

Neighborhood



Leadership Tips

Neighborhood Organization tools recommended by Indianapolis Neighborhood Leaders

1. Background statement

As part of Neighbor Power Indy 2018, the Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC) organized a panel of current and former neighborhood organization presidents to discuss their experiences. Over 25 residents participated in the discussion.

After the event, INRC surveyed the attendees, with particular interest in developing next steps. From that survey, five persons volunteered to develop a plan of action. After discussing several issues, the group decided to develop a project that benefits neighborhoods, with the specific goal to develop an action plan that outlines tools for neighborhood engagement that can be provided to existing and future neighborhood presidents.

2. Organizers Workbook

In 2008, INRC developed the Organizers Workbook, designed to help residents get to know their neighbors and work in partnership to design and work toward goals. The Workbook is an easy-to-follow guidebook full of practical tools to help neighbors organize. It includes lessons, tips and stories to help residents work together to achieve their visions for their neighborhoods.

The Workbook has 10 chapters, which discuss a variety of topics, including Asset-Based Community Development, Community Organizing, Developing an Organizer Work Plan, Leadership and Group Dynamics, Engagement, Collaboration, Communication Efforts; Taking Action to Get Results, Neighborhood Meetings, and Measuring Success.

The Organizers Workbook is in its 3rd Edition, with updated stories of success from neighborhood leaders in Indianapolis. The Workbook can be used jointly with the tools highlighted in this document.

3. Specific tools from Neighborhoods

These tips have been used by neighborhood leaders in Indianapolis. There is no perfect way to be a neighborhood leader. Each of the tools may or may not be appropriate, depending on individual circumstances. The goal of this document is to present a variety of ideas, based on past practice.

Tip Group 1: Considering locations for meetings

Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC)

Some factors to consider in choosing location:

- Is the location within the neighborhood, or near enough for residents to attend?
- Is the building accessible for those of all abilities?
- Does the location create any perceptions that may limit attendance (for example, if the location is in a religious building, is it clear that the neighborhood organization is separate from the religious entity)?
- Is there ability to have childcare, food, or other amenities that will help the residents attend and be comfortable?



- To the extent possible, meetings should be in the same location and at a regular time and date.
- If your organization is new, or wanting a new location, considering contacting neighborhood assets or anchor institutions (businesses, schools, religious facilities, etc.) to see if they will provide meeting space at no cost.

Tip Group 2: Getting people involved in meetings and other neighborhood activities

One of the most often-asked questions of INRC is: “How do we get more people involved in our neighborhood?” The following neighborhoods have had success in increasing resident and stakeholder involvement.

Irvington Development Organization

In order to get people involved, the Irvington Development Organization (IDO) started one-off kinds of activities that were interesting for the residents, businesses and other stakeholders. It was difficult to recruit new volunteers to go to a meeting. Residents and others had to understand that their time was valued and that they were contributing to something of value. People had to know the organization's mission and what had been accomplished. IDO did that most effectively through a newsletter and social media. IDO's monthly newsletter contained upcoming neighborhood events, a focus on IDO news and announcements, and a neighbor/neighborhood business spotlight. Individual articles were then posted on Facebook. People always wanted to be in the know, so providing information got them linked to information. It took dedicated time and resources to manage the organization's communication, but it was essential to build trust and then loyalty.



Tip Group 3: Managing conflict and differences of opinion at your meetings

Kennedy-King Neighborhood Association



The Kennedy-King Neighborhood Association has dealt with conflict and differences of opinions at its meetings. The president gauges the overall response from neighbors when a conflict or differences of opinion arise. When it gets to the point of being heated, the president will step in and advise that the neighbors discuss the issue offline and move forward with the meeting. Once the meeting is over, the president makes sure that the parties speak to one another, but makes sure it's in a constructive way. The president wants all neighbors to feel that they can express themselves and their concerns without being ridiculed or causing an unnecessary argument. The president stays neutral and tries to reach the best outcome for their neighbors. If they reach an impasse, the president tries to find a best solution that everyone can settle on. Each person will not get their way, but if they can find common ground, that's what the president wants and tries to achieve.

Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association

In their meetings, Haughville STRONG often develops workshops that have structured activities, so that the meeting time is well managed. Recently, Haughville STRONG worked with the Herron School of Art and Design to create a community guidebook. The process included three workshops: asset mapping, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis and a strategic planning retreat, where goals and objectives were developed. These workshops occurred at regular community meeting times, in order to be respectful of the attendees' volunteer time.



Tip Group 4: Finding candidates for neighborhood offices and creating a succession plan

Neighborhood organizations, by their nature, are supported by volunteers. Dedicated and passionate leaders have supported neighborhoods for many years, but some neighborhoods have found that new leadership is difficult to develop.

Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association

The Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association is rebuilding and neighbors are focusing on developing a sense of community. The association has a board of 12 members, but several have had health issues, which has made decision-making difficult, because they often lack a quorum. In order to address this problem, the association is considering a change in the bylaws to reduce the number of board members.



Mapleton-Fall Creek has been approached by a local magazine, Indy Midtown Magazine, for articles. They will be submitting articles that address the history of the neighborhood, as well as highlighting neighbors. The association hopes this press will spark interest and more volunteering from other neighbors.

