



Westside
Future Fund

Transform Westside Summit

Convene | Communicate | Collaborate

Westside Future Fund
Friday, September 17, 2021

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VISION

A community Dr. King would be proud to call home.

MISSION

To advance a compassionate approach to neighborhood revitalization that creates a diverse, mixed-income community, improves the quality of life for current and future residents and elevates the Historic Westside's unique history and culture.



VALUES

Do with the Community, not to the Community

We know that residents are the real experts on the challenges in their community. Therefore, we learn from residents and involve them in all we do.

Be Compassionate

We meet residents where they are in a spirit of empathy and respect.

Have Integrity in Everything

We stand behind all we say and do. We are open, honest, and courageous.

Be Creative

We bring high energy and fresh ideas to tackling the long-standing challenges on the Westside. We're dedicated to trying different approaches to get different results.

Deliver Results

We're committed to driving transformation in the long term, with a focus on measurable outcomes today.



 @westsidefuturefund

 @WFFAtlanta

 @westsidefuturefund

 westsidefuturefund.org

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Derrick Jordan
Senior Project Leader,
National Church
Residences



Wonya Lucas
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Crown Media Family



Penny McPhee
President,
The Arthur M. Blank
Family Foundation



Bill Nordmark
President, & CEO
Aver, Inc.



Helen Smith Price
Retired President,
The Coca-Cola Foundation
and Vice President of Global
Community Affairs for The
Coca-Cola Company



Dr. Valerie Montgomery Rice
President and Dean,
Morehouse School of
Medicine



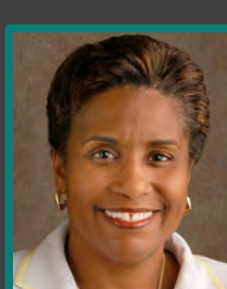
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President,
Central Atlanta
Progress



Sylvia Russell
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AT&T Georgia



Dave Stockert
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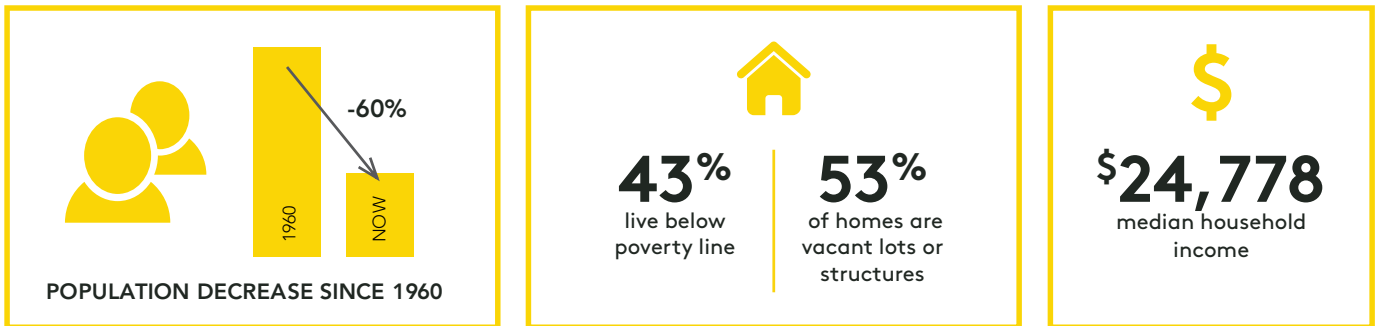


Westside Future Fund

CREATING A NEW WESTSIDE FUTURE

Westside Future Fund (WFF) is a nonprofit formed by Atlanta's public, private and philanthropic partners who believe in the future of Atlanta's Westside and are committed to helping Historic Westside neighborhoods revitalize and develop into a community Dr. King would be proud to call home.

English Avenue • Vine City • Ashview Heights* • Atlanta University Center



Role of the Westside Future Fund

With an emphasis on community retention and a compassionate approach to revitalization, Westside Future Fund is focused on creating a diverse mixed-income community, improving quality of life, and elevating and celebrating the Historic Westside's unique history and culture.

Impact Areas

Westside Future Fund's holistic, partner-driven model is proving successful. Through our roles as participator, amplifier, convener, strategist and accelerator, WFF is delivering results in our four impact strategies.



