



**WOODLAWN
UNITED**

love
peace,
and
hair grease.

THE POWER OF WE

2022 Annual Report

DEAR SUPPORTERS & FRIENDS,

The residents of Woodlawn and our partners have done it again!

2022 was another year fueled by strength, resilience, and collaboration as we worked towards creating the community the residents of Woodlawn have always imagined. Their vision and hope for Woodlawn shaped our strategy and drove our work this past year.

You, our supporters and friends, were there along the way, joining us for the grand openings of locally owned co-working space POLARIS, Rev Birmingham's Woodlawn MarketPlace, and grand opening block party for the nationally acclaimed, 100% vegan restaurant Slutty Vegan. Many of you also saw the impact for yourselves by joining one of our four quarterly tours and taking a seat at the table during one incredible Woodlawn Sunday Dinner. Thank you!

You weren't alone in acknowledging our transformative work in Woodlawn. We were honored to welcome U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg as he announced the launch of Reconnecting Communities during a Woodlawn celebration of the Birmingham Express Bus Rapid Transit project. Purpose Built Communities (PBC) also took notice as they recognized Woodlawn United as a PBC Pacesetter and, in partnership with the Bloomberg Foundation, invested \$1M across the PBC network, with a portion going to strengthen Woodlawn's cradle-to-career education pathways and another \$100,000 in partnership with the Truist Foundation to increase our data infrastructure so we can better measure impact and make more data-informed decisions.

From advocating for eliminating railroad blockages and noise pollution to investing in smart technology trash cans, new high-quality mixed-income housing, and more opportunities



Woodlawn United Executive Director Mashonda Taylor welcomes community members and supporters to Woodlawn Sunday Dinner

for residents, 2022 put our mission to the test! But with a new strategic plan in place, we stepped up to each challenge with a focus on the vision and mission of our community.

This past year, we listened and committed to going deeper in our work by focusing on sustaining what we've accomplished, better supporting our partners, and advocating for stronger infrastructure to improve the quality of life for everyone in the Woodlawn community. We did it with the help of board chair Johnny Johns, the addition of Deputy Director Meghan Ann Hellenga, an incredible Woodlawn United staff, and of course, the partners and residents who make this work in Woodlawn so worthwhile.

There's much work to do, and we have no doubt that with the residents as our guide and you by our side, we will continue to create new pathways to prosperity and generational wealth in Woodlawn.

JOHN D. JOHNS
Immediate Past Chairman

MASHONDA S. TAYLOR
Executive Director



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WE ARE WOODLAWN UNITED

Since 2010, we have aligned ourselves with Purpose Built Communities and followed its holistic approach to community revitalization. To better represent our commitment to Woodlawn as Community Quarterback, in 2022, we became Woodlawn United and launched our rebrand.

The “W” in our new logo represents Woodlawn and the 4 color stripes represent the four neighborhoods of the Woodlawn community: East Avondale, Oak Ridge Park, South Woodlawn, and Woodlawn. The negative space formed by these stripes represents the 3 pillars of the Purpose Built Communities’ model: Community Wellness, Mixed-Income Housing, and Education Pathways.





2022-2027 PRIORITIES



OUR VISION is to grow a safe and healthy community where children learn and play, families live in quality housing, parents work in stable jobs, businesses thrive and everyone contributes to the growth of Greater Birmingham.

“

In the upcoming year, I am looking forward to building better relationships with partners, community members, and those invested in the Woodlawn Community.”

- AURIEL THOMPSON
Community Initiatives Manager



*(L-R) Leigh Hancock, Jason Meadows, Auriel Thompson, Meghan Ann Hellenga, Mashonda Taylor, Morgan Montiel, Joe Ayers, Emily Clark.
Photo credit: Quentin Renard Gunn*

18 

**NEW BUSINESSES
OPENED IN 2022**


23

**WE LEAD
FELLOWS**

267 

**STUDENTS SERVED
AT JAMES RUSHTON
EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

300 
SUPPORTERS
& RESIDENTS
ATTENDED WOODLAWN
SUNDAY DINNER

750+ 
STUDENTS SERVED AT
i3 ACADEMY
SINCE INCEPTION

1000+ 
PEOPLE ATTENDED
**SLUTTY VEGAN
BLOCK PARTY**

170,000+ 
SOCIAL MEDIA
IMPRESSIONS IN 2022

\$1.5M
TOTAL INVESTED IN HRP
SINCE 2013

\$41M
TOTAL INVESTED
SINCE 2010

OUR MISSION is to serve as a catalyst and facilitator for the transformation and revitalization of the Woodlawn community.



