

## Using-Innovation-to-Build-a-Better-Jackson-Community-Development-Forum

On Wednesday, September 26, 2018, the Mississippi Urban Research Center hosted a forum on community development entitled “Using Innovation to Build a Better Jackson” at the Downtown Campus of Jackson State University. The purpose of the event was to bring together community development professionals and organizations, community members, academics, and other stakeholders to discuss innovative community development solutions to help improve the quality of life in Jackson.

The program consisted of a brief report on community development by MURC research associate Sheryl L. Bacon, a panel discussion, and a “talkback session” with the audience. Panelists were Dr. Martha Alexander of Leadership Next Generation and the JABEZ Project; Mr. Kiyadh Burt of HOPE Policy Institute; Dr. Kimberly Hilliard, Executive Director of JSU Community Engagement; Mr. Primus Wheeler, Executive Director of the Jackson Medical Mall Foundation; and Dr. Joan M. Wesley, Associate Professor/Interim Chair of JSU Department of Urban and Regional Planning. The discussion was moderated by Mr. Malcolm Shepherd, Executive Director of Mississippi Homebuyer Education Center/Mississippi Housing Initiative and owner of M & M Professional Services, LLC. Over 40 attendees participated in the forum, and the event concluded with participants joining smaller work groups to continue working on improving community development in the city of Jackson. The ultimate long-term goal of the forum is the creation of a new community development model that will improve outcomes and lives in numerous aspects through collective effort and evidence-based decision-making.