**SAFETY
& SECURITY**



**COMMUNITY HEALTH
& WELLNESS**



**MIXED-INCOME
COMMUNITIES**



**CRADLE-TO-CAREER
EDUCATION**



HOME ON THE WESTSIDE

Investing in a New Westside Future

- Westside Future Fund is deeply committed to community retention
- We created Home on the Westside as a signature initiative in partnership with Mayor Bottoms to drive equitable and inclusive redevelopment in the Historic Westside neighborhoods
- WFF's community retention guidelines prioritize individuals and families with ties to WFF's historic neighborhoods to be first in line for housing opportunities and do not discriminate based on income

Using these guidelines, Home on the Westside prioritizes Westside legacy residents by providing high quality, permanently affordable housing opportunities

- Providing renters housing they can afford as area rents continue to rise
 - Renters should not have to pay more than 30% of their gross income on rent
- Enabling homeownership with financial coaching and counseling
- Constructing and renovating new single-family homes, available for purchase and for lease-to-purchase, supported by down payment assistance
- Covering increases in property taxes for qualified legacy homeowners

If you are interested in housing opportunities through Home on the Westside, start by completing an interest form.

[REGISTER NOW](#)



Westside
Future Fund

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(404) 793-2670
WestsideFut@reFund.org



@westsidefuturefund



@WFFAtlanta

A Dedicated Team



John Ahmann
President and CEO



Jaren Abedania
VP of Real Estate



Rachel Carey
VP of Project
Financing



Sonia Dawson
Special Assistant to
the President & CEO



Charles Forde
Director of Project
Financing



Lee Harrop
VP of Real Estate
Development



Raquel Hudson
Director of
Volunteer Programs +
Property Assets



Marni Pittman
Controller



Deidre Strickland
Development
Manager



Jaaren Strickland
Accounting
Manager



Joan Vernon
Director of
Neighborhood
Engagement



Christal Walker
Staff Accountant



Robyn Washington
Development
Coordinator



Cristel Williams
Chief
Development
Officer

Agenda

7:45AM – 8:00AM
Welcome + Updates

Benjamin Earley
Westside Correspondent, Redclay-Hill

Ebony Ford
English Avenue Resident

8:00AM – 8:05AM
Opening Devotion

Daniel Ogle
Associate Minister, Peachtree Road United Methodist Church

8:05AM – 8:55AM
"Advancing Education during COVID with the Booker T. Washington Cluster Principals"
Moderated by John Ahmann

Dr. Angela Coaxumyoung
Principal, Historic Booker T. Washington High School

Tiauna Crooms
Principal, Herman J. Russell West End Academy

Dr. Diamond Ford
Principal, Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy

Yolanda Weems
Principal, Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy

Robert Williams
Principal, M. Agnes Jones Elementary School

8:55AM
Raffle Drawings + Closing Remarks

Ebony Ford
English Avenue Resident

John Ahmann
President & CEO, Westside Future Fund

9:00AM
Summit Adjourns



Our Featured Participants

John Ahmann

President & CEO, Westside Future Fund

For more than 25 years, John Ahmann has been driven by the determination to improve the way communities and institutions function in Atlanta. From his early days working in Washington, D.C. to his positions with private, governmental, and organizational entities in the Atlanta area — including his eight years as an elected school board official in Decatur — he has focused his energy on solving the big problems whose resolutions can ultimately change Atlanta's trajectory and contribution to racial equity.

He has worked primarily behind the scenes, bringing together diverse stakeholders, and managing initiatives through to fruition, and has had a hand in some of the region's most important public policy initiatives and cross-sector collaborations. Along the way, John has built a vast network of individuals who are impacting Atlanta and its future.

A native son of Atlanta, John is currently the President & CEO of the Westside Future Fund (WFF). WFF was launched by the Atlanta Committee for Progress (ACP) in December 2014, with the strong leadership support of former Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed. The nonprofit organization's mission is to advance a compassionate approach to neighborhood revitalization that creates a diverse, mixed-income community, improves the quality of life for current and future residents, and elevates the Historic Westside's unique history and culture. Through its flagship program, *Home on the Westside*, WFF helps neighbors live in the place they love through access to high-quality housing and educational support, strengthening the city we call home.