Tip Group 5: Tips to engage new volunteers, to work with community partners, and avoid burnout of existing volunteers

A common question asked of INRC staff: “How do we get more people to help?” Several neighborhoods have successfully recruited volunteers to support their efforts.

Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association (HSNA)



Haughville STRONG leadership structure is unique. Haughville has approximately 15,000 housing units; some occupied, abandoned, or dilapidated. Leadership realized the area was too large for the traditional board structure, President, Vice-President, Treasurer. Seeing a great need for shared leadership, residents decided to divide Haughville into 4 quadrants; the structure includes one at-large-member who can be a business/organization within Haughville. Each quadrant area has a resident leader who is responsible for passing out flyers in the area, connecting with neighbors, and building capacity with those around them.

When residents identified their top three concerns, leaders stepped up to become liaisons that would work with subcommittee members to organize, develop action plans, and work with community partners to build capacity on committees. Keeping the neighborhood focused on three top areas (public safety, children programs, and cleanliness/beautification) provided direction, structure and allowed members to receive education to address issues now. Each subcommittee has a mission and objectives that are reviewed annually for consistency and efficiency.

HSNA is intentional about action and ensures flyers are available for all community meetings to expand community marketing. They organize neighborhood walks with residents and community partners to pass out information regarding upcoming events happening in the neighborhood. Every meeting has a volunteer signup sheet for the three subcommittees and encourage residents to take action with leadership. HSNA continues to use all social media platforms to spread the word about the great things happening in Haughville.

Irvington Development Organization

The Irvington Development (IDO) organized “friend-raisers”. The largest of these “friend-raisers” were the streetscape clean-ups and tree plantings. Those were usually done in conjunction with Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB), and was a way for neighbors to help, in a very limited, finite, but physical way. Volunteering for a couple of hours with a bunch of other people was a great way to meet people and feel good about visual contributions to a larger effort. It gave volunteers a sense of ownership. It was important to make it easy to volunteer, provide training if necessary, and reward them with food/drink.



Another kind of activity people wanted to volunteer for were fun events. In its first year, IDO hosted The Irvies. A group of eight to ten service sorority members had coincidentally contacted IDO for a project. Members volunteered for a variety of tasks needed for the gala, but they had great fun and volunteered many years after. It was “their” event. They had fun being together and enjoyed the spotlight they collectively received.

IDO also had a way to sign up to volunteer on their website. Shortly after anyone signed up, a board member or veteran volunteer contacted them to meet face-to-face and talk about their interests and what committee or activity that interested them. IDO kept an email list of everyone who indicated interest and sent out calls for volunteers whenever an event was planned. They didn’t wait too long before reaching out to them again for a specific ask.

To transform a neighbor’s general interest into a vested board/committee member, it took the hook of either that initial toe-in-the-water of volunteering for a particular activity or the personal engagement from an already committed participant. Neighborhood organizations should never take that for granted. IDO held thank-you parties for their volunteers where they just recognized their efforts and made the volunteers feel appreciated and special.

Tip Group 6: Being inclusive of others – diverse neighborhoods that get lots of diverse involvement

Indianapolis Neighborhoods are often very diverse. Promoting diverse representation is important for successful and representative neighborhoods events and meetings.

Little Flower Neighborhood Association



All Little Flower communications provide language that specifically states, “All are welcomed”, including both homeowners and renters. Sometimes, the Association organizes meetings designed to provide and discuss specific resources for renters.

Little Flower often has guest speakers. The Association has targeted speakers that highlight inclusiveness, like the Immigration Welcome Center and Exodus Refugee. In order to celebrate cultural differences, Little Flower sponsors a Heritage Pot Luck, where neighbors bring a food dish that is part of their heritage. Other events also support diversity, including their Speed Neighboring and Bingo event, which is held at nearby Shi-kay Lounge, around Valentine’s Day each year.

Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

The Holy Cross Neighborhood is diverse, with both renters and owners. The Association indicates that they don’t have many renters participating, however, they do have 50-100 people attending regular meetings, with more attending their annual Christmas party; most, however are white.



Holy Cross has a group of Legacy Neighbors – those that have been a part of the community for some time. There is a Men’s Group who paint and do chores for these neighbors. The Men’s Group also spearheads the Neighborhood Cleanup.

At one time, the Association used yard signs to advertise community events. Holy Cross is included in The Urban Times, which is delivered to all homes in their community. They are responsible for writing Urban Times articles, but it is sometimes difficult to find volunteers. To reach their diverse population, they use Facebook and NextDoor to broadcast all their events.

Neighbors reach out to each other in informal ways, such as walking their dogs and sitting on their front porches and greeting passersby. Home ownership rates have been increasing, because Holy Cross is currently more affordable than the nearby historical neighborhoods, Cottage Home and Woodruff Place.

Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association

In Mapleton-Fall Creek, there is a natural inclusiveness because of the neighborhood dynamics. This allows for great discussions at their community meetings. There are many renters in the neighborhood, which they have not been able to tap into yet.