(L-R) DeForrest Brown, Neighborhood Housing Services; Jason Meadows, Woodlawn United; JT Moore, Birmingham City Council; Kenneth Free, Alabama Department of Housing and Urban Development; Joe Ayers, Woodlawn United; Kelleigh Gamble, Neighborhood Housing Services
 Photo Credit: Neighborhood Housing Services

FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYER WORKSHOP

Along with our mission to provide safe, high-quality housing options for residents of all income levels, we are also committed to helping residents build generational wealth through homeownership.

We partner with Neighborhood Housing Services of Birmingham and East Lake Initiative to create opportunities for people who traditionally have not had

the chance to purchase a home. Together, in November 2022, we hosted a first-time homebuyer’s workshop in Woodlawn. Participants received financial literacy and home maintenance training from local professionals and were connected with organizations to provide additional assistance if needed. Twenty-two participants completed the workshop to set themselves up for success in the home-buying process.



Homeowner Rehabilitation Program

As part of our mixed-income housing strategy, we are committed to investing in legacy homeowners.

Through our Homeowner Rehabilitation program, existing Woodlawn homeowners can apply for funds to address health and safety renovations. Typical repairs include roof replacements and floor stabilizations as well as plumbing and electrical system upgrades.

West Woodlawn



Through our partnership with the Birmingham Land Bank Authority, we secured property and partnered with the City of Birmingham and the National Community Reinvestment Coalition to build 16 affordable, single-family housing units. This partnership is a continuation of our efforts to remove blight by clearing dilapidated structures from properties in West Woodlawn around i3 Academy.

“

While interest rates and construction costs create challenges, we remain committed to working with families who desire homeownership as a pathway to generational wealth.”

- **JOE AYERS**
Real Estate Director



The Townhouses on Georgia Road

COTTAGES AT WOOD STATION

In partnership with ARC Realty, Build Initiative, Design Initiative, Navigate Affordable Housing, and Western Horizons, The Cottages at Wood Station is a three-phase development comprised of 12 houses on 59th Street, 16 houses on 59th Place, and 26 townhouses on Georgia Road. The project includes a mixture of renovations and new builds.

With phase one completed, work began on the second phase of the Cottages at Wood Station. In 2022, the final 6 homes of this phase were completed and sold, and work began on the third phase. The first 4 townhouses of phase three were completed, bringing the total units finished in the Cottages at Wood Station to 32.



Slutty Vegan Founder and CEO, Pinky Cole, was welcomed to Woodlawn with a block party hosted by Barnes & Associates, REV Birmingham, and Woodlawn United.

SLUTTY VEGAN JOINS MOMENTUM IN WOODLAWN

Woodlawn welcomed 18 new businesses in 2022. Slutty Vegan Founder and CEO, Pinky Cole choose Woodlawn for her first location outside the state of Georgia. The grand opening was a perfect example of Cole's entrepreneurial spirit uplifting small businesses. Forty local, black owned businesses participated in the block party, sharing in the

excitement and making connections across the community. Slutty Vegan joins other Black-owned businesses opening in the neighborhood this year including POLARIS, TRVL Love Koffee, Thrive Wellness Lounge, and Woodlawn Bar & Lounge.



Measuring Impactful Data

With support from The Truist Foundation, Woodlawn United joined the first cohort of Purpose Built Communities' Pacesetters. We were one of 7 communities selected within the network that are setting the standard and leading the way in achieving measurable results. Through Mark Friedman's Results Based Accountability, our goal is to help partners measure impactful data and build capacity by identifying powerful measures that determine our community's progress towards holistic community well-being.



James Rushton Early Learning Center

James Rushton Early Learning Center (JRELC), serving as the entry point to Woodlawn United's cradle-to-career education pathway, is a national example of high-quality, affordable early childhood education. Since its inception, JRELC has served 267 students from birth to four years old. JRELC gives preference to Woodlawn families with tuition based on need and scholarships available for those who meet the criteria.



i3 Academy

i3 Academy completed its second school year in 2022 and expanded to seventh grade, serving an additional 100 students this school year. The public charter school also earned accreditation by Cognia, a nonprofit organization that provides quality assurance for schools, school districts, and education service providers. i3 Academy Elementary School is now accredited and recognized across the nation as a school that meets Cognia Standards of Quality and maintains a commitment to continuous improvement.