John has been recognized for his work by receiving the following awards: 2020 and 2021 *Atlanta Magazine's* Atlanta's 500 Most Powerful Leaders; 2020 and 2021 *Atlanta Business Chronicle's* 100 Most Influential Atlantans; 2019 Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy Partnership Award; 2019 Christian City's Community Champion Nonprofit Honoree Award; Atlanta Business League's Visions of Excellence Award in 2019; Antioch Urban Ministries Anchor Award in 2018; and 2018 *Atlanta Business Chronicle's* Best Overall Deal in Atlanta Real Estate Awards.

John has two adult daughters and lives in Atlanta's historic neighborhood of Vine City.

Benjamin Earley

Senior Consultant, Redclay-Hill

Benjamin Earley is a web developer, creative writer, and musician born and raised in Atlanta, GA, where he continues to call the Westside home. He holds two certificates from Berklee College of Music for Music Business and General Music Studies. In addition to pursuing his passion for songwriting and music production, Benjamin also builds websites and web-based solutions for clients as an independent contractor with Redclay-Hill.

Our Featured Participants

Ebony Ford

Westside Resident, English Avenue

Ebony Ford is a Westside Atlanta community advocate with affiliation of several civic and philanthropic organizations. She is passionate about legacy resident retention in this climate of rapid gentrification in the city of Atlanta, particularly in the neighborhoods of English Avenue and Vine City, and she spends her free time mentoring residents who want to become homeowners through her organization English Avenue Tea. She is an Atlanta Public Schools elected official as she serves as secretary for her neighborhood school's GO Team. Professionally, Ebony works in IT for the State of Georgia.

Daniel Ogle

Associate Minister, Peachtree Road United Methodist Church

Daniel Ogle is an associate minister at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church in Atlanta whose primary role at the church is to build community and strengthen relationships in and with the Westside. Daniel is married to Erin Horeni-Ogle, who is the Director of Development for University Libraries at Emory University. Erin and Daniel are the proud parents of their three-year old daughter, Georgia.

Dr. Angela Coaxum-Young

Principal, Historic Booker T. Washington High School

Dr. Angela Coaxum-Young has been Principal of the Historic Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta, since Fall 2019.

She began her educational studies at Bethune-Cookman University, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. She moved on to earn a Master's in Education with a concentration in Management of Educational Programs from Nova Southeastern University. She went on to receive her specialist credential in Educational Leadership from Georgia College and State University and her Doctorate of Education from Georgia Southern University.

During her tenure in the field of education, Dr. Coaxum-Young has served in various roles in education to include Middle School Social Studies Teacher, High School Exceptional Education Instructor, Director of Student Support, Academy Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal. Much of her career is marked by her intentional and passion-driven focus for serving under-resourced communities and ensuring high quality educational programs for students with academic deficits. Dr. Coaxum-Young has led or contributed to national discussions around the topic of ensuring quality education and access to academic programs for vulnerable populations. Dr. Coaxum-Young remains committed to closing the achievement gap. Her hope and unshakeable belief in the academic potential of ALL students, motivates her to champion causes that raise levels of consciousness around educational equity.

Our Featured Participants

Tiauna Crooms

Principal, Herman J. Russell West End Academy

Born in Chicago, Illinois, but raised in Southwest Atlanta, Georgia, Tiauna Crooms is a proud product of the Atlanta Public School System and graduate of Frederick Douglass High School. Tiauna Crooms is knowledgeable of the public school system's curriculum dynamics and has embraced leadership through instructional and strategic-based guidance. She is embarking upon her 13th year as an educator in the Atlanta Public School System.

Mrs. Crooms' calling into the field of education began as a Language Arts Teacher in the middle school setting for three years and then pursuant to professional growth, Mrs. Crooms transitioned to high school as an English teacher for seven years. This has given her an essential perspective into the structure of education and its operations. Acknowledging the nature of the middle and high school child was a critical component in addressing the needs of the students. Inspired to foster student achievement, she began her experience as an instructional leader as the first African American Assistant Principal in Paulding County at East Paulding High School. Through experience, she was able to connect the best attributes of middle and high school instruction and supervision which has served as an asset to promote her continuous growth.