The Neighborhood Association provides and participates in several events to reach out to the diverse community:

- 1) Senior Dinner in October – generally at a local church. The cost is \$10.00 for seniors and \$25.00 for non-seniors. This is well attended and all the funding is specifically for this event.
- 2) National Night Out held at the Raphael Health Center. In 2019, the organization sent out flyers to encourage more neighbors to participate.
- 3) Great Indy Clean-up. Although the cleanup typically happens in the spring, the 2019 event was in the fall, as their spring weekend was on Easter.
- 4) Mapleton-Fall Creek has worked with Freewheelin' Community Bikes in the past and wants to strengthen that relationship.
- 5) The neighborhood organization participated with Tabernacle Presbyterian Church and their Halloween Trunk or Treat event.
- 6) Mapleton Fall Creek hopes to organize a block party in the future.



Tip Group 7: Having fun at your meetings

Regular meetings are necessary to conduct the business of neighborhood organizations. However, it is important for residents to have fun and meet in a friendly, non-business-like environment. Several neighborhoods provide opportunities for their residents to meet socially.

Little Flower Neighborhood Association



Little Flower meets monthly, but every other month, they organize a social or service event. They refer to the business meeting as a “neighborhood meeting” instead of business meeting.

Each neighborhood meeting begins with an Icebreaker which generally aligns with the time of the year, i.e. Spring/Summer, current holidays. They have played Speed Neighbor where they get to know other neighbors. There are seasonal giveaways. For example, during gardening season, they may give plant starts.

They have a neighborhood T-shirt that they also give residents.

For meetings that are service or social, events can include Little Flower night at local restaurant Steer Inn, game board night, a chili cook-off and the Great Indy Cleanup in the spring. In order to personalize these events their advertising for the Great Indy Cleanup includes the faces of their neighbors instead of just the details of the event.

Holy Cross Neighborhood Association

The Holy Cross Neighborhood Organization only meets quarterly (for business); however, during warm months, they meet every 3rd Monday on the Sturm Esplanade. Several volunteers set up a BBQ. In addition, neighbors bring side dishes. The event is held from 6 p.m. to dusk (May to October). In October, the neighborhood organizes a chili cook-off. The Esplanade has benches, etc., to encourage it as an informal gathering space.



Holy Cross also organizes a Girls Night Out (GNO). This is held in private homes of neighbors during the warmer months. The host picks the date, and guests bring wine or munchies. Although it mostly becomes a house tour, it provides an opportunity for neighbors to develop friendships. For National Night Out, Holy Cross has sometimes closed Arsenal Street, so the activities are organized like a block party.

The Holy Cross regular meetings begin at 6:30 p.m., with beer and wine. The business meeting is from 7-8 p.m. The meetings are usually held in the Redevelopment Group Warehouse, but if it is too hot, they will have a block party.

Tip Group 8: Designing newsletters

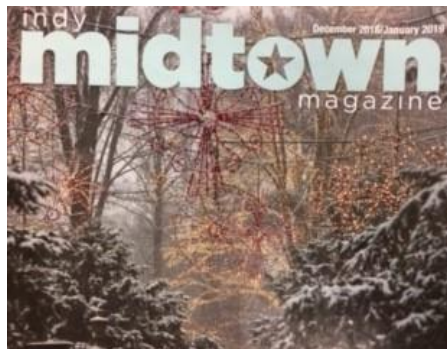
Newsletters are often one of the consistent ways for a neighborhood organization to provide information to the residents. There are many different ways to develop a successful newsletter.

Indy Midtown Magazine Editor

The Editor of the Indy Midtown Magazine, Tom Healy, provided the following information. Newsletters can be an essential tool for community organizing because they build support networks, strengthen community relations, prompt participation and engagement, help generate a community “voice,” and establish a means of distributing the community “message.” There are multiple options.

Low- or no-budget operations will likely benefit from using digital publishing tools: email or one of several social media platforms. The level of design sophistication (graphics, fonts, etc.) isn't as important as the content, which must be timely, interesting, useful, and relevant to the community's mission/goals.

Communities with members who have the appropriate skillset might create a PDF and print out a few copies to hand out at meetings/events and/or post to the group's website.



A more elaborate form is a printed piece that is mailed to members. This is the most expensive route, requires some skills (both technical and interpersonal i.e. working with a printer/mailing house) and takes the most time. The benefits of printing and mailing should not be underestimated since not every community member has the technology for digital communications, but everyone has a mailing address. In addition, print is a proven way to engage an audience and hold their attention.

Any of these approaches can be effective but regardless of the technology, the key to a successful newsletter is consistency. The newsletter needs to appear regularly. While each group will have to determine the best frequency, one approach to communications could be as follows:

- A quarterly printed newsletter mailed to all members/constituents/allies/stakeholders. Post PDF to website.
- A monthly news blast that is predominantly text-oriented and emailed widely. Post as blog entry on website.
- A weekly email might be necessary to send updates about high priority projects that do not necessarily require immediate action. Post as blog entry on website.
- As-needed online updates for late-breaking news of immediate interest. Post as blog entry on website.
- Printed postcard mailings as needed for essential meetings/events. Post as calendar item on website.

