

APPENDIX TASK FORCE STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPACT OF SEGREGATION: CROSS-CUTTING FACTOR #1

STRATEGY	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS	CRITICAL PARTNERS*
Strategy A: Acknowledge the significant role segregation and racialization have played in our current opportunity narrative and commit to becoming a more inclusive, fair and just community.	A1. Provide more opportunities to include all voices, especially those who have been marginalized or excluded in genuine community engagement and change efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a participatory budgeting process in our local government to engage people in decision-making around budget decisions that affect their lives. 	City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, CMS, Faith Community, Business Community, Philanthropy, Digital Charlotte, For Profit and Nonprofit Housing Developers, Grassroots Organizations, Criminal Justice System, Social Justice/Racial Equity Organizations
	A2. While we recognize that “inclusionary zoning” may be the goal that many seek (and may ultimately provide the long-term solution in Mecklenburg County and across the state), we must take action today to ensure we dramatically increase the creation of mixed-income housing throughout Mecklenburg County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide incentives and use other tools to support development of more mixed-income housing. See tactics for Strategy O 	
	A3. De-concentrate high poverty schools and create an educational environment in which all students can thrive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See tactics for Strategy B 	
	A4. Build and support community efforts to increase transportation options and efficient routes for people who live and work in different parts of the city and county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See tactics for Strategy Q 	
	A5. Ensure children, youth and families in all areas of the community have technology and digital literacy training to connect with broadband internet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support efforts by Digital Charlotte aimed at helping everyone in the community take full advantage of digital tools, access and technology. 	
	A6. Urge governmental, educational, philanthropic, nonprofit and faith-based organizations to make funding, programmatic design and policy decisions through the lens of equity and opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate multi-sector use of an equity lens tool as a filter for decision-making. 	
	A7. Engage more of our governmental, educational, philanthropic, nonprofit and faith-based organizations, as well as residents-at-large, in initiatives and opportunities that, a) elevate awareness and understanding of the impacts of segregation, racialization and inequality and, b) provide tools to help change behaviors and actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify strategies to encourage greater integration of early care and education programs to start building interracial relationships and trust from an early age. 	

A

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Strategy B: Address the complex, multi-faceted issue of school segregation with a systems approach	B1. Galvanize community support for the Board of Education's School Assignment Vision and Goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position the reduction of concentrated schools of poverty as a significant enhancer of economic opportunity for all students in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. 	CMS, Mecklenburg County, City of Charlotte, Faith Community, Business Community, Philanthropy
	B2. Increase community awareness regarding the impact of schools with highly concentrated poverty on economic opportunity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness about community events focused on the link between schools of concentrated poverty and economic opportunity. Evaluate opportunities to form partnerships and collaborations to inform the community and elected officials about the impact of highly concentrated schools of poverty. 	
	B3. Monitor progress of the assignment plan process and continuously encourage the Board of Education to be bold and courageous in developing the new student assignment plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage faith, business, grassroots leaders, parents, and other interested parties from across Charlotte-Mecklenburg to advocate to elected leaders for the reduction of schools with high concentrations of poverty. Support efforts by Digital Charlotte aimed at helping everyone in the community take full advantage of digital tools, access and technology. 	
	B4. Create an intergovernmental working group, including Mecklenburg's five towns, to develop a coordinated plan to reduce the number of schools of highly concentrated poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request that leadership from all elected bodies authorize the creation of an intergovernmental working group to evaluate strategies and tactics, which impact school assignment and enrollment. 	
	B5. Develop strategies to increase private sector funding of the CMS Foundation.	To Be Determined	