Congratulations to the inaugural class of WE Lead Fellows! Pictured (Back Row L-R) Jason Meadows (facilitator), Eric Perry, Leah Davis, Aimee Castro, Sylvia Mooney, Timothy Lanier, Myeisha Hutchenson (facilitator), (Front Row L-R) Brenda Holifield, Lamartra January, Valencia King, and Samantha Nelms!

WE LEAD CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Thanks to the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, we launched the Woodlawn Effect Fellowship Program (WE Lead), a program to address the community's gap in access to leadership development opportunities. Led by Woodlawn Resident and Woodlawn United Founding Board Member, Myeisha Hutchinson, the intergenerational program is designed to refine and grow participants' leadership skills and challenge them to step outside their comfort zones.

Graduates are prepared to assess, identify, and solve problems in their community and are actively creating

positive changes. Projects from the inaugural class include an outdoor classroom for i3 Academy and a new nonprofit to help former inmates re-enter society.

In May 2022, we celebrated the inaugural cohort of 9 fellows completing the Woodlawn Effect Fellowship Program. After the successful first cohort, we received an exponential increase in applicants and launched the second cohort with 14 new WE Lead Fellows in November 2022.

BUS RAPID TRANSIT

In Summer 2022, U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg, visited the Birmingham Xpress Eastern Terminal in Woodlawn to announce the Reconnecting Communities program, which grants money to communities that were racially segregated by transportation projects.

Birmingham Xpress is a bus rapid transit system that connects 25 neighborhoods along a 10-mile corridor between Five Points West and Woodlawn. After decades of disenfranchisement, this development is a big step in connecting Woodlawn to the other parts of Birmingham.

With the Birmingham Xpress Eastern Terminal located in Woodlawn, we look forward to further partnering with Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority, City of Birmingham, and REV Birmingham as we work to build transit-oriented development adjacent to the site.



U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Pete Buttigieg; Congresswoman Terri Sewell; Birmingham Mayor, Randall Woodfin; and Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority CEO, Charlotte Shaw visit Woodlawn.

ADDRESSING RAILROAD NOISE AND SAFETY

After years of blocked railroad crossings and noise pollution in our community, Birmingham City Council approved a \$10 million local match for a Railroad Crossing Elimination planning grant. We worked with the cities of Birmingham and Trussville along with Norfolk Southern to gather community input to support the application.

The project will improve the operation of the Norfolk Southern Norris Yard and reduce the frequency of roadway grade crossing blockages at Brussels Avenue, notably improving the quality of life at Harris Homes which is often entirely blocked in by stopped trains. The project will also eliminate train horn noise in South Woodlawn, enabling the construction of affordable housing.

MAGIC CITY MURAL FESTIVAL

For the second year, Woodlawn United proudly served as the presenting sponsor for the Magic City Mural Festival, partnering with Blank Space Bham and REV Birmingham to add 5 new murals to the public art display.

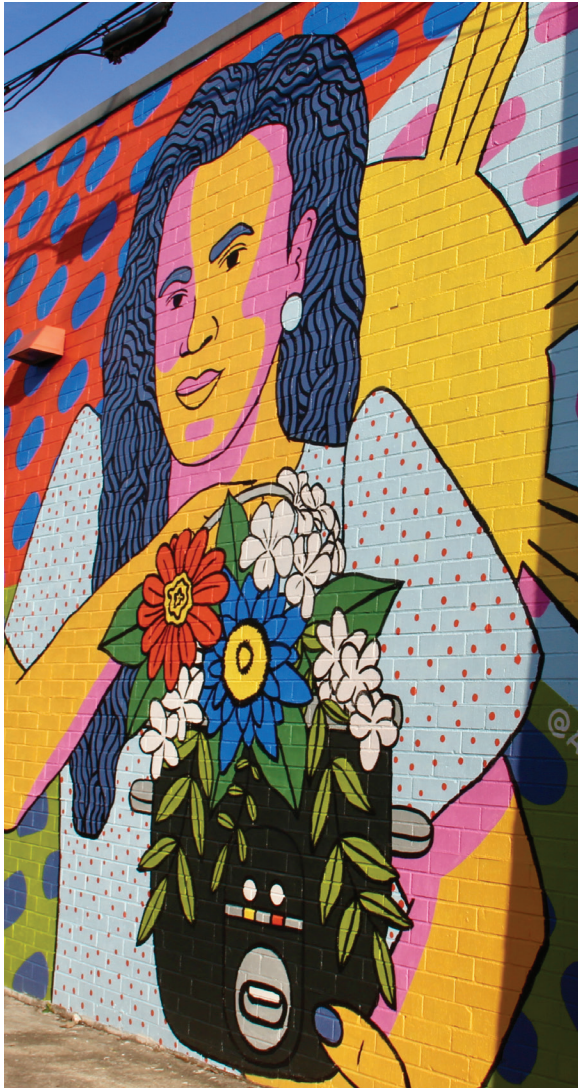
Located in the heart of Woodlawn's Central Business District, the collection of murals, called The Way, is situated at the back door of Woodlawn Bar & Lounge and the highly anticipated Woodlawn Theater. Our intention is to reclaim unused space as a gathering place for community.