Depending on the size of the community/organization, a Communications or Outreach Committee is helpful. While many hands make light work, there should be one person who is the Editor. This is really important – someone has to make decisions on what constitutes suitable content, establishes and manages deadlines, and takes responsibility for accuracy.

Another tip is to have different people review the material before publication/distribution. It's a good way to catch errors of fact or omission by having a “fresh eye” look things over.

Printed pieces that are mailed frequently will cost money so look for local businesses/organizations to help underwrite the cost. If a group decides to go down this path, it will require a volunteer to have both sales and collections skills!

Producing a regular newsletter project is a substantial undertaking. It doesn't matter if it is print or digital – it is work! There is no shame in realizing it may be beyond the capacity of volunteers to manage. Fortunately, there are lots of freelancers with the necessary skills who can help (for a fee) but the organization/community will still need a person to manage the process.

Urban Times Editor

The Editor of the Urban Times, Bill Brooks, recommends that newsletters provide basic information for a neighborhood, as follows:

1. Information on regular meetings – both facts from latest meeting and info about next meeting (time, place, what might be discussed, etc.).
2. Information on Board of Directors, including officers, and how to contact them.
3. Information on pending developments, house construction, etc. and new businesses, if the neighborhood has commercial element.
4. Ways to network with each other.



Tip Group 9: Use of social media, websites, NextDoor, etc.

Social media is a quick, inexpensive way to provide information to neighborhood residents. Several neighborhoods use a variety of social media tools.

Little Flower Neighborhood Association

Little Flower regularly uses social media. They have a monthly newsletter, distributed electronically through e-mail, which primarily provides general information about upcoming events. Facebook highlights events, and they sometimes pay fees to boost some events. Facebook generally shows the creative/sense of humor of neighbors and the community, which is helping to develop the personality of the community.

Little Flower's Instagram account highlights photos of neighbors and events. The Little Flower website includes whimsical photos of board/staff members, with short bios that also highlight the personality/creativity of the neighbors.

<https://www.facebook.com/LittleFlowerNeighborhood/>

<http://www.littleflowerindy.org>

littleflowerneighborhood@gmail.com



Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association



BATES-HENDRICKS NEIGHBORHOOD

Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Association has a marketing person as part of the leadership. They use the application, Hootsuite, (a subscription-based social media management platform), which allows them to post on all their social media (except NextDoor) at the same time. Hootsuite also allows them to do auto-posts, so that they can schedule posts for events, meetings, etc. The auto-post tool is the most helpful. Hootsuite makes use of data on all social media sites to see and connect with those who are visiting their sites and responding, ("likes" etc.).

Bates-Hendricks uses an electronic newsletter, delivered by e-mail, for those not on social media. The e-mail always includes a page of upcoming events.

Bates-Hendricks is also a part of the Urban Times, which is delivered to 500-600 neighbors, via Block Captains. There is a focus to deliver to those residents in the southern part of the community, who are not always represented.

The Bates-Hendricks newsletters are archived with the Indianapolis Public Library.

Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association

Haughville STRONG develops a flyer that contains information regarding their email, website, and Facebook pages. Haughville STRONG also has three focus areas – Public Safety, Children Program, and Cleanliness Ambassadors. Separate flyers are developed for each of these focus areas, so that those interested in only a specific area can keep informed on that topic. They also share this information on NextDoor and on other neighborhood pages such as Haughville USA.



Community Heights Neighborhood Organization

The Community Heights Neighborhood Organization (CHNO) uses WordPress, which is a free platform that gives access to professional themes and 3 GB of storage space. It provides the option of choosing affordable plans, which allows for more space and support. Some of the plans include advance design customization and monetization tools.

CHNO at one time upgraded to another platform, which required yearly payments. Due to problems with an expired debit card, CHNO was locked out and unable to retrieve the website. CHNO continued to keep the WordPress domain, and seamlessly went back to the previous website.



It is important that someone be responsible for the website and any and all other social media platforms used.

NextDoor is a free and excellent tool for organizations in highlighting meeting notices and any other events. Government agencies can post special events/trainings available to everyone. There are certain criteria with respect to the type of posts that are accepted and monitored by the fellow users and reported for possible removal.

Facebook is also used extensively by CHNO. Posting photos of neighborhood events is a good way to encourage more involvement. It is important that a neighborhood representative monitor posts, to avoid any misunderstandings.

Tip Group 10: Identifying and understanding the role of local government and how they can support your neighborhood

An asset of every neighborhood is local government. Staff at local agencies can help neighbors with a variety of issues. Building relationships with a variety of staff members can widen the spectrum of support for your neighborhood.

Near East Side Community Organization (NESCO)

NESCO is unique, as they have been working with the government since its inception. In the days of Mayor Richard Lugar, an extensive study was developed called the Highland Brookside Project and that framework became the basis of many of the priorities in the community. It would probably compare to the current use of Quality of Life Plans.

David Hittle, the land use chair for NESCO, works with the entire NESCO area (currently made of 19 neighborhood/community organizations). Because of the history of NESCO and the many projects, professionals in land use were brought on board, as they needed community members that understood the approval process before city agencies.

