



Sarah Dixon Innovation Center

A Project of P.O.O.R.L.A.W. and GH-CARED

Who We Are

Greater Hazelwood Coalition Against Racial and Ethnic Disparities (GH-CARED), a division of P.O.O.R.L.A.W.

GH-CARED is a diverse coalition of local grassroots, community-based organizations, churches, agencies, businesses, and residents that crosses over all racial, ethnic, and geographic boundaries that have historically separated our local communities. As an organization, we are dedicated to finding community-driven solutions that address the racial and ethnic disparities facing the Black and brown residents – especially women and children – of Greater Hazelwood.

Our Mission

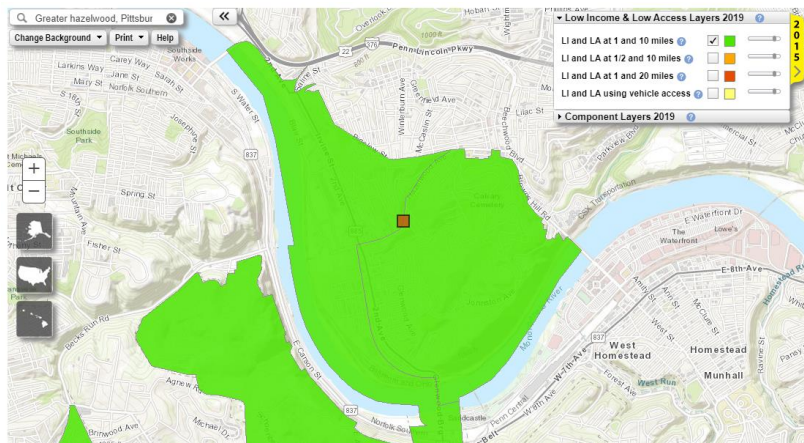
Uplift the Greater Hazelwood community

- Revitalize the Hazelwood Business District
- Address food apartheid and social injustice
- Enable community, minority, and employee ownership
- Rebuild Hazelwood's economic core

Our Community

2009 – Hazelwood's full-service grocery store closes, leaving only convenience stores and a pharmacy selling high-priced snack and processed foods.

USDA classifies Greater Hazelwood as a [food desert](#).



Low-Income and Low Food Access at 1 and 10 miles, [U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Access Atlas](#).

“Participants overwhelmingly desire a neighborhood grocery store, and would welcome locally-owned small businesses. Of particular interest were restaurants; retail stores; and gathering places such as coffee shops, breweries or bars, and entertainment venues. Areas identified for reinvestment included the Second Avenue commercial district, Below the Tracks, and Glen Hazel. Also of particular interest was the intersection at Hazelwood and Second Avenues, as the entry into Hazelwood Green from the neighborhood.”

~Greater Hazelwood Neighborhood Plan, Pittsburgh City Planning, November 2019, p. 18.

Sarah Dixon

Born on November 29, 1924, **Sarah Durant-Dixon** was an entertainer, activist, and organizer who dedicated her life to uplifting the Greater Hazelwood community.

- Co-founder of the Malcolm X African American Society at Gladstone School
- Founder of PREP Mothers (Preparing and Researching for Educational Services) to support local youth with race-related issues
- Founder of the Ujema Theater at the Glen Hazel Recreation Center
- President of the Glen Hazel Heights Tenant Council
- Founder of the Glen Hazel Citizen Association Community Development Corporation (GHCA-CDC)

Even now more than 10 years after her passing in 2011, Dixon’s influence and work continues to make a positive impact – including the establishment of affordable housing, bringing the Rite-Aid pharmacy to the Hazelwood Business District, and the rehabilitation of the HOPE Center on Second Ave.

In the spirit of Sarah Dixon’s life-long work and love for the Greater Hazelwood community, we are naming this community-founded, -owned, and -led center in honor of her legacy.



The Space

- South side of the Second Ave. 4800 block – between Hazelwood Ave and Flowers Ave.
- Two-story commercial building with underground parking lot
- 40,000 sq. ft. of commercial space
- Ground floor: Full-service grocery store on the ground floor
- Upper floor: Small businesses that meet the immediate needs of Greater Hazelwood



Sarah Dixon Innovation Center Building Design Concept by StoreMasters

Design and Construction Partners



The Cooperative

The property and businesses housed at the Sarah Dixon Innovation Center will operate as employee-owned organizations – **owned by the Greater Hazelwood community, the employees of the businesses, and their customers.**

Why a cooperative model?

- Better pay for workers – from 15%–70% higher than typical organizations
- More control over working conditions
- Greatly reduced worker turnover (40%–60% reductions, typically)
- Dollars spent directly benefit the community
- Community resilience and pride in ownership

Cooperative and Employee Ownership Partners





The Grocery Store



Family Tree Food Market – A Community-Driven Approach to Food and Wellness

Family Tree Food Market is more than just a grocery store. Its mission is to **reimagine how the food industry meets the needs of communities like Greater Hazelwood**. In order to support healthy neighborhoods and families, Family Tree looks to reduce nutrition-related chronic diseases by offering affordable, high-quality food as well as health and wellness programs and services – all close to home.

As part of its **commitment** to the Sarah Dixon Innovation Center, Family Tree will:

- Work with the community employee-owned community cooperative to establish the grocery store operating model
- Jointly manage operations for the first two-to-three years as part of a franchise agreement
- Provide guidance, training, and operational management expertise
- Prepare employees and managers to successfully take the reins and operate the store going forward

Market Viability

The Study



In order to establish the market viability of a grocery store in the Hazelwood Business District, **Oak Moss Consulting & Associates** conducted a market viability study. The study contains forward-looking information, including demographics, new residential projects, and trends in the market for groceries and household goods.

The **results are clear** – a coop grocery store in Greater Hazelwood is a good investment:

- **Population growth**, including new housing development projects on Second Ave. and the Hazelwood Green, will significantly increase demand and market size
- **Strategic location** on commuter route SR885/Second Avenue offers a unique advantage
- **Benchmark revenues** projected within 2–3 years, that will continue to grow over 5–10 years

Read the full market viability study [here](#).



Partner Organizations



To read the full case statement and plan for the Sarah Dixon Innovation Center, please visit us [online](#).