



City of Oshkosh  
Department of Community Development

# Oshkosh Neighborhood News

APRIL, 2016

## The Value of Community Building & Engagement

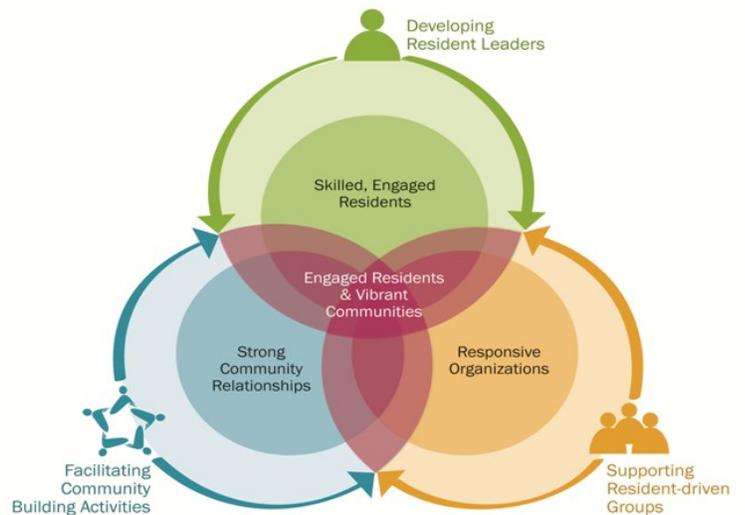


*“Community Building & Engagement brings the talents, resources, and skills of people in a community together.”*

It has been said that resident engagement is an essential component of effective and sustainable community development. For nearly five years, the City of Oshkosh has been working to strengthen neighborhoods through a specific theory of change known as the Healthy Neighborhoods approach. A fundamental part of this approach is what we refer to as Community Building & Engagement (CB&E), which describes continuous, self-renewing efforts led by residents who build relationships, problem solve, and build a stronger community.

These efforts are grounded in the belief that people have the ability to name their problem(s) and identify the additional information and resources needed to solve them. Community building efforts are processes that bring the talents, resources, and skills of people in a community together. People work for social change, which results in improved lives and greater equity; new or strengthened institutions, organizations, and relationships; and new standards and expectations for life in the community.

Neighborhood associations play a key role in carrying out CB&E activities and have made huge impacts in improving the quality of life in Oshkosh’s 11 neighborhoods.



### CB&E By the Numbers

In 2015, neighborhood association members invested 2,380 hours on planning, organizing, and carrying out neighborhood projects and events—and that is just what was reported. This number does not include the countless hours that were spent in informal meetings, on one-to-one relationship building, making phone calls, sending emails, conducting research, or carrying out other neighborhood-related tasks.

According to Independent Sector, a coalition of non-profits, foundations, and corporate giving programs, the value of a WI volunteer hour is \$22.24, which

means that Oshkosh resident leaders created \$52,931.20 in added value in our neighborhoods through their generous investment of time and effort! In addition, 25 neighborhood events were held in 2015 and a number of neighborhood beautification projects were completed.

If you would like to learn more about Oshkosh neighborhood associations, how to get involved, or how to start a group in your neighborhood, please contact Shelly Reinke, City of Oshkosh Neighborhood Coordinator at [sreinke@ci.oshkosh.wi.us](mailto:sreinke@ci.oshkosh.wi.us), or at 920-236-5059.

## Oshkosh Event To Celebrate National Bike Month

May is National Bike Month, sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists and celebrated in communities from coast to coast. Established in 1956, National Bike Month is a chance to showcase the many benefits of bicycling—and encourage more folks to give bicycling a try. This year, Oshkosh will join the national celebration with the BikeOsh event on May 21, 2016 from 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m. The goal of this free event is to encourage Oshkosh residents to live a healthy lifestyle while learning about the incredible bike facilities in our community. From 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m., participants will use the City of Oshkosh bike routes to visit any of the 20+ participating “pit stop” businesses and organizations and pick up a pedal pass. For each pit stop vis-

ited, riders will get their pedal pass stamped. Pit stop locations include the YMCA, Bare Bones Brewery, the Roxy, Ground Round restaurant, UWOW, and the Seniors Center, just to name a few. From 12:30 p.m.—2:00 p.m. riders will visit the Seniors Center to be entered in prize raffles. The more stamps you have on your pedal pass, the more chances you have to win!

