

Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

Project Name: *Ubuntu Gathering Place*

- **Year Complete:** 2022
- **Local Government:** City of Cleveland, OH
- **Local Foundation:** Saint Luke’s Foundation

Project Purpose

To transform an empty field into a programmable greenspace, nurturing connection among community members and providing educational opportunities while mitigating local flooding and stormwater issues.

Key Lessons Learned

The diversity of organizations engaged in this project – from a social service agency, to federal health agency, to environmental nonprofit, to municipal partner, to funders – and the attention that has been given to keeping all partners in regular communication with one another around shared goals – has been crucial to success. Further, though addressing issues like a city’s long-term climate resiliency can feel massive and overwhelming, there is surprising pride in taking small steps, like adding green infrastructure to a 0.54-acre empty lot, that can build momentum and inspire others to lead to more systemic and lasting impacts. Some key lessons are:

- It is important to hold onto the team’s guiding vision to persevere through obstacles and to ultimately achieve the project goal.
- Community power lies in collective devotion to see each other in each other and recognize a shared humanity.
- It is critical to recognize that systemic change involves long-term, sustained efforts to be achieved.
- Regular team meetings aid in project process and establishing good communication and trust.
- To be successful, the team must stay committed to the vision.

Additional Information and Resources

An informational video about the development of the project can be found [here](#). More information on the project can be found [here](#).