In the Fall of 2009, Mrs. Crooms pursued her goal to return to Atlanta Public School System in a leadership capacity. She joined the Washington High School family who welcomed her as an Assistant Principal. The following year she was promoted and became the Principal of Booker T. Washington High School Senior Academy (August 2010 – 2012). Due to a new initiative, Atlanta Public School System transformed Booker T. Washington High School from a comprehensive high school into three small schools (schools within a school). As a result of Mrs. Crooms outstanding governance, expertise and leadership, the Carver Cluster accredited Tiauna by appointing her as the Principal of Carver School of Technology. Missing her Washington Cluster family, an opportunity was presented to Tiauna to serve as the principal of the Joseph E. Brown Middle School, now known as Herman J. Russell West End Academy. God first and then family, following her commitment to provide a stimulating and rigorous learning environment with innovative and responsive teaching across the curriculum to ensure all students are college and career ready in a rapidly global environment. Mrs. Tiauna Crooms, mother, wife, educator.

Dr. Diamond Ford

Principal, Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy

Dr. Diamond Ford is currently in her sixth year as Principal of Michael R. Hollis Innovation Academy. She has served in the field of education for 20 years as a teacher, instructional coach, and principal. A passionate and dedicated educator, Dr. Ford is committed to growing and transforming schools, and she enjoys creating programs that focus on developing the whole child through rigorous and relevant curriculum. She has successfully created an environment for students that nurtures their creativity, supports their social-emotional development, encourages engagement and meaningful connections with their

Our Featured Participants

families, and fills academic gaps. Among numerous honors, Dr. Ford was awarded EL Education's prestigious 2019-2020 Silverberg Leadership Award, the "2016-2017 Stellar Principal of the Year" by Atlanta Public School Leadership, and she was named as one of Atlanta Business League's 100 Black Women of Influence in 2017 and 100 Women of Influence in 2020. Also in 2020, she was honored as one of Mercedes-Benz USA's "Greatness Lives Here" Heroes, a tribute to her impact on those she serves. Dr. Ford has participated as a panelist/speaker on multiple education platforms, including UNCF Educational Panel, NAACP Educational Panel, Author David Osborne's Book Preview, Georgia Coalition for Public Education, and Atlanta Business League's 2020 Super Tuesday Conference panel, "Ensuring No Black Child Is Left Behind".

Yolanda Weems

Principal, Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy

Yolanda T. Weems is a 24-year veteran of the field of education. She began her teaching career as a teacher for the Fulton County School System. After eight years of teaching, Mrs. Weems became an instructional coach specializing in the areas of Reading, Language Arts and Writing. As instructional coach, Mrs. Weems developed a passion for offering support to teachers, facilitating professional development, and implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). Her hard work and dedication contributed to significant increases in student achievement and gains on the Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) and the Georgia Writing Test. Mrs. Weems felt very accomplished while offering support in Reading and Language Arts; however, as she began to think globally, she knew that her services were needed in other content areas. She then became a Curriculum Support Specialist and remained in that role until joining the Atlanta Public Schools family in July of 2011 as an Instructional Coach. Her tenure as an Instructional Coach was short lived. The following year she became an Assistant Principal in which she served in that capacity for six years. Although, Mrs. Weems found great fulfillment as an Assistant Principal, she was honored when afforded the opportunity to serve as the Principal of Tuskegee Airmen Global Academy.

Mrs. Weems earned her bachelor's degree (BS) from Albany State University. She earned a master's degree (M.Ed.) from the State University of West Georgia and her specialist's degree (Ed.S) from Central Michigan University. In addition to educational degrees, she is endorsed in Reading and is a certified Teacher Support Specialist.

Robert Williams

Principal, M. Agnes Jones Elementary School

Robert Williams began his appointment as the new principal of M. Agnes Jones Elementary School in May 2021. As a native of Los Angeles, his first introduction to Atlanta began at Morehouse College. After graduating from Morehouse College, he worked in corporate America for two years and volunteered at the California Tennis Association for Underprivileged Youth. His transition to education began in 2002 when he was selected to be in the New York City Teaching Fellows (NYCTF) program where he taught elementary

Our Featured Participants

school in Bedford Stuyvesant. As a member of the NYCTF program, he earned a Master of Science for Teachers degree in Elementary Education from Pace University.

After completing the program in 2004, he helped develop a proposal for a small school and opened the doors of Young Scholars Academy (YSA) in the Bronx. While working at YSA, he continued his journey of professional and personal growth by earning a Master of Education degree in Education Leadership from Teachers College. At YSA, he led the math department as a math lead teacher and instructional coach.