NESCO instituted a specific land use committee who meet separately to address specific projects. As member neighborhood organizations grew, many instituted their own separate land use committees instead of relying on NESCO. These committees allow neighbors to be informed and participate on any and all projects within their boundaries.

Mr. Hittle believes all community groups need to have a working knowledge of the Comprehensive Plan for Indianapolis. Staff from Planning and Zoning will come out and speak to neighborhood groups to discuss the grand picture and the particulars of the community, including outlining the zoning process for all projects that come before the City for approvals. This incomplete sentence needs clarification

In addition, Business Neighborhood Services, formally Code Enforcement, is an important agency neighborhood groups need to know. This agency handles licensing, permitting and inspections. They will meet with neighborhood organizations and businesses to help them to understand and comply with building codes.



The Department of Public Works is also an important agency neighborhood groups should be aware of as DPW maintains roads and street closures, storm water program, snow removal, and garbage/leaves/heavy trash pickup.

The Mayor's Action Center (MAC) provides neighbors one place to request services, get Information, or give feedback. Many services can be requested online at RequestIndy. This website/app also allows neighbors to check the status of their requests.

Indianapolis Community Building Institute (ICBI) – Through the Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC)

ICBI is a training program that incorporates the traditional classes of neighborhood organization with a neighborhood-based project. INRC has included project management skills in the training program and will help solicit additional resources for the project, as determined through the process. The program is open to all Indianapolis neighborhoods. As an important part of the program, INRC will work with chosen neighborhoods to develop a system to measure the results of each of the neighborhood-based projects.

ICBI includes three sessions that provide training on government services. Those are: Introduction to Long-Range Planning, Introduction to Current Planning, and Introduction to Healthy Communities Planning. To learn more about ICBI visit: <http://www.inrc.org/icbi>.



Tip Group 11: Organizing events

Many neighborhoods are successful because they have events. The events can be small, and reserved for residents only, or cater to the community-at-large. These events are typically planned and organized by neighborhood volunteers.

Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Organization



Bates Hendricks organizes three large community events. They have an Events Committee, which meets monthly. The Events Committee develops a budget, which is submitted to the Board for approval. The Committee obtains all permits, etc. One of the challenges is recruiting volunteers. In the future, the Committee hopes to be working to find volunteers from Manual H.S. and their Honor Society, to solicit students who have service hour

requirements. The Committee uses social media and a link on website for neighbors to sign up to volunteer. In addition, a local coffee shop is another place where volunteers are recruited.

Bates-Hendricks uses paid Facebook ads and the newspaper Urban Times to publish events. Their events are:

- 1) Chili Cook-off in February - rotates to different venues in the community - generally, 100-150 people attend.
- 2) Street Festival in August (largest fundraiser), where a street is closed. There is a small entrance fee or donation of school supplies which they share with two K-8 schools in the community. Invitations are made to local businesses (no realtors anymore as it became problematic) artists, bands, food trucks. Funds raised are for operational costs. 400-500 people attend.
- 3) Oktoberfest - October. This is one of the easiest activities to plan, as it is held near an old German social club. The event is mostly social time, where the attendees can purchase food and drink from food trucks. It is casual and attendees typically bring their own chairs. Working with the food trucks to assure their attendance is an important part of this event.

Near West (Haughville, Hawthorne, WeCare, Stringtown)

Indy Convergence, in partnership with Near West residents, brought the Haitian Rara to the Near West community. The Haitian Rara is a street band that grows and evolves as it moves through the city playing traditional instruments. Raras exist to celebrate the joy of living and unite communities to dance and sing away their troubles.

The spirit of the Rara is to bring communities together to celebrate. The Near West is a special part of Indianapolis made of four separate neighborhoods that have decided to work together to benefit all of residents in the Near West. The Rara is a low-cost, low-impact way to gather people together, celebrate, experience the arts, and remind residents how close their neighborhoods are.

Each neighborhood throws their own block or house party with their own band playing a 45-60 minute set. The Indy Convergence float arrives and travels to all four neighborhoods, with a live DJ and short performances. The party and float packs up from one neighborhood and moves to the next neighborhood. Participants can walk, bike, scooter, drive, skateboard or run along the route. Musical instruments, colors, or costumes that represent each neighborhood are encouraged but not required.

The entire route is 1.6 miles. The walking time between each stop is approximately 10-15 minutes. Refreshments are available at each location. All party locations are shared on social media and on a general Rara poster. Anyone can join in at any of the stops along the way.

The Rara culminates in one of the four Near West neighborhoods, where neighborhood leaders from each Near West neighborhood share their successes, upcoming events, and dreams for the future.



Tip Group 12: How to identify and collaborate with major assets/stakeholders

Collaboration is the process of bringing the appropriate people together, to work in constructive ways and with good information, so they can create authentic visions and strategies for addressing the shared concerns of a community, an organization, etc. Collaborative efforts have been successful in several neighborhoods.

Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association

The Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association (HSNA), formed in 2017, facilitates community inclusiveness, awareness, investment, and involvement to promote a safe, sustainable, and vibrant neighborhood. Residents and stakeholders canvassed the neighborhood and invited neighbors to share their vision of a strong Haughville. A new and representative leadership team reached out and engaged both longstanding and emerging leaders who are working together to build a more engaged and inclusive neighborhood association. Through several surveys and community meetings, the Haughville community has identified three focus areas: public safety, children programs, and cleanliness/beautification as major issues in the neighborhood. Public safety is interpreted by residents as manifestations of crime, violence, police brutality, and drugs. The surveys educated the community about the real magnitude of the problem, so that residents felt empowered to propose solutions based on a better understanding of the situation and its causes.

Between April and June 2018, the HSNA hosted three evening workshops for Haughville residents with the help of the IUPUI Herron School of Art and Design to conduct asset mapping to identify the resources, assets, strengths, and gaps in the community to support development initiatives. During these workshops, residents brainstormed about what the top three concerns and identified several of their strengths to address the situation in the community. This collaboration led to the creation of the Haughville Community Asset Toolkit Guide, which utilizes the People-Centered design approach to creative problem solving. This toolkit was created so that the collective good of Haughville can be made evident and empowered to work towards a common purpose: a renewed and strong neighborhood.



In order to address resident concerns that were addressed in separate workshops, in July 2018 HSNA leadership organized the community to initiate a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis where residents and community partners would identify actions that will enable Haughville to see where the community is with public safety and what strategies can be developed to increase safety in the community.

The groundwork completed by HSNA Leadership helped form a partnership with SPEA graduate students in 2018 who assisted with creating a plan with the community that residents could use to take a specific course of action to address the most urgent public safety issues in the neighborhood. The plan included strategies that comprehensively attack the roots of the problems discussed and leverage external resources and community assets.

The number of residents at the neighborhood association meetings continues to grow, and from a few meetings, a diverse group of leaders serves on the leadership council of residents and community partners, including IUPUI, INRC and Christamore House. The organization has recently selected neighborhood liaisons for the three focus areas.

Otterbein Neighborhood Association

The Otterbein Neighborhood Association supports the Pogue's Run Art and Nature Park. The park property has several "owners." The Department of Public Works (DPW) owns the land, as it is a drainage facility. Indy Parks manages the park. The Indiana Department Transportation (INDOT) has responsibility for the Interstate 70 right of way. This issue of ownership and management caused the park to be neglected.

Otterbein helped assure that improvements to Pogue's Run Art and Nature Park be included in the Quality of Life Plan Revitalization Project, which was approved. With that backing, they were able to apply for grant money. Funds were made by private donations, as well as other means.

The People's Health Clinic initiative helped develop a walking trail. Paramount School developed a project by their 8th grade students. Otterbein won an Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC) Collaborative Spirit Award, which allowed Otterbein to enter the Neighborhoods of USA award program, where they received \$500.00. Near East Area Renewal (NEAR) was Otterbein's fiscal agent, as Otterbein is not a 501(c)3 organization. Otterbein also received a grant from Reconnecting Our Waterways, which was used for more artwork and benches. NEAR painted murals, with TeenWorks. Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB) provided 180 trees over 2 years. Otterbein needed to recruit KIB captains around neighborhood to facilitate networking/insight into opportunities. One of KIB's Corporate Sponsors, Roche brought in 100 employees to help work on the Park. Overall, there was approximately \$5,000 in total grants and donations. The project was completed in 3 years.



Currently, Indy Parks maintains the Art and Nature Park. INDOT brings community service workers to help clean the rights-of-way. The project was recently highlighted in a photo contest, sponsored by NEAR. Neighbors participate in a park patrol, with many neighbors using the park to walk their dogs.

Tip Group 13: Soliciting funds

If only we had more money... Everyone and every group believes they would be more successful if they had more funds. Several neighborhoods have been successful in fundraising.

Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association

The Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association (HSNA) is not a 501(c)(3), so leadership understands the value of partnership when requesting financial support for the neighborhood.

Members review upcoming grant opportunities on an annual basis and utilize their asset map created for Haughville to identify grants that are focused on improving issues in the community through financial support.



HSNA collaborates with community partners when submitting proposals for grants. Westside Community Development Center (WCDC) is the fiduciary for HSNA Inc. and serves as the 501(c)(3) backing who supports the progress and success of community involvement. In 2019 HSNA, Indy Convergence, Christamore House, and Fonseca Theatre partnered to apply for the Create Indy grant where we were awarded \$10,000 to host the 2nd annual NearWest Rara Neighborhood Festival in Haughville, Hawthorne, Stringtown, and We Care.

HSNA works continuously with IUPUI and INRC on organizing leadership trainings, retreats, and grant-writing trainings for resident leaders who can assist with raising funds for the community. Leadership Council is building a grant writing team of residents who will review grant opportunities annually and work together to identify grants that support the neighborhood efforts and help to move projects and events forward.

Irvington Development Organization

The Irvington Development Organization (IDO) didn't have many signature fundraising events. A handful of creative volunteers, with a little beer involved, dreamed up a clever event based on The Dundeys, the awards ceremony from The Office. Instead of being about IDO, it was about the neighborhood. They devised a gently tongue-in-cheek awards night that honored residents and businesses for their contributions to the community.