“

The Way has become a sacred spot showcasing the best female artists in the country of all ethnicities and backgrounds. But we don't want to stop here. Our next step is to expand this idea to other spaces in Woodlawn with an emphasis on local artists from underrepresented populations. We want to create a model of public art being representative of the areas in which they sit.”

- JASON AVERY

Woodlawn Community President



Art by Anna Dugah | Titled “Kain Na!,” translated “Let’s Eat!” in English. This mural is a portrait of Anna’s older sister holding a rice cooker with flowers spilling out of the top, which represents filling the house with love through preparing food for family and friends.
Photo right: Art by Azah Sanders



WOODLAWN SUNDAY DINNER

OCTOBER 9, 2022



Every year we look forward to gathering supporters, residents, businesses, and partners together as a community for Woodlawn Sunday Dinner. In October 2022, we welcomed 300 people to Woodlawn to enjoy music from Gina Tollese and Eric Essix and a meal prepared by Bayles Catering, Dirty Red Food Truck, Eugene's Hot Chicken, Post Office Pies, and Slutty Vegan!

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

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Mashonda Taylor, *Executive Director*, and Meghan Ann Hellenga, *Deputy Director*

INAUGURAL DEPUTY DIRECTOR

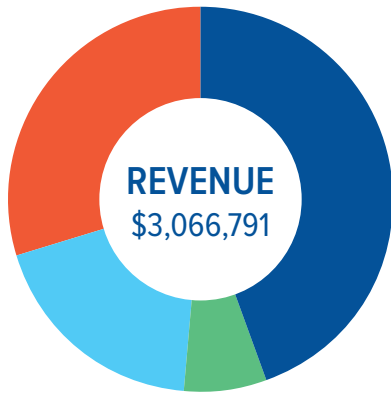
In 2022, we hired our first Deputy Director, Meghan Ann Hellenga. As Deputy Director, Meghan Ann assists in building organizational capacity through fundraising, strategic planning, and operational efficiency. These key priorities help ensure sustainability so we can continue meeting the needs of the Woodlawn Community.

“

If adequately resourced, the work happening in Woodlawn will continue to provide equitable opportunities for all residents in the community to thrive and serve as a model for other communities throughout the city and region.”

- **MEGHAN ANN HELLENGA**
Deputy Director





45%

Real Estate & Rental Income
\$1,372,353

7%

Government
\$200,000

19%

Foundations
\$586,803

29%

Corporate & Individuals
\$907,635

22%

Real Estate Expenses
\$598,225

45%

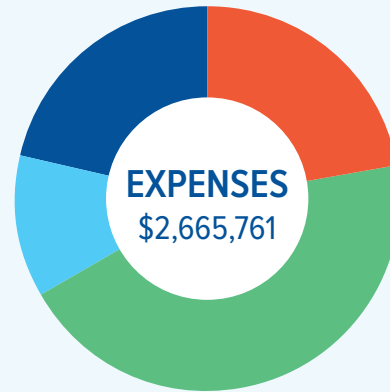
Community Development & Operations
\$1,183,228

12%

Grants
\$331,912

21%

Program Expenses
\$552,396



CAPITAL CAMPAIGNS

2015-Present

\$ 19,783,604

\$7,129,871

James Rushton Early Learning Center / WIN

\$12,653,733

i3 Academy

THANK YOU TO OUR 2022 DONORS

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 Latressa Wilson
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In 2022, we welcomed visitors from around the country and world, including dignitaries from Brazil with the International Visitor Leadership Program, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Harvard Business School MBA candidates, Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation, and Kresge Foundation.



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