In 2007, he transitioned from New York to Georgia to not only begin a family but to also work at Marietta Middle School (MMS) as an 8th grade math teacher and character education team leader. He is married and has three children (two sons and a daughter). His administrator career began as an assistant principal at Washington High School, followed by an interim principal position at Kennedy Middle School, assistant principal at E.L. Connally Elementary, and finally an assistant principal at BEST Academy (6-12). He managed the implementation of STEM practices schoolwide and partnerships such as Project ENGAGES (Engaging New Generations at Georgia Tech in Engineering and Science), which contributed to BEST Academy (6-12) becoming Cognia STEM certified.

As a new principal in the Washington cluster, he is committed to collaboration and service, with a belief that all students will be successful with perseverance and a nurturing environment.

COVID-19 VACCINE SITES



**GA Department of Health of Public Health
Fulton County
Mercedes Benz Stadium
9 Mangum Street
Atlanta, GA 30303
COVID Vaccine Line: (404) 613-8150**

**Morehouse Healthcare
455 Lee Street
Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30310
COVID Vaccine Line: (404) 752-1000**

**Good Samaritan Health Center
1015 Donald Lee Hollowell Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30318
COVID Vaccine Line: (404) 523-6571**

**Family Centers of Georgia at
West End
868 York Avenue, SW
Atlanta, GA 30310
COVID Vaccine Line: (800) 935-6721**

For more information on vaccination sites

myvaccinegeorgia.com

vaccinefinder.org

dph.georgia.gov/covid-vaccine

fultoncountyga.gov/covidvaccine



**Good Samaritan Health Center and CVSHealth are offering free rapid
COVID-19 testing or vaccination**

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

Call 404-523-6571, ext. 4928 to schedule.

Good Sam is located at

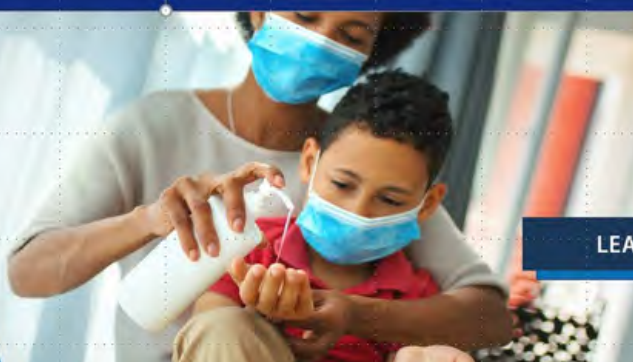
**1015 Donald Lee Hollowell Pkwy, NW
Atlanta, GA 30318**

Visit goodsamatlanta.org/COVID-19 for more info.



**Subscribe for Updates to the
NATIONAL COVID-19
RESILIENCY NETWORK**

www.msm.edu/ncrn



LEARN MORE

CARIBBEAN AMERICAN
CULTURAL ARTS FOUNDATION

**SENIOR
DENTAL
CARE**
PROGRAM



**Free Senior Dental
Care Services for
Fulton County
Residents !**



DOCTOR

DANIELLE GREENE

OWNER FABULOUS SMILES ATLANTA

Danielle Greene, DDS, will help you achieve the most beautiful and healthy smile possible. At her practice Fabulous Smiles of Atlanta, located in Fulton County. You can take advantage of various dental issues.

DEEP CLEANING

DENTURES

EXTRACTIONS

**CALL TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT
CALL 1-800-213-1059**

Fabulous Smiles of Atlanta

**1188 Ralph David Abernathy Blvd,
Atlanta, GA 30310**



**FULTON
COUNTY**



This is a federally funded program, which is based upon a first-come, first-serve basis. Spaces are limited. No walk-ins are accepted. You must call to make an appointment. Must be 65 years or older.



Only one number to get the help you need: food, housing, counseling, employment, education, healthcare, COVID-19 testing. Feeling lonely, lost, stressed, anxious or down? Need help managing your health condition?

Call **404-430-8180** today!