For more information on BikeOsh, please contact Alexa Naudziunas at [anaudziunas@ci.oshkosh.wi.us](mailto:anaudziunas@ci.oshkosh.wi.us), or at 920-236-5126.

Visit the BikeOsh Facebook page to learn more about bicycling safety and other bike related projects and events in our region and state.

To view the City of Oshkosh Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Plan, visit <http://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us>.

Click on Departments, Community Development, Planning Services, Plans, 2012 City of Oshkosh Bike and Circulation Plan.

**BikeOsh**

May 21, 2016 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Hop on your bike for the BikeOsh ride to promote and celebrate a bike-friendly Oshkosh!

Pick up your Pedal Pass at any of the 20+ pit stop locations.

Use your Pedal Pass as a guide for Oshkosh bike facilities, routes and pit stops.

- ✓ Check in at as many pit stop locations as you can.
- ✓ Utilize Oshkosh bike lanes and paths.
- ✓ Turn in your pass at the final stop (Seniors Center) to be entered into a drawing for prizes.

Check out the BikeOsh Facebook page for more information!

Riders are invited to enjoy complimentary snacks and beverages at the Oshkosh Senior Center from 12:30 - 1:00pm.



*“Turning on a porch light makes a street feel more welcoming and communicates a high level of care for the neighborhood by its residents”*

## Eight Ways to Improve Your Neighborhood Now

Simple steps can be taken now—that require very little time, effort, or money—but can make a big difference. Helping your neighborhood to be friendly, code compliant, and look better can result in a safer, more enjoyable neighborhood for everyone. Remember, living in a good neighborhood isn't a right—it's a responsibility.

**1. Make a list of the names and phone numbers of every neighbor on your block.** Not just two neighbors - set a goal of at least 10 and preferably 20 or 30. Find almost any citizen who has turned around a

problem block and you will find a citizen who really knows the people who live there. Did you grow up in a neighborhood where "everyone knew each other" and find that today your neighborhood isn't like that? That's true for many people. That's not "society's" fault. Instead, think of it as your responsibility and you can fix it. Unless you know neighbors' names and numbers, you can't call them about a concern or let them know about a neighborhood event. Learn the names and phone numbers of your neighbors this weekend.

**2. Make a list of landlords in your areas as well.** As owners of property in the community, landlords are responsible to the neighborhood and most are rightly concerned about the health of the community in which their properties stand. You can find out the name and address of the person or organization that owns any property, including the rental house next door, by contacting the City Assessor's office. Do it today.

**3. Walk around the block.** It sounds simple enough, but neighbors benefit over time (Continued, page 3)

## Eight Ways, Cont...

when responsible citizens walk about more. At minimum walk around the block, once every day, preferably at night if you feel comfortable doing so. Take a moment to chat with neighbors, including youth, when the opportunity arises.

**4. Help your neighborhood association or similar groups.** If you are willing, decide what greater contribution you would like to make - then take the lead and do it. If leadership isn't your desire, at least make sure someone in your household attends local neighborhood association meetings. You'll be kept better informed of the issues facing the neighborhood, how you can help, and perhaps more importantly, you'll have the chance to shape, guide, and participate in the future of your neighborhood.

**5. Pick up the litter near your home, even if you didn't put it there.** Most people are less likely to litter where they don't see litter already. You can help stop the growth of trash in your neighborhood by taking away the existing litter that attracts it.

