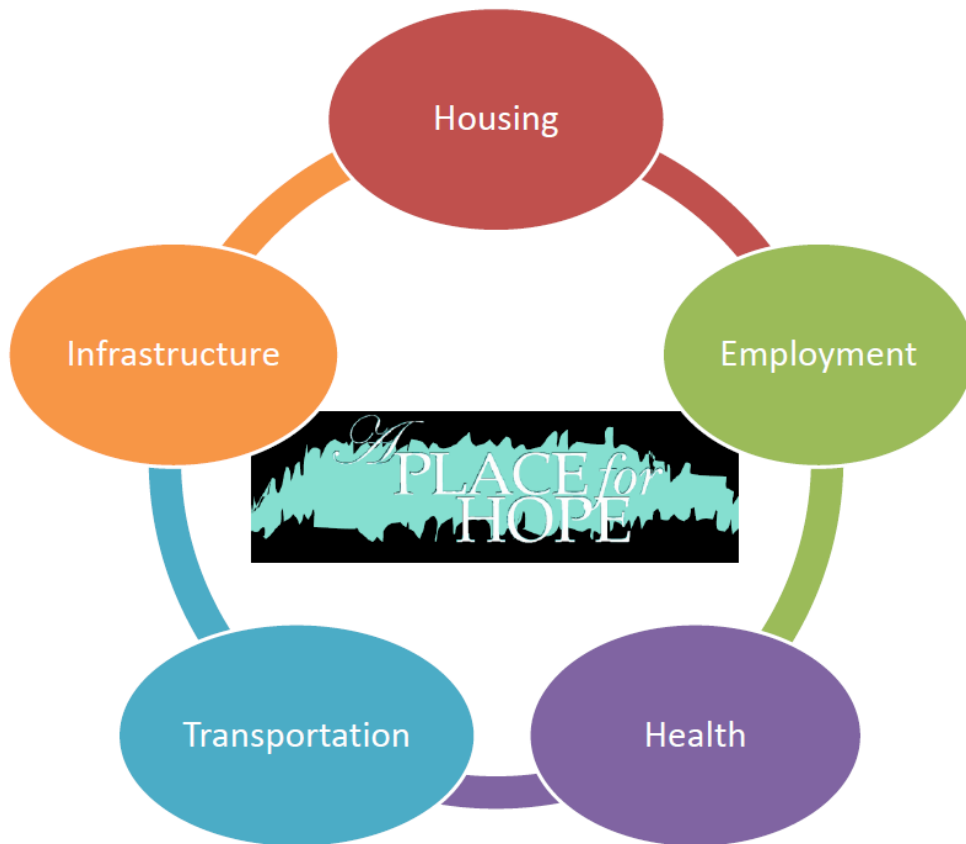
HUD, DOT and EPA Partnership: Sustainable Communities



PROGRAM AREA	FEDERAL OBJECTIVE
<p>Transportation <i>Provide more transportation choices.</i></p>	<p>Develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health.</p>
<p>Housing <i>Promote equitable, affordable housing.</i></p>	<p>Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.</p>
<p>Employment <i>Enhance economic competitiveness.</i></p>	<p>Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets.</p>
<p>Infrastructure <i>Support existing communities.</i></p>	<p>Target federal funding toward existing communities – through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling – to increase community revitalization, the efficiency of public works investments and safeguard rural landscapes.</p>
<p>Health <i>Value communities and neighborhoods.</i></p>	<p>Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe and walkable neighborhoods – rural, urban or suburban.</p>
<p>Coordination <i>Coordinate and leverage federal policies and investment.</i></p>	<p>Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.</p>

CONNECTING THE DOTS

The national *Livability Principles* (opposite page) were established in June 2009 through a cooperative agreement between the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to coordinate federal programs and resources to foster sustainable communities. During the same general timeframe (2009) the Blackmon Road Healthy Housing Committee and this neighborhood master plan were discussing similar key concepts and principles. The following graphic illustrates how the national and local emphasis areas are interconnected and will work together to support the redevelopment of the Blackmon Road Community.



To ensure successful implementation of the *Livability Principles*, public and private resources at the federal, state and local levels must be carefully coordinated. Leveraging this awareness and spirit of cooperation between public agencies will be facilitated by this new federal partnership and its strong influence on respective state agencies. These state agencies—Departments of Commerce, Health and Environmental Control, and Transportation—are principal funding sources for the community improvements listed in the *Recommended Actions* section of this plan. Private sector supporters will also understand and appreciate the opportunity to leverage resources from multiple sources in a collective manner. The time for redeveloping the Blackmon Road Community appears ripe in terms of supportive federal policies and community stakeholder buy-in.

REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

The following drawings provide a conceptual view of the future revitalization and development of the Blackmon Road Community and the surrounding properties.

Neighborhood Level

BRC is part of a larger neighborhood that is served by Albright Road. This area of York County has a variety of land uses from industrial to commercial to residential. The lack of cohesiveness that plagues BRC also exists along this section of Albright Road. Recent efforts to widen Albright from a two-lane road to a five-lane highway will have a lasting impact on the neighborhood. The drawing below presents the concept of a master planned development with mixed uses (retail, office and residential) with direct access to Albright Road. Multi-family residential uses (apartments and townhomes) along a linear park and single-family homes (detached and duplexes) around A Place for Hope and the new Village Green.



Block Level

APFH is the focal point of the community. Future development must embrace and support this neighborhood center. The wash house will be the first step, followed by new rental housing, a transit stop, and a new building for APFH. Proposed new single-family housing (single-family detached and duplexes) will be based on the successful Katrina Cottage model used in revitalization efforts in the Gulf Coast states.

The area's topography and geology do not support extending gravity sewer lines into the central and southern sections of the neighborhood due to numerous rock outcroppings and 'Blackjacks' soil. Therefore, the infrastructure improvements needed to support redevelopment will occur in the immediate area surrounding A Place for Hope. This location presents the best option for success because the new water and sewer mains will extend the existing mains that were constructed in 2007. Preliminary cost estimates are in the range of \$350,000 to \$500,000.



RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Immediate Projects [0-2 years]

- Locate a **wash house** adjacent to APFH to provide bathrooms and showers along with washing machines and dryers for use by the BRC residents. **[\$50,000]** *Mulvaney Foundation*



- Acquire Boyd property to ensure long-term stability of APFH. **[\$10,000]** *York County*
- Install water, sewer and road infrastructure to serve new rental housing units adjacent to APFH. **[\$200,000 - \$500,000]** *York County and CDBG funds*

- Improve housing conditions by **building 2-4 new rental housing units** adjacent to the community center that will be managed by APFH that can serve as models. **[\$150,000 - \$300,000]** *York County, HOME grant and APFH*



- Begin consistent and continued enforcement of building, nuisance and zoning codes to protect public and private investment in the neighborhood. **[in-kind]** *York County*
- Identify substandard structures and condemn/demolish units to ensure protection of public health and welfare. **[\$50,000 - \$100,000]** *York County and CDBG funds*
- Initiate talks with **RHSD3** to ‘assign’ elementary students to The Children’s School to take advantage of the Montessori based curriculum. **[in-kind]** *York County & Rock Hill School District Three*



- Request ‘check point’ service from York County Access to provide a permanent, reliable transportation option to/from work, medical appointment and shopping. **[in-kind]** *York County*
- Continue partnership with EPA and SCDHEC to address alternative measures for providing water and wastewater services to current homes that are not able to support conventional systems. **[in-kind]** *York County, EPA and DHEC*
- Begin a meaningful dialogue with Reverend Hill to develop a mutually beneficial plan for integrating his church’s property into the overall community. **[in-kind]** *York County and APFH*

Short-range Projects [3-5 years]

- Engage owners of large adjacent parcels to **create a shared long-range vision** for the greater BRC. **[\$50,000]** York County, Wilbanks, City of Rock Hill and SCDNR
- Rezone properties** to facilitate new vision and plans. **[in-kind]** York County and City of Rock Hill
- Based on the success of model housing project, build additional units at the northern end of the community. **[\$250,000 - \$500,000]** York County, HOME grant, CDBG funds, APFH and private foundations.
- Install new streetscape (sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, etc.) along Blackmon Road and streets adjacent to new community center and in conjunction with new housing construction. **[\$350,000 - \$700,000]** York County, CDBG, SCDOT and APFH
- Invite SCDNR to be a partner in APFH and begin discussions about potential expansion of Rock Hill Blackjacks Heritage Preserve. **[in-kind]** York County, DNR and APFH



Long-range Projects [5+ years]

- Build a **new community center** and offices for APFH **[\$250,000]** APFH and private foundations



Projected Costs:	Immediate	\$960,000
	Short-Range	\$1,250,000
	Long-range	<u>\$250,000</u>
	TOTAL	2,460,000

PROJECT TEAM



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Additional copies of the plan are available to the public upon request.

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