**Westside
Connect
Help Line**

**NEED A
DOCTOR?**

**TEXT:
WESTSIDE
TO 51555**



JOB FLASH REPORT

**IF INTERESTED IN EMPLOYMENT, PLEASE CALL 404-853-1780
OR VISIT [INTEGRITYCDC.ORG](https://integritycdc.org). WHEN YOU FILL OUT YOUR
APPLICATION, MAKE SURE TO CLICK "DIRECT EMPLOYMENT."**

ATTENTION

**WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR
OWN AD SPACE?**

Westside Future Fund is now offering you a chance to
promote your business in our Summit bulletins!
If interested, please email sonia@westsidefuturefund.org
for more details!



AT&T

Connectivity for the Common Good.

Making broadband more affordable for communities impacted by COVID-19



As part of our commitment to bridging the digital divide, AT&T is participating in the FCC's Emergency Broadband Benefit (EBB) Program to help eligible households with connectivity costs during the pandemic.



.....



The monthly cost of broadband – after applying the EBB – can temporarily fall to as low as \$0 a month.¹

In these difficult economic times, the EBB will help qualifying households reduce wireless service costs for activities like job searches, telehealth, remote work, and distance learning. EBB enrollment is now open, and the benefit can be applied to select plans for both new and existing AT&T and Cricket Wireless customers.

Households interested in using the benefit with AT&T should: Determine EBB Program eligibility by applying [here](#).



CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS EXTERIOR OWNER-OCCUPIED REHAB PROGRAM

Atlanta Housing, Invest Atlanta and the City of Atlanta have launched a deferred forgivable loan program that provides up to \$70,000 in federal funds to eligible Ashview Heights and Atlanta University Center homeowners for exterior health and safety repairs on their home. Funds will be provided in the form of a forgivable loan at a 0% interest rate with payments deferred and forgiven until the earlier of loan maturity, sale, transfer of ownership, or failure to maintain the property as the primary residence during the loan term.

The maximum loan amount per home is \$70,000, inclusive of all construction related costs and closing costs. Loan term will be determined by loan amount, not to exceed 10 years.

ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES

- Homeowner must reside within the Choice Neighborhoods of Ashview Heights or Atlanta University Center.
- Must be a primary homeowner and existing resident as of September 30, 2015.
- Homeowners with 1st Mortgage Liens are permitted. Second mortgages from Habitat for Humanity on a Habitat home, and Invest Atlanta will be treated as one mortgage for purposes of this program. Homes with other liens (tax liens, recorded Fi Fas, etc. are ineligible. Homes with water liens must have a payment arrangement to be eligible).

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO APPLY

Contact the Choice Neighborhoods Exterior Owner-Occupied Rehab Program Manager
Meals On Wheels Atlanta at info@mowatl.org or 404-351-3889





Center for Employment Opportunities

938 Peachtree Street
Atlanta Ga, 30309
404-689-6579
www.ceoworks.org
Mon-Friday 9am-5pm

We provide immediate, effective, and comprehensive employment services exclusively to individuals who have recently returned home from incarceration.

@reallygreatsite
reallygreatsite.com

Bringing Goodwill to the Southside:

New Store & Career Center Coming to Metropolitan Parkway

Located at 2160 Metropolitan Parkway, our new store and career center will bring jobs and skills training to the local community. To start, this project is generating 30-40 new construction jobs for local residents. When we open, we will create an additional 50 jobs in the store, as well as in the career center.

Our focus will continue to be on not just helping our neighbors to find work, but helping them move into successful careers. All of our career centers provide free access to job search resources like computers, résumé writing tools, job listings, employment seminars, software training and more.

Great finds at great prices.

Our new store is bringing great deals to your community. From clothing to accessories, housewares, and shoes; shopping at Goodwill will save you money and help your neighbors find jobs.



Job training for the future.

Goodwill offers a number of skills training programs to prepare residents for careers in fields like technology, healthcare, construction, logistics and more.



Donate. Shop. Support Job Seekers. *That's #Goodwilling.*



Be the first to know.

Visit goodwillng.org/metro and sign up to receive updates on job opportunities, hiring events, construction updates and more at our new location.

THE WESTSIDE: Your home now... and for years to come



Introducing **Home on the Westside**, an initiative from Westside Future Fund to help drive inclusive community retention for Atlanta's Historic Westside neighborhoods.

We're taking steps to deliver safe, quality housing on the Westside with:

- Affordable 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom rentals
- Newly constructed and renovated homes for purchase and lease-to-purchase
- Down payment assistance
- Anti-Displacement Tax Fund for legacy homeowners
- Financial coaching and counseling in partnership with On the Rise Financial Center

Are you interested in Home on the Westside?