**6. Drive slowly on neighborhood streets.** While we often call for stop signs, lights, and speed bumps, we often forget that we can organize a means to slow down neighborhood traffic sooner. Remember that it is legal to drive a few miles per hour below the speed limit in your neighborhood. For example, if the speed limit is 25, try 20 instead. Regular slower driving on neighborhood side streets by multiple neighbors will dampen the desire of racers to use your street - it isn't as fun to cut through a neighborhood if the likelihood of being stuck behind a car traveling at a more respectful pace has increased. Also, do it on every side street in the neighborhood, not just the one near your home.

**7. Turn your porch light on.** Do this every night at dusk and keep it on until dawn. Crime tends to decline in neighborhoods that are well lit. Turning on porch lights is a simple way to start this process. It also makes the street feel more "welcome" to good residents who are out for a walk in the evening.

It communicates a higher level of caring for the neighborhood by residents. This can become a daily routine or it can be accomplished by installing a timer. It is also immediate - while you wait for local government to install that new street-light that everyone is asking for, go ahead and add a little more light yourself. Then encourage other neighbors to do the same.

**8. Stay where you are.** Stable neighborhoods are built on the commitment of long term residents who would rather live in a healthy community than move to a bigger house. Communities reach stability when conscientious citizens allow their roots to grow deep and help transform a geographic area that exists as a "neighborhood" in name only into a real community of involved people. Please, stay and help.

## Imagine Oshkosh—A Master Plan For Our Center City

The City of Oshkosh is currently developing *Imagine Oshkosh – A Master Plan for Our Center City!*

**What Is Imagine Oshkosh?** *Imagine Oshkosh* is a long-term vision and strategy for Oshkosh's center city.

It will direct growth, investment, and development in the City's greater downtown area over the next 10 years. Extensive public outreach will be conducted throughout the planning process, and the community's vision will drive the plan's direction and recommendations. Ultimately, *Imagine Oshkosh* will answer: "What should our center city look like in 10 years and how do we get there?"

**Where/What Is Oshkosh's Center City?** Oshkosh's "center city" is its downtown area and historic core. It includes our central business district as well as the Fox River and Lake Winnebago waterfront area. The central city area is crucial

to the health of Oshkosh due to the great concentration of property value, businesses, jobs, worker housing, and population density.



