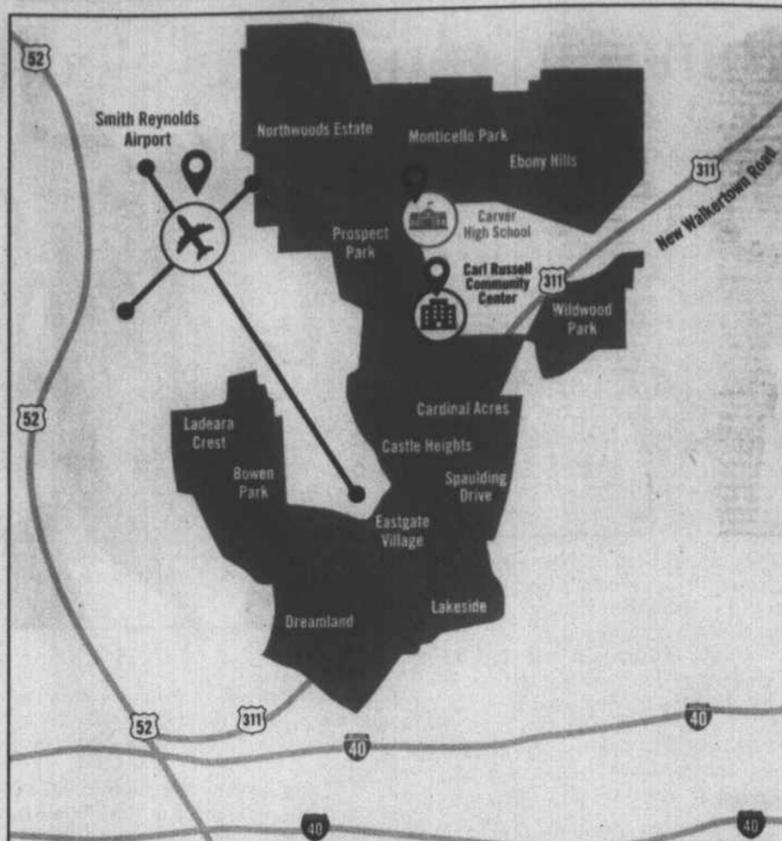




This map from the United Way shows the 13 neighborhood area that is covered by the Place Matters initiative. Neighbors for Better Neighborhood's Lead Community Organizer Nakida McDaniel, Program Officer Dee Washington and Executive Director Paula McCoy.



NBN, but not involved with Place Matters, for a youth job program that puts young people to work doing lawn care. She said a UNITY Neighborhood Crime Watch that was formed just three months ago has already caused a large drop in crime in the neighborhood.

She said that in the long term, they'd like to get a Place Matters grant to build a youth community center for Bowen Park. Bonner, who is 68, is focused on inspiring youth and recruiting them to become the next generation of neighborhood leaders. She said she was grateful to see the

help the neighborhood was getting with Place Matters. "It'll be a great asset," she said. "It'll help strengthen our community, help beautify our community and help us help ourselves provide more projects, more income for the residents in the community."

Another fledgling nonprofit in the area is True Elite, which provides mentors and tutors to student athletes at Carver High School. It was founded in December 2014 by Roderick Fluellen, who is a Carver coach and a former Carver teacher who now teaches at Main Street

Academy. The group has more than 20 tutors working with students. Fluellen would like to apply for a grant after he can show the effectiveness of the program. He'd use the grant to fund things like college tours, educational supplies for students and a Christmas present giveaway the group will begin this year at two local elementary schools. He said he was also glad to see the area getting assistance.

"I think it's needed," he said. "I think it's a great initiative that they're doing. They saw a need in the city, and they're trying to address it."

**United Way**

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**Community-Based Collaborations** Alana James said the agency will be devoting up to 25 percent of resources, which is over a million dollars in 2016 alone, to Place Matters. She said the neighborhoods were chosen not just for their challenges but also because of their promise.

"These neighborhoods in this part of the community are actually not the most challenged part of the community, but they do have significant and complex issues, but they also have a number of assets to build on, and part of that is very active residents who are willing to partner with us," she said.

"To build relationships with the 5,300 residents in the area and guide them through the process, the United Way turned to NBN. The local nonprofit regularly awards grassroots grants funded by local foundations and provides a variety of support to community groups.

A survey was conducted to discover the needs of the community, such as education, healthcare and jobs. For more than a year, NBN has held community conversations to see if the

community was receptive to the initiative and then to find out who the leaders in the community are and what the solutions are to the community's problems.

"The United Way is bringing the partners to the table, Neighbors for Better Neighborhoods is working to bring residents to the table and kind of facilitating those discussions," said NBN Program Officer Dee Washington.

Washington said that the meetings are bringing the residents together and helping them discover how to help each other and pool their resources as a neighborhood network.

"One of the things we're asking is don't come to network, be the network," said Washington. "And so residents where able to lift up issues and concerns and people were able to say, 'How do we solve that problem?'"

To lead the initiative, a CIVIC (Community Voices Impacting Community) Impact Council was formed with representatives from the neighborhoods, which will have first say in reviewing the grant

applications.

Letters of intent are due Oct. 3 for the first round of grants to be awarded next year. It'll be far from the last round, as the United Way has promised that Place Matters is in it for long haul, even if it takes decades to see real change.

"They had what we call 'patient money,'" said NBN Executive Director Paula McCoy, "We think that funders, when they're doing the work of rebuilding communities, that it requires patience."

Groups outside the area can apply for grants for projects that will impact the area as long as they're working with the residents there. But there are many within the area hoping to get grants someday too.

UNITY Neighborhood Association works in Bowen Park and just reformed in October 2014 after being defunct for 20 years. UNITY President and Founder Dorothy Bonner said she was glad to be in the thick of community activism again after her neighbors urged her to restart the group to help with the neighborhood's problems. Her group already got a grant through



James

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**FREE LEAF MULCH**

The City of Winston-Salem will offer free loading of leaf mulch (as long as supply lasts) on Saturday, September 12 from 8 am - 3 pm, at the Forum 52 Yard Waste Facility in Rural Hall, 180 Northstar Drive, in the Forum 52 Business Park off Forum Parkway. You must bring a tarp or cover. All loads must be fully covered before leaving the leaf site.

**ALL VEHICLES WILL BE LOADED!**

From Downtown Winston-Salem take Highway 52 north to Exit #118 Rural Hall/Hwy. 65. At the top of the ramp turn right at the traffic light onto Highway 65 east, turn right at the first traffic light onto Forum Parkway, follow Forum Parkway to Northstar Drive, turn left onto Northstar Drive, follow Northstar Drive which terminates at the entrance of Forum 52 Yard Waste Facility.

For more information call 727-8000 or visit [www.utilities.cityofws.org](http://www.utilities.cityofws.org).

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