They received the hotly sought after gilded awards that were assembled from flea market purchases. The event was glam'ed up like one of the many entertainment awards ceremonies, red carpet and all, which are also held during that dark, cold page of the calendar, mid-February. It

turned into a “must-attend” event, which made it easy to get sponsorships and sell tickets. Most importantly, it put the spotlight on the wonderful neighbors and neighborhood businesses that make Irvington a special place to live.

IDO also identified donors and members who had contributed in the past, but were generally understood to be capable of giving more. IDO scheduled an early morning, catered breakfast, and invited a small group and promised to keep it to an hour. Board members gave a brief presentation on the history, accomplishments, and plans for the future and distributed pledge cards without specific amounts. IDO received almost as much as another of their events, The Irvies, with very little effort comparatively. The take away was the need to effectively and personally communicate the needs of the organization and the impact it had on the community.

Tip Group 14: Buying, developing, and managing property (pocket parks, greenspace, signs, banners, etc.)

Many neighborhoods have developed pocket parks as an asset for their residents. Others have developed signs or banner programs that must be maintained by the Organizations.

Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Organization

Bates-Hendricks has a strong partnership with Keep Indianapolis Beautiful (KIB). Through this partnership, Bates-Hendricks uses native plants in their open space projects. They have several examples:



- a) The Organization maintains one city-owned park: The Organization pays a private citizen, who is a neighbor, to mow the grass. That neighbor doesn't manage or maintain any of the existing playground equipment. On the first Saturday of each month, the Neighborhood provides volunteers, on a rotating basis, for cleanup/weeding/plantings and yearly mulching in all their parks/open space.
- b) Adopt three Medians/Greenspaces:
 - South New Jersey Street: Generally, neighbors take care of the median, but the Organization provides some funds for mulch, mowing, etc. Neighbors maintain a Gazebo, which was updated with funds from a Neighbor Power Indy grant.
 - Alabama - This is a large median where the Neighborhood pays a neighbor to mow. The median contains some playground equipment, but that is not maintained by the Neighborhood.
 - Gateway – This median is sponsored by a business for advertisement. On occasion, neighborhood volunteers do some weeding.

c) Manage three privately owned properties:

- Property was purchased at a tax sale. It is a pocket park, with an odd shape. The park provides more beautification purposes than an open space for use by residents. The Organization pays a neighbor to mow this property.
- Baumann Park is a partnership with SEND CDC and KIB. It is a massive space, with some playground equipment, but plans for larger equipment are underway. This property is included in the volunteer program mentioned above, where on the first Saturday of each month the Neighborhood provides volunteers, on a rotating basis, for cleanup/weeding/plantings and yearly mulching.
- A SEND/School 31 Community Garden had been maintained by a School 31 teacher. When that teacher left, the Neighborhood found a private group that plants flower pots, etc., for sale. That group maintains the property in exchange for its use.

Bates-Hendricks approves an annual budget of approximately \$650 to pay for mowing of these sites.

Otterbein Neighborhood Association

The Otterbein Neighborhood Association developed the Otterbein Gateway Sign as a project for the Indianapolis Community Building Institute (ICBI). The purpose of the sign was to help build Otterbein's identity. The sign was planned for the intersection of 21st and Sherman. The property was owned by a church, and Otterbein received permission to locate the sign there, if Otterbein maintained the property. If they fail to conduct adequate maintenance, the Church will ask them to remove it.

This informal agreement was included in applications for approval through the Department of Metropolitan Development's Current Planning Division. There was a long approval process, including permits. Because Otterbein was considered a not-for-profit organization, the permit fees were reduced. There was a requirement of a site plan, which was prepared and given as a donation to the organization.



Otterbein residents built the sign themselves, using a template from another Otterbein sign. Indianapolis Power & Light (IPL) donated mulch, so no mowing is necessary. The neighbors only spray for weeds.

There have been two automobile accidents that destroyed the original pots and flowers and required repair of the signs. Solar lights were installed, but were taken within a week. Otterbein eventually added plastic flowers.

There are small fundraisers, like a pancake breakfast and a bake sale, to help maintain the area.

Tip Group 15: Resources for Homeowner's Associations

Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC)

A homeowners association (HOA) is an organization in a subdivision, planned community or condominium that makes and enforces rules for the properties and their residents. Those who purchase property within an HOA's jurisdiction automatically become members and are required to pay dues, known as HOA fees.



In Indianapolis, homeowners associations are neither created nor regulated by the City government. In most cases, disputes that arise must be mediated among neighbors. HOAs typically have elected officers. New HOA members should read the HOA guidelines before they purchase a home and they should meet the HOA officers soon after moving into a home.

Indiana Legal Services, Inc., www.indianalegalservices.org, may be able to provide help for initial HOA questions.

The Indianapolis Bar Association is a good resource for questions about HOAs, specifically the Real Estate and Land Use Section: <https://www.indybar.org/index.cfm?pg=RealEstateLandUse-HomePage>.

Tip Group 16: Developing by-laws for your organization, including naming officers and defining their roles and responsibilities.