B

DETERMINANT ONE: EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

STRATEGY	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS	CRITICAL PARTNERS*
<p>Strategy C:</p> <p>Make the necessary investments to ensure all children in Mecklenburg County from birth to age five have access to quality early care and education.</p> <p>C</p>	<p>C1. Eliminate the waitlist for subsidized child care for all children birth to age five (3,014 as of Feb. 2017)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a financial evaluation of options outlined in recommendations C1-C3 to expand access in Mecklenburg County. This study is funded by the Charlotte Executive Leadership Council (CELC) and spearheaded by Mecklenburg County, with findings anticipated for release in 2017/early 2018. 	<p>Child Care Resources, Inc., Mecklenburg County, Smart Start, CELC, Philanthropy, Latin American Coalition</p>
	<p>C2. Make high-quality voluntary public pre-K universally accessible to all four-year-old children in Mecklenburg County.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the possibility of utilizing a local option sales tax increase to expand early childhood education. 	
	<p>C3. Increase access to voluntary high-quality early care and education for all children starting at birth, regardless of family income following attainment of the two previous tactics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and implement findings from Mecklenburg County's Feasibility Study of Pay For Success as a financing mechanism to enhance and expand access to Pre-K for four-year old children. This study is funded by the Department of Education with findings anticipated for release in 2017. • Quantify the costs and consequences to the community if greater access to quality early child care for children ages birth to four is not provided. • Develop and execute a comprehensive funding strategy to provide greater access to quality early child care for children ages birth to four and public pre-K for four-year olds based on the two studies above. • Advocate for increased funding and reimbursement rates for child care and public pre-K at the state and federal level. • Advocate for increased funding of public pre-k at the federal, state and particularly the county level. 	
	<p>C4. Promote a clear definition of and related indicators across multiple dimensions for what "ready for school" means to ensure early educators and families share common readiness expectations for children.</p>	<p>To Be Determined</p>	
	<p>C5. Improve data collection and reporting on school readiness.</p>	<p>To Be Determined</p>	
	<p>C6. Provide expanded support of Read Charlotte and ensure it has resources required for implementation of identified strategies.</p>	<p>To Be Determined</p>	
	<p>C7. Increase enrollment of young Latino children in quality child care and public and private pre-K education programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and convene Latino community leaders to identify access barriers and to inform strategies to increase Latino family awareness about the importance of early learning within and beyond the home. 	

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<p>Strategy D:</p> <p>Strengthen the early care and education workforce to improve the quality and experiences of early care and education available to children ages birth to five.</p> <p>D</p>	<p>D1. Improve the compensation and benefits of early care and education providers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the cost of raising our child care workforce's compensation to that of comparably educated staff in public Pre-K, Head Start and Early Head Start to improve the child care workforce and reduce teacher turnover. • Investigate public and private strategies that have increased early childhood workforce's compensation without increasing costs of care for families. 	<p>Child Care Resources, Inc., Smart Start, CELC, CPCC, UNC Charlotte, Latin American Coalition, Charlotte Works, Early Care and Education Centers and Providers</p>
	<p>D2. Expand the number of early care and education providers with certifications, credentials and degrees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pursue strategies to increase our early childhood workforce's access to, and engagement in, pre-service, in-service, continuing and higher education and peer learning. • Expand recruitment and support for CPCC's integrated pathway that targets ESL students and combines ESL instruction with the courses needed to pass the early childhood certification exam. 	
	<p>D3. Make high-quality voluntary public pre-K universally accessible to all four-year-old children in Mecklenburg County.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to classroom and program-based consultation, coaching and mentoring available to early childhood education teachers/providers to reinforce use of evidence-based early brain development and literacy practices. • Train all early educators in "ready-for-school" indicators recommended for development. 	
	<p>D4. Grow the culture and linguistic diversity of our early care and education workforce to better serve our Latino children and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with community organizations and houses of faith that serve our Latino population to increase awareness of the need for Latino early educators and promote the profession. • Create targeted recruitment strategies and supports for Latinos interested in entering the field, including having more bilingual early childhood educators. 	

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<p>Strategy E:</p> <p>Support parents and other caregivers as a child's first teacher in promoting positive early brain development, social and emotional health, and early literacy beginning at birth.</p>	<p>E1. Educate parents, early educators and other caregivers to help them understand the importance of positive early brain development, social-emotional development and early literacy and how to best support and interact with their children from an early age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and launch a public campaign to promote positive early brain development and early literacy. 	<p>Smart Start, Child Care Resources, Inc., Other Family and Children Nonprofits, Early Care and Education Centers and Providers, Pediatricians, Faith Community</p>
	<p>E2. Promote families as partners and leaders in co-creating and implementing solutions to improve a child's social-emotional and language and literacy development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help parents develop networks of peer and other support within their neighborhoods and communities create more mutual support for effective nurturing, early literacy and advocacy for their children. 	
	<p>E3. Build the capacity of early child care and early learning programs, schools and providers to effectively engage families in meaningful ways to support their children's social-emotional and language and literacy skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand access to evidence-based programs such as Raising A Reader in child care centers, family child care and homes, pre-schools and faith-based preschools and other community settings. 	
	<p>E4. Grow the culture and linguistic diversity of our early care and education workforce to better serve our Latino children and families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage more employers to provide paid maternity leave and utilize other employment practices that enable parents of young children to better support their children's early development. Increase the number of medical practices and clinics serving children and young mothers who are participating in the Reach Out and Read program that encourages active reading with children ages 0-3. 	
	<p>E5. Provide parents with greater access to developmental screenings for their children to help them identify learning delays, vision problems and other issues that may be affecting school readiness and that will enable them to seek help sooner than later.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to make the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) available to more parents. (Examples: Columbus Kids and Spartanburg Academic Movement) Increase access to needed post-screening developmental supportive services for children. 	