Go online and complete a simple form to let us know which of our housing opportunities interest you:

westsidefuturefund.org/homeonthewestside

Contact WFF with any questions.

Call: 470.377.1696

Email: home@westsidefuturefund.org



**Westside
Future Fund**

Legacy westside residents,
Ebony and her son, Jeremiah

Progress to Date

Westside Development Activity

WFF Residential Units as of September 1, 2021

	Units Acquired/ Under Contract	Units Awarded Invest Atlanta/AH	Total Residential Units	Units In Service	Units Under Development	Deeply Affordable Units (<60% AMI)
Multi-Family	246	42	288	181	37	175
Single Family	108	15	123	8	57	48
Total	354	57	411	189	94	223

Major Third Party Developments as of September 1, 2021

	Total Planned Units	Units in Service	Units Under Development	Deeply Affordable Units (<60% AMI)
Quest Commons West*	53		53	47
Herndon Square*	700	97	200	347
OaksATL*	32	32	TBD	32
Quest Simpson and Springfield projects	309		309	228
Legacy at Vine City	105	105	-	105
Atlanta Housing (CHOICE)	481	195	72	253
The Proctor	132		132	32
Total	1,812	429	766	1,044

* Financing provided by Westside Future Fund



395 James P. Brawley Drive, NW

Creating the Beloved Community



The end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the Beloved Community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opponents into friends. It is this type of understanding goodwill that will transform the deep gloom of the old age into the exuberant gladness of the new age. It is this love which will bring about miracles in the hearts of men.

Martin Luther King, Jr. from "Facing the Challenge of a New Age," 1956

The coining of the term, "beloved community" is credited to Josiah Royce (1855–1916), a Harvard professor, theologian, and philosopher, who taught at Harvard from the 1880s to 1910s.

Josiah Royce deemed the beloved community the "principle of all principles" and spoke of the beloved community as an ideal, separate from ordinary life, a spiritual community where all those "fully dedicated to the cause of loyalty, truth, and reality itself" were joined. Speaking from a distinctly Christian perspective, he stated that religious communities at their core should embody "the mystery of loving membership in a community." This participation was enacted through deep loyalty to a personal cause that one serves with "all [one's] might and soul and strength."

Royce wrote, "Find your own cause, your interesting, fascinating, personally engrossing cause; serve it with all [one's] might and soul and strength; but so choose your cause and so serve it, that thereby you show forth your loyalty to loyalty, so that because of your choice and service to your cause, there is a maximum of increase of loyalty among your fellow [human beings]."

Since you cannot find the universal and beloved community, create it.

Josiah Royce (1913)

One of Royce's students in the 1890s was W.E.B. Du Bois, who arrived in Atlanta in 1897 to establish a sociology program at Atlanta University and develop the university's curriculum. It is possible W.E.B. Du Bois and others could have discussed the idea of the "beloved community" and its embodiment in the Atlanta University Center and Vine City neighborhoods as early as Du Bois' arrival in Atlanta. Since the late 1860s, white and black educators, black students, and working class white and black residents had been living in the historic Westside.

Dr. King's mentor, Howard Thurman, was also a student of Royce and colleague of W.E.B. Du Bois. He used the term "beloved community" as an inspirational lens "to perceive [in the world] a harmony that transcends all diversities and in which diversity finds its richness and significance." He broadened the concept from Royce's specifically Christian orientation and emphasized the importance of truly integrated communities beyond legal integration and emphasized the importance of a radically nonexclusionary community.

During Thurman's lifetime, the historic Westside served as a nerve center of civil rights activism even as the effects of legal segregation remained in the community.

Community cannot for long feed on itself. It can only flourish with the coming of others from beyond, their unknown and undiscovered brothers and sisters.

Howard Thurman 1971

Dr. King takes the thinking of Royce and Thurman forward with his belief that we can "actualize the Beloved Community." Walter Fluker writes that the "beloved community" is Dr. King's "single, organizing principle of [his] life and thought."

Our goal is to create a beloved community, and this will require a qualitative change in our souls as well as a quantitative change in our lives.

Martin Luther King, Jr., 1966

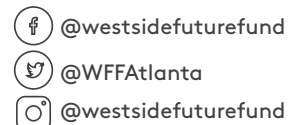


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