



Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership
The Larimer Consensus Group
HUD Choice Grantee Conference - March 17, 2016

Larimer At a Glance

- ▶ 750 vacant lots and homes in disrepair
- ▶ 30.4 % of the population is living below poverty
- ▶ Median income of \$23,040
- ▶ Declining aging population
- ▶ 40 years of disinvestment and deterioration



Big Picture- Journey to the Vision



Journey to the Vision

- ▶ Larimer community was established as a “blueprint” community by Ora Lee Carroll twenty years ago
- ▶ 2008 the Larimer Community Plan was formalized
- ▶ Action Teams (Green Team, Redd Up, Work and Wellness, One Voice and Celebrate) were created to focus on visible outcomes



Journey to the Vision

- ▶ 2010 The Larimer Vision plan was established upon the principles of equity and sustainability
- ▶ Focused on a comprehensive approach to community transformation
- ▶ The Plan strived to thoroughly identify community needs
- ▶ Passionate LCG members engaged the community of Larimer through this entire process



Journey to the Vision

- ▶ The LCG through the Action Teams and community survey developed a robust engagement strategy that informs the Vision Plan
- ▶ 2010 formalized the LCG as an incorporated entity
- ▶ Strong Partnership (KEEL) provided guidance, resources and mentoring
- ▶ Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant awarded (2014)



Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ The LCG was initially formed as a member based volunteer advisory board
- ▶ Strategy and operations have been driven exclusively by volunteer board of directors, which could inhibit sustainability and vision to become a full fledged organization
- ▶ The LCG received a number of organizational trainings, leadership development training, and assistance in developing organizational process and procedures
- ▶ The LCG leveraged valuable resources from key partners in the areas of fundraising and development
- ▶ An updated strategic plan and key partnerships (which included experienced CDC's and CBO's) positioned the LCG to grow and meet the new opportunities of an expanded vision

Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership (to this point)

- ▶ The LCG Built a Shared Vision
- ▶ Operated as stewards of the plan. Focused on community needs and desires, versus self interest
- ▶ Initially knew their role, taking ownership and responsibility
- ▶ Continued to educate themselves (through a variety of partners, consultants, trainers)
- ▶ Thoroughly engaged the community in all aspects of the planning

The Choice Neighborhood Implementation Grant

- ▶ The LCG realizes a higher level of competency and capacity is required to fulfill its obligations in the Choice grant
- ▶ This brought about several challenges the LCG had to face



Initial Challenges

- ▶ Transformational or Transactional?
- ▶ Who do you want to be when you grow up?
- ▶ The Planning process has been long and the LCG has undergone a number of substantial changes in leadership
- ▶ \$\$\$\$.....



Challenges/Opportunities

- ▶ Choice grant does not cover the entire community
- ▶ Hard to manage multiple projects going on simultaneously
- ▶ There is an updated Vision to Action plan which needs to be actualized
- ▶ The organization itself needs to transform before it can be a catalyst of transformation

Challenges/Opportunities

- ▶ LCG must transition from a volunteer advisory group to governance entity
- ▶ Informal processes now must be formalized processes
- ▶ The LCG is unsure that they consistently represent neighborhood priorities

Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ Through the Strong partnership of stakeholders (KEEL and Neighborhood Allies). The LCG was awarded a grant to hire a full time staff person.



Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ The staff person was tasked with formalizing LGC processes and procedures. Developing and organizational infrastructure, securing a 501C3 tax exempt status for the organization.
- ▶ More importantly equipping the LCG to meeting obligations of the Choice grant as well as the broader Larimer Vision



Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ A critical step the LCG had to take was to actualize the strategic plan
- ▶ The Strategic plan had a number of recommendations for the LCG to move forward in its growth and effectiveness



Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ The LCG planning sessions identified four (4) priorities to move the LCG forward in its role as stewards of the Larimer Vision to Action plan.
- ▶ Governance/Capacity Building
- ▶ Community Engagement
- ▶ Programming
- ▶ Partnerships



Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ **Governance** -focused on setting up governance structure for LCG and board development and capacity building training for the LCG members as well as the community.
- ▶ **Community Engagement** - Focused on developing new community engagement strategies. Emphasis on building a shared vision for each facet of the community. New membership is critical for the growth and viability of the LCG
- ▶ **Programming** -create programs, initiatives and strategies that either push or pull residents to LCG programming
- ▶ **Partnerships** - revisit current partnerships while exploring new partnerships needed for LCG to successfully move the Larimer Vision to Action plan forward

Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership strategies

- ▶ Strategic planning
- ▶ Board Development (Board Training 101)
- ▶ Actualization of the Strategic plan
- ▶ Capacity building
- ▶ Action Team participation
- ▶ Staff person providing expertise, TA to equip the LCG (practical application)
- ▶ Resident Led Initiatives
- ▶ Properly align board member skills and gifts with their role on the board

Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ The mission of the organization is central to all the LCG does
- ▶ One of the LCG's Goal is to create multi-generational equity wealth among existing low and moderate income homeowners in Larimer by making their current homes safe and more valuable.
- ▶ LCG is setting the foundation for the next generation



Building and Sustaining Resident Leadership

- ▶ Leaders can be developed, however passion drives vision, raises influence and potential
- ▶ Look for residents that have a passion for the community
- ▶ Passion for equity and quality of life for the existing residents has brought the LCG to this point in their journey to vision
- ▶ Passion sustains efforts for the long haul

Goals for the Next Six Months

- ▶ Complete our Action plan
- ▶ Develop a fundraising strategy (Board and resident involvement)
- ▶ Identify new potential leaders
- ▶ Complete our membership drive. Hold an election for officers
- ▶ Add expertise to the board or advisory board as the LCG continues to work on the Larimer Vision to Action plan
- ▶ Develop leadership from the Hamilton Larimer and East liberty Gardens Community
- ▶ Acclimate the “new” residents to Larimer, its amenities and services
- ▶ Develop strategies to engage youth as well as build on strategies engaging seniors

The LCG Journey Continues...

- ▶ Each community has it's own unique dynamics. The path to leadership may differ
- ▶ “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

John Quincy Adams