DETERMINANT TWO: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

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CRITICAL PARTNERS*

<p>Strategy F:</p> <p>Broaden the range of and access to high quality college and career pathways offered by our K-12 and postsecondary institutions, ensuring all students have access to and support for the full range of opportunities.</p>	<p>F1. Replicate, expand and improve career academies and other pathway models that provide a clear sequence of academic and technical courses, work-based learning experiences, intentional career advising, and opportunities to develop skills and earn credentials that will meet the current and future needs of the region's employers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider creating a leadership position at CMS focused on expanding the role of workforce development and work-based learning and building collaborative partnerships with government, local industry sectors, nonprofits and higher education to expand "next generation" learning opportunities for CMS youth. Support a new policy that every CMS Career Academy has an actively engaged Board of Directors comprised of industry stakeholders who are leading, advocating for apprenticeships and paid internships and supporting the career academy and holding the institution accountable. Continue to improve and increase industry-targeted CTE options for more CMS students in collaboration with industry and higher education programs. Explore opportunities for a consulting firm to partner with CMS to develop a roadmap for the future of CTE programs and community engagement. Create/implement a communication strategy to reduce the stigma and cultural bias associated with vocation education and non-degree certificate programs that lead to middle-skill job opportunities. Fully integrate entrepreneurship with the larger strategy of preparing students for productive, high-skill careers. 	<p>CMS, Employers, Charlotte Chamber, Charlotte Works, CPCC, UNC Charlotte, Meck Ed</p>
	<p>F2. Enable more students to access accelerated learning and dual enrollment opportunities, and make more credits "stackable" from high school into college, so high school courses count toward specific postsecondary credentials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen and expand articulation agreements and partnerships between CMS, CPCC and UNC-Charlotte. Launch a recruitment campaign to encourage more eligible, low-socioeconomic students to take advantage of the state's Career and College Promise Program that enables high school students to earn free college credit at CPCC during their junior and senior years. 	
	<p>F3. Increase the number of low-socioeconomic students enrolled in and completing higher-level college prep courses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that all high schools offer a minimum number of AP/IB courses and provide the necessary support for students to succeed in them. 	
	<p>F4. Explore funding options to ensure every Career and Technical Education (CTE) student has the financial ability to attain a certification.</p>	<p>To Be Determined</p>	

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<p>Strategy G:</p> <p>Equip all students and parents with the information and guidance they need to understand and navigate multiple college and career pathways, preparation and processes.</p>	<p>G1. Ensure all students, beginning in middle school or earlier, are exposed to and understand how to navigate career pathways and the postsecondary enrollment process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide a continuum of career awareness and planning support for all students beginning with career awareness in elementary school, career exploration in middle school and intentional skill development in high school and beyond. ● Leverage social media and technology tools to increase awareness and knowledge about career pathways and how to navigate them. ● Include and support funding of additional guidance counselors in future CMS budgets to achieve the recommended counselor/student ratio. 	<p>CMS, CPCC, Areas Colleges and Universities, Education Nonprofits, Charlotte Works, Meck Ed</p>
	<p>G2. Increase the number of dedicated college and career guidance counselors/advisors available for students in every CMS school, meeting the industry recommended average student/counselor ratios of 1:250.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Include and support funding of additional guidance counselors in future CMS budgets to achieve the recommended counselor/student ratio. 	
	<p>G3. Expand the knowledge, capacity and cultural competence of guidance counselors, advisors, career development coordinators, teachers and near-peer mentors on the various college and career pathways and trends, and ensure they have the tools to help students and their parents understand and connect with college and career pathway opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bolster ongoing professional development opportunities to improve knowledge and skills relating to targeted career pathways and associated educational and industry requirements. ● Increase opportunities for teachers and counselors to participate in summer industry internships to help them better understand how to contextualize learning with students. ● Have more CMS counselors, advisors, teachers and administrators participate in implicit bias training to challenge occupational stereotypes and interactions with students about their college and career aspirations and preparation. 	
	<p>G5. Leverage nonprofit and other community resources to augment college and career advising in our schools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate the need for a coordinating entity to lead professional development on career pathways and labor market trends for local education institutions and workforce agencies to ensure common information, data and best practices are shared. ● Aggressively grow work-based mentor programs to ensure every student has a tangible career path. ● Expand access to quality out-of-school time programming that integrates academic support with career awareness, exploration and preparation and helps connect more low socio-economic students to these opportunities. ● Increase support provided through programs such as College Advising Corps 	