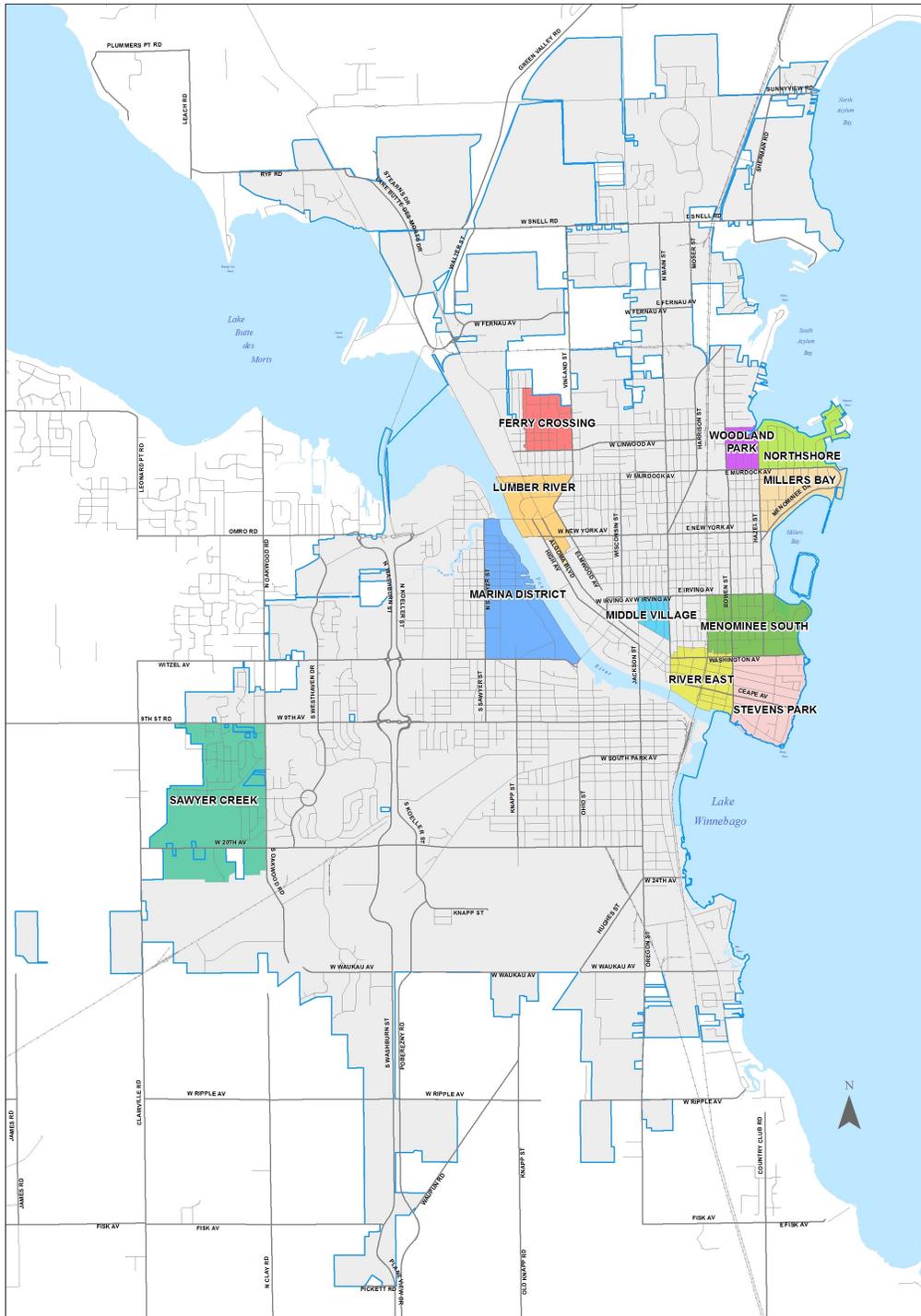
### What Will Imagine Oshkosh Contain?

*Imagine Oshkosh* will contain several important pieces, including: a summary of community feedback and outreach; a demographic and market analysis; a detailed vision with accompanying goals and objectives; a land use and infill redevelopment framework; an arts and entertainment district framework; a parking and transpor-

tation plan; a pedestrian mobility and connectivity plan; a beautification, streetscape, and signage plan; and an implementation plan. Collectively, *Imagine Oshkosh* will provide elected officials and decision-makers with the long-term vision of the center city area and the strategies and tools needed to achieve that vision.

### Who Is Involved in Creating Imagine Oshkosh?

You! It is critical that all of Oshkosh's stakeholders are involved in the development of *Imagine Oshkosh*. The City is committed to involving residents, businesses, and workers in the process in order to craft a common community vision for the future of our center city. Ultimately, the Plan will be reviewed and approved Oshkosh Plan Commission and City Council. For more information, please visit <http://www.hlplanning.com/portals/oshkosh/about-the-plan/> or call Planning Services at 920-236-5059.



**City of Oshkosh  
Neighborhood Associations**

The City of Oshkosh creates and maintains GIS maps and data for its own use. They may show the approximate relative location of property boundaries and other features from a variety of sources. These maps/datasets are provided for information purposes only and may not be sufficient or appropriate for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. They are provided "AS-IS" without warranties of any kind and the City of Oshkosh assumes no liability for use or misuse.



**Do you have a suggestion for a story or other content for an upcoming newsletter? Do you or your organization have an upcoming event that you'd like publicized? The City of Oshkosh welcomes your questions, comments, and suggestions. Please contact the Planning Services Division at 920-236-5059. We look forward to hearing from you!**