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<p>Strategy H:</p> <p>Galvanize community support to develop and implement a multi-faceted plan to increase paid work-based learning opportunities for students.</p>	<p>H1. Increase community awareness about and support for apprenticeships, paid internships and other work-based learning programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Organize a learning network of employers with experience and success in providing apprenticeships, paid internships and other education partnership activities to share their knowledge, lessons learned and value proposition with other employers, and provide peer coaching. 	<p>CMS, CPCC, Charlotte Chamber, Employers, Charlotte Works, Meck Ed</p>
	<p>H2. Build the necessary infrastructure and employer commitment to implement and scale work-based learning in order to create at least 10,000 slots annually for CMS high school students; 1,000 by 2018, 4,000 by 2020 and 10,000 when fully scaled.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate the need for an intermediary or coordinator to promote, build and sustain collaborative partnerships with K-12, higher education institutions, local industry sectors and nonprofits. 	
	<p>H3. Increase the involvement of employers in developing and helping to teach courses that incorporate sector-specific knowledge and skill development.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create more pre-apprenticeship opportunities at CMS and CPCC to help students and workers understand how to qualify and prepare for apprenticeships. 	
	<p>H4. Require every student who completes a formal career academy experience receive a paid internship as a capstone to his or her high school career and that every CMS high school student, whether a career academy student, receive some type of meaningful work-based learning experience before he or she graduates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Publicly recognize and celebrate employers that support work-based learning and other collaborative work with education. 	
	<p>H5. Provide paid internships for high-performing, low-income college students enrolled in local colleges and universities.</p>	<p>To Be Determined</p>	
	<p>H6. Ensure students take advantage of the work-based learning opportunities by addressing structural barriers, such as transportation, work hours, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop strategies to address transportation barriers for students to access apprenticeship and internship opportunities. 	

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<p>Strategy I:</p> <p>Expand and strengthen support for first-generation and other low socioeconomic students who need help in transitioning to and completing postsecondary education.</p>	<p>I1. Reduce the potential for “summer melt,” which often causes unsupported students to not follow through with their college plans between high school and the first semester of college.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand information about and access to summer bridge programs at CPCC and other educational institutions to help students follow through with their plans. ● Explore efforts such as the Austin Chamber’s Summer Melt Aversion Program through which high school or college counselors and/or volunteers stay connected with students over the summer months. 	<p>CMS, CPCC, Area Colleges and Universities, Faith Community, Charlotte Chamber, Business Community</p>
	<p>I2. Continue to reduce the number of CMS graduates needing remediation at CPCC before they can take college-level coursework.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to align requirements for entry-level college courses with those for CMS diplomas. ● Administer the college-ready anchor assessment in 10th grade to address students’ academic deficiencies before college. 	
	<p>I3. Connect more minority and low socioeconomic college students to mentoring, academic tutoring, financial assistance and other support to help them stay in and complete their education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Create a learning network of administrators from CPCC, UNC Charlotte, Davidson College, Queens University, Johnson C. Smith University, and Johnson and Wales to share and support evidence-based best practices that improve persistence and completion rates of low socio-economic students. ● Embed mentoring in more scholarship programs that serve low socioeconomic students to help improve recipient outcomes. ● Provide financial assistance to meet basic needs for scholarship and low-income students, such as food, books and transportation. ● Leverage external partnerships to provide services and support for students. 	

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<p>Strategy J:</p> <p>Create more on-ramps to education, training and employment for our disengaged youth.</p>	<p>J1. Make the training and hiring of disconnected youth a higher community priority.</p> <p>J2. Expand collaboration and partnerships county-wide to support the reengagement of our disconnected youth and develop new and innovative approaches to working with them.</p> <p>J3. Connect more of these youth to earn and learn training programs that allow them to make a living while earning a credential or degree.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop creative outreach strategies to connect with teens and young adults. ● Provide additional funding and other support for workforce development programs that offer remediation and GED support, soft skills training, and postsecondary education and training opportunities, including apprenticeships, for teens and young adults. ● Promote entrepreneurship as an alternative pathway, and provide guidance and financial support to help young entrepreneurs get started. ● Connect youth and teens to caring adults who can help them navigate their challenges. ● Explore place-based initiatives that concentrate outreach and support in neighborhoods where larger numbers of disconnected youth live. 	<p>Charlotte Works, Nonprofit Workforce Development Agencies, CPCC, Mecklenburg County, City of Charlotte, Nonprofits working with young people, Faith Community, Business Community</p>
	<p>J4. Gain commitment from area employers to give disconnected youth a chance by providing them with training and/or work experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Call on our business community to reach out to disconnected youth with entry level jobs that lead to meaningful career. Businesses of all sizes and types, including entrepreneurs, have a role to play, and should be challenged to partner with workforce development agencies, CPCC, and other organizations supporting disconnected youth. ● Encourage more employers to use hiring policies and practices that do not automatically eliminate their hiring young people with minor criminal records. ● Work with the local legal community to offer opportunities for youth and young adults with a criminal record to seek expungement that will make them more attractive candidates for jobs. 	

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<p>Strategy K:</p> <p>Elevate and actively promote the critical importance of our young people acquiring a postsecondary degree and/or industry certification to successfully compete in our changing, technologically advanced labor market.</p>	<p>K1. Develop and launch a public campaign and strategy aimed at promoted the importance of postsecondary attainment for all students.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a local group of partners to investigate postsecondary campaigns in other communities to identify potential leadership infrastructure, costs, audience messages, what’s working/not working and which models may be best to consider for Charlotte-Mecklenburg. • Lead, support and implement such a campaign. 	<p>Charlotte Chamber, CMS, CPCC, Area Colleges and Universities, Charlotte Works, Meck Ed</p>
	<p>K2. Seek creative solutions to provide more young people with financial support/ scholarships to enable them to participate in postsecondary education and training.</p>		

DETERMINANT THREE: CHILD AND FAMILY STABILITY

STRATEGY

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<p>Strategy L:</p> <p>Encourage the formation and maintenance of committed two-parent families.</p>	<p>L1. Promote marriage, which research shows is the most reliable route to mobility, recognizing it may not be the choice of all couples.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop culturally appropriate communications and data-rich messaging strategies to increase awareness of the value of marriage, committed relationships, co-parenting and the potential challenges and related stressors in raising children. • Study, adopt, and implement evidence-based programs that effectgively encourage people to be part of committed relationships when considering parenthood. 	<p>Faith Community, Community-Based Organizations, Mecklenburg County DSS</p>
	<p>L2. Advocate for the active involvement of fathers in the lives of their children.</p>		

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<p>Strategy M:</p> <p>Ensure young women and men have the necessary information and sources of reproductive health care to ensure they can plan for pregnancy when they are ready to raise a child.</p>	<p>M1. Complete a community health assessment, plan and outreach strategy that builds understanding and provides a feasible approach to reducing unintended pregnancy in Mecklenburg County. This plan should explore a range of options from abstinence to creating greater access to the most effective forms of contraceptives, including long-acting reversible contraception (LARCs.) The work is already underway through a study commissioned by several philanthropic organizations.</p> <p>M2. Develop fact-based and culturally appropriate messaging that empowers all young people to incorporate pregnancy planning into the vision they establish for their lives. We acknowledge, first, that abstinence works. Always. We acknowledge, also, that those who decide to become sexually active are not necessarily deciding to have children. In order to prevent unintended pregnancy and reduce the risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), young people need age-appropriate information.</p> <p>M3. Based upon the outcomes of the assessment, launch a comprehensive campaign to reduce the rates of unintended pregnancy in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, primarily among all young women and men ages 17-29.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and secure philanthropic dollars for the campaign. • Implement the community strategies developed in the three recommendations above. • Ensure key stakeholders are engaged in the process including Mecklenburg County Health Department, Carolinas HealthCare System, Novant Health, private clinics and other institutions serving young men and women such as education and faith-based organizations. 	<p>Medical Community, Mecklenburg County Health Department, Health Nonprofits, Community-Based Organizations, Philanthropy</p>
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<p>Strategy N:</p> <p>Improve birth outcomes for all children and their mothers.</p>	<p>N1. Provide access to evidence-based information for all women, regardless of their income level, and culturally sensitive information and programming for quality prenatal and postnatal care.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure prenatal care services are more widely available early in pregnancy. • Expand the delivery of outreach strategies for low-income women who experience barriers to information and care. • Incorporate knowledge about and treatment for post-partum depression in pregnancy services. • Pursue additional funding for evidence-based home visitation programs, such as Nurse Family Partnership. 	<p>Medical Community, Mecklenburg County Health Department, Health Nonprofits, Community-Based Organizations, Agencies Assisting Young Families</p>
	<p>N2. Encourage more employers to provide paid parental leave.</p>	<p>To Be Determined</p>	

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<p>Strategy O:</p> <p>Help more families get and stay on a path to living wage income and asset building.</p>	<p>O1. Create and provide access to more quality jobs that pay living wages for families living in lower opportunity communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide economic development incentives and use other targeted tools (Tax Increment Financing, Opportunity Zones, etc.) to help attract new businesses to current “job deserts” in and around low-income areas of the community. • Place a higher priority on recruitment of companies to the Charlotte region that offer entry-and mid-level positions. • Ensure greater accountability for businesses that receive government tax incentives or support from other financing programs to hire workers from low-opportunity communities and consider hiring and wage practices when selecting vendors for government contracts. • Coordinate job development activities of local workforce development agencies that serve people with barriers to more efficiently and effectively match job seekers with employers. 	<p>Mecklenburg County, United Way, Human Services Agencies, Workforce Development Agencies, CPCC</p>
	<p>O2. Encourage more anchor institutions and other employers in the community to voluntarily raise wages and improve benefits of their lowest-paid employees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate and encourage more businesses to become “fair chance” employers who use best practices in giving job seekers with criminal records a fair chance for employment. 	
	<p>O3. Ramp up community efforts to place more parents of school-age children in jobs, particularly jobs with advancement opportunities and benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide retention support for graduates of training programs. 	
	<p>O4. Increase access and opportunities for parents to earn a high school or equivalency diploma and/or engage in post-secondary education or market-driven job training while meeting the demands of their families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and connect more low-income parents to work and learn training models that enable parents to make a living while being trained through paid work experiences. • Explore implementing evidence-based two-generation models in Mecklenburg County that bridge the workforce development system with the early childhood system. Integrate more wrap-around support (social workers and mentors) for parents enrolled in education and training programs. • Integrate more wrap-around support (social workers and mentors) for parents enrolled in education and training programs. 	
	<p>O5. Encourage and support more low-income parents to pursue entrepreneurship as an alternative path to their financial stability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and provide more entrepreneurship training loan programs and support in low opportunity communities, including financial training and products to help them address cash flow challenges. • Incorporate entrepreneurship skills into workforce development programs and develop links for entrepreneurs from socially excluded groups to connect with broader business/social networks that can help them grow their business. 	
	<p>O6. Connect low-income families to financial and asset building education and products that will help them become more financially stable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate financial literacy, asset building and financial capacity building into human service and housing programs. • Increase use of Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) to low-income families and advocate for the reinstatement of the North Carolina earned income tax credit. • Develop a campaign to educate families about the high cost of predatory lending and promote lower cost alternatives. • Encourage local banks and other credible financial institutions to offer free or lower cost products that encourage families to save. 	

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KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

CRITICAL PARTNERS*

Strategy P:

Take dramatic steps to address our affordable housing crisis, which will stabilize working families, prevent family homelessness and minimize the disruption of children who move from school-to-school due to housing affordability issues.

- P1.** Support the City of Charlotte's goal of creating or preserving a net 5,000 affordable units over the next three years. Concurrently, investigate and implement strategies to set an ambitious goal for a second wave of housing that will substantially reduce the deficit of 34,000 units.
- P2.** Pursue new and/or dramatically expanded sources of public funding to support affordable housing development.
- P3.** Engage private, nonprofit and public developers in new conversations to create innovative strategies to address locational and financial barriers to affordable housing.
- P4.** Encourage and support more place-based initiatives that include affordable housing as part of neighborhood revitalization efforts. (Renaissance West is example of place-based initiative.)
- P5.** Ensure mixed income housing—including rental and home ownership opportunities for low-income residents—is always considered when planning new residential or mixed used development.
- P6.** Act on the recommendations outlined in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Strategies for Affordable Housing Development Report.

- Increase housing bonds referendum from the current \$15M every two years up to \$50M every two years and maintain at these significantly higher levels.
- Explore the creation of a Housing Opportunity Investment Fund to incentivize new developments.
- Create strategies to increase use of the 4 percent Low-Income Tax Credit, TIF
- Examine ways to lower barriers and fees associated with the development of affordable housing.
- Overhaul zoning and permitting process including the creation of an affordable housing overlay district, and continue to advocate for changes at the state level, which would enable local communities to use mandatory inclusionary zoning as a tool to create more affordable units.
- Advocate that elected officials make affordable housing development the highest priority for using excess public land when deliberating on properties through the local government's Mandatory Referral Process.
- Partner with developers to understand the financial considerations of developing affordable housing and identify opportunities to help address those needs.
- Institute an initiative to acquire vacant, foreclosed residences with delinquent taxes and repurpose for affordable housing.
- Encourage large anchor institutions (schools, hospitals and other large employers) to consider assisting with housing affordability for its workforce.
- Substantially increase access to and funding for rental subsidy vouchers paired with supportive services, including programs such as the A Way Home Endowment.
- Create and sustain a landlord consortium to encourage landlord participation in all zip codes to house families with public and/or private rental subsidies.
- Provide more mechanisms for lower-income families to purchase homes that help build their assets such as creation of a community land trust, deed restrictions that control the resale price of a home.
- Develop and launch a community campaign to change the community mindset about affordable housing and shift to a "Yes, in my backyard" mentality by more people.

City of Charlotte, Private/Nonprofit Housing Developers, Business Leaders, Philanthropy, Mecklenburg County

P

STRATEGY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

CRITICAL PARTNERS*

Strategy Q:

Create a more connected community to ensure all families have ready access to employment, shopping, service areas schools, parks, and other daily destinations.

- Q1.** Increase transportation options for families that don't have their own vehicles.
- Q2.** Improve alignment between housing and transportation.

- Support the work of CATS' Envision My Ride study and subsequent implementation efforts, and prioritize connecting low-income families when implementing the bus route restructuring.
- Develop and expand public/private partnerships to provide low-cost transportation service, ridesharing, carpooling and/or bus pass benefits that will enable more low-wage workers to access employment sites within the county and region.
- Explore / expand options for low-income parents to obtain their own vehicles through facilitating vehicle donation and repair programs and/or providing loan assistance to purchase or lease vehicles.
- Increase opportunities for safe and reliable transportation for youth to participate in out-of-school time activities.

City of Charlotte, CATS

Q

STRATEGY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

CRITICAL PARTNERS*

Strategy R:

Develop efforts focused on addressing mental health issues and/or reducing the mental health impacts of living in low-opportunity environments.

- R1.** Deepen our understanding of the childhood mental health system, and develop tangible strategies to address identified needs and gaps. An assessment is underway currently with recommendations forthcoming this spring (2017).
- R2.** Increase the number of social workers in high poverty schools to provide expand access to students.
- R3.** Provide all teachers and others working with children better training on evidence-based practices to best address emotional stress and other mental health challenges of students.
- R4.** Provide all teachers and others working with children better training on evidence-based practices to best address emotional stress and other mental health challenges of students.
- R5.** Increase availability and access of parenting education classes, home visitation programs, mentoring and other support to help reduce toxic stress in the lives of low-income families.
- R6.** Support opportunities to identify best practices and/or evidenced based programs that reduce the impact of toxic stress in children, youth and adults including physical exercise, mental health education, meditation, re-framing, etc.
- R7.** Investigate strategies to reduce the stigma of mental health issues and associated treatment.

- Complete a pediatric mental health system assessment by June 1, 2017. Review and implement strategies based upon the findings.
- Support increased public funding through the Mecklenburg County Health Department for social workers assigned to high poverty schools within CMS.
- Leverage the recently announced collaboration between Novant and Carolinas Healthcare to ensure increased capacity to address mental health issues in low-income neighborhoods.
- Encourage creation of peer networks of women and parents with similar needs to support one another (example: Family Independence Initiative in California).

Mecklenburg County, Mental Health Agencies and Providers, CMS and Other Schools, Philanthropy

R

STRATEGY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

CRITICAL PARTNERS*

Strategy S:

Invest in strategies that lead to smart criminal justice reform and create a community where families are not split due to interactions with the criminal justice system.

- S1.** Develop policies and interventions to decrease the high rates of adult and youth interactions with the criminal justice system and counteract the current national and local trends of unnecessary jail time.
- S2.** Improve civilian-police relationships through increased trust and legitimacy, and develop local systems for law enforcement governance and oversight that brings civilians to the table as stakeholders and empowers the neighborhoods and communities being policed to address policies and practices.

- Advocate for policy changes to State legislation to raise the age when youthful offenders are charged as adults from 16 to 18 years old.
- Identify and implement evidence-based programs to increase school engagement, reduce youth delinquency and violence, thereby disrupting the "school-to-prison pipeline".
- Advocate for school policies and practices that promote keeping students in school and minimize the role of law enforcement in disciplinary action.
- Identify and pursue alternative intervention methods to replace disciplinary measures such as out-of-school suspensions, expulsion, and school-based arrests, which disproportionately affect students of color and transfer them from the academic environment into the juvenile and criminal justice systems.
- Invest in training and implementation of pre-arrest diversion initiatives that redirect citizens from the criminal justice system and into appropriate health, mental health, and substance abuse services when appropriate.
- Improve processes that move cases through the system quickly so individuals are not incarcerated for long periods of time as their case proceeds.
- Implement new policies for bail, fines and fees that will reduce incarceration of individuals who are incapable of paying fines, fees and court costs.
- Pursue more ways to improve relationships, increase community engagement, and foster greater cooperation and collaboration between the criminal justice system and community members, especially in communities and neighborhoods disproportionately affected by crime. Improved trust, transparency, and mutual accountability should result from this collaborative work.
- Utilize consistent survey methods to track and analyze the level of trust communities have in law enforcement.
- Continue to implement recruitment, hiring, and retention practices that promote a police force that reflects the diversity of the communities law enforcement serves.
- Encourage area employers to use fair chance hiring practices for job applicants with criminal records.

Criminal Justice System Agencies and Partners, Race Matters For Juvenile Justice, Council for Children's Rights, City of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County

S

STRATEGY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

CRITICAL PARTNERS*

<p>Strategy T:</p> <p>Re-envision a human services system in which the needs of families are addressed holistically and services and support are coordinated to achieve the best possible outcomes.</p>	<p>T1. Convene stakeholders to develop a community-centered human services vision plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop shared client databases and metrics, where feasible, to streamline intake processes and coordinate case management. • Coordinate social work case management across programs and systems (when multiple social workers are serving the same client) through assignment of lead social workers. • Use the collective impact model to support common goals and outcomes for families and programs that use evidence-based or research-informed practices to achieve agreed upon outcomes. 	<p>Mecklenburg County, United Way, Human Services Agencies</p>
	<p>T2. Use a systems thinking/design approach to better integrate and coordinate service delivery across programs and systems to provide more client-centered service and achieve greater outcomes for families.</p>		
	<p>T3. Improve and consolidate our information and referral systems to better and more efficiently serve families seeking assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform United Way's 2-1-1 system to serve as the community's central clearinghouse for information about and referrals to human services resources. • Invest capital in United Way's 2-1-1 system to allow for innovation and efficiencies. 	
	<p>T4. Invest in evidence- and research-based programs that produce the greatest impact on families and children.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop data sharing policies of government agencies that currently prevent sharing of data across systems. 	

SOCIAL CAPITAL: CROSS-CUTTING FACTOR #2

STRATEGY

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TACTICS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

CRITICAL PARTNERS*

<p>Strategy U:</p> <p>Ensure all children, youth and families have relationships in the community which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect them to opportunities, information and resources; - Broaden their horizons about what's possible in their lives; - Assist in navigating through unexpected crises to stay on track; - Offer tangible pathways toward achieving their aspirations; and - Demonstrate to every child, youth and adult that their contribution is vital to the success of our community 	<p>U1. Support an expectation that beginning in 7th grade, all students have access to a Life Navigator or other supportive adult to help expose, navigate and connect them to career, educational and life opportunities.</p> <p>U2. Develop and execute a focused strategy to build, train and coordinate an "army" of community volunteers committed to connecting more children, youth and families to knowledge, resources and opportunities.</p> <p>U3. Leverage relationships developed through the above and elsewhere to help young people and families build social capital and increase access to new networks.</p> <p>U4. Build on and expand efforts promoted through the 2014 Cultural Vision Plan for Charlotte-Mecklenburg, which focuses on connecting people and strengthening communities by using arts and culture to create pathways and bridges.</p> <p>U5. Encourage all sectors to use economic opportunity as a lens for their decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research and evaluate local, regional and national models to develop the Life Navigator concept. Examples include Kauffman Scholars, the Possee Foundation, etc. • Coordinate efforts by alumni organizations, civic/social groups, houses of faith, businesses, neighborhood associations, schools, etc. to have their members/employees engage young people through programs that create exposure and relationships. • Encourage faith-based and civic organizations to use economic opportunity as a lens to rethink and expand their community support and outreach efforts to maximize network building opportunities for those with more limited bridging relationships. • Ramp up efforts of the staff and boards of cultural arts organizations to go into diverse areas of the community to build relationships, listen to what people say they need and want and develop new strategies and programs that reach more diverse groups and communities. • Train "gatekeepers" in social service agencies, houses of faith and other organizations, to share information and better connect families, children and youth to resources and opportunities in the community. • Explore ways to visibly demonstrate a "Culture of Caring" by asking, "How will this decision impact the opportunity trajectory for all children, youth and families?", prior to significant decision making. 	<p>Civic Organizations, Community-Based Organizations, Postsecondary Institutions, CMS and other Schools, Faith Community, Business Community, United Way</p>
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* Entities identified under critical partners are not all-inclusive. This is a beginning list of potential partners/groups during implementation.