By-laws specify the methods that an organization uses to manage its operations. They help maintain consistency in the organization's business and outline the rules, so internal disputes and conflict can be avoided. Residents should understand the history of their area in order to do a good job of creating by-laws. There may be specific factors that led to the formation of the organization and those should be outlined in the by-laws.

Community Heights Neighborhood Association



The Community Heights Neighborhood Organization had its original by-laws developed by an earlier group, the Eastside Community Organization (ECO). From 1980-2006, ECO brought neighbors together to address a range of issues aimed at safeguarding the well-being of the neighborhood. The organization began informally, as a group of concerned residents but incorporated officially to oppose a developer's plans to buy up housing along 16th Street in order to build more medical offices. Once they were incorporated and applied for 501(c)(3) status, the organization established the by-laws in order to meet all official requirements. The first set of by-laws was adopted on December 9, 2008, but they were revised and

amended in 2012 and 2016. The review process was extensive, with many neighbors included in the process. The Community Heights by-laws can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MeiMK4n7x2WIX4iiw_IyEaiZyztmVdboraOSodJTwog/edit?usp=sharing

Haughville STRONG Neighborhood Association

Haughville STRONG's by-laws were written specifically for their needs. The traditional structure of the organization had failed them in the past. There are four quadrant leaders, each representing a residence or a business in the quadrant. Haughville STRONG is a large neighborhood, so having multiple leaders throughout the community helps divide responsibilities. There are also at-large members. At-large members are elected for one year and the term can be extended by election. The organization invites the at-large members, who are community partners and assets in the neighborhood.

The Haughville STRONG by-laws were created in 2017. Prior to the development of the by-laws, residents noticed that there wasn't a lot of energy and most people didn't see the value and assets of the neighborhood. These residents believed the neighborhood was valuable. One resident began working with Christamore House, and through this, noticed that there were many people fighting the same fight, but doing it separately. The original Haughville Neighborhood Organization was

basically one person at a time, and there was no continuity. When the new leaders got together, they conducted surveys in the neighborhood and solicited ideas from the residents. They asked how residents wanted to focus their efforts, which were prioritized into safety, cleanliness, and children's welfare. Leadership drafted the by-laws and they took it to residents. They had a member resident who was knowledgeable about by-laws, who helped in drafting and review. They did significant posts on social media, posted fliers in businesses, and used other strategies to help people become aware of happenings in the neighborhood and how to become involved.

Homewood Park West

Homewood Park West knew they needed by-laws, but didn't know much about them or how to develop them. One of the residents conducted on-line research and found a template for by-laws, where they could edit each section, based on their needs. This template led them through the process. It took several months for their organization to create the detailed by-laws. One of the reasons they wanted the by-laws was to receive a Federal tax identification (ID) number. As they were completing the application for the tax ID number, one of the residents talked with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and found that the paperwork asked for more detailed information than necessary for the neighborhood's purpose. The IRS representative said that a tax ID made them an "assumed" 501(c)(3) and they could accept funds up to \$5,000. This process was much simpler for the organization. One of their neighbors, a former IRS employee, did an audit for them later, to make sure their finances were in order.

The organization created a membership dues requirement of \$10 per year. Paid memberships allow neighbors to vote at neighborhood meetings. Any resident can be a member of the organization. A landlord, as a property owner, could be a member of the organization. Board members must own property in the neighborhood. The organization has different levels of membership for businesses.

Homewood Park West Neighborhood Association Bylaws

Tip Group 17: Branding your neighborhood, creating logos, letterhead, etc.

Some neighborhoods are well known throughout Indianapolis, some are known to the immediate residents, and others do not have a strong identity. Branding tools help increase the recognition of various neighborhoods.

Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Association

The Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood Association has a Marketing Committee, led by a resident within the community who stepped up to spearhead the program. The organization's logo is placed on all materials, using the same font, colors, etc., to promote a consistent brand for everything connected with the association. Bates-Hendricks' current logo has been a part of the community for many years.



Some examples of items that display the logo are:

- T-shirts (adult and children), which are sold and used for fundraising.
- House signs - which are sold to residents, and given to all businesses.
- A gateway sign at an entrance into community, which was developed with grant money. The approval process, including permits was expensive.
- Business cards.
- Neighborhood Maps, that include parks, open space, points of interest, trails, etc.
- Once a year the Organization designates an item to sell with their logo. In the past, the item has been pint glasses, kids t-shirts, and coffee cups. In 2019, they will be selling baseball caps.

In the *Urban Times*, Bates-Hendricks has a header and their own page, displaying their logo. They regularly submit a calendar of events and different stories to the editor for publication.

Tip Group 18: Land Use and Responding to public notices

Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center (INRC)

In Indianapolis, many land use petitions require a public hearing, with public notice to surrounding property owners and registered neighborhood organizations. Registered neighborhood organizations are found on the Department of Metropolitan Development's website:

<http://maps.indy.gov/Indy.Organizations.Web/>.

A new organization can be registered here:

http://maps.indy.gov/Indy.Organizations.Web/data/rno_registration_form.pdf



Public notices are mailed to property owners adjacent to a property subject to a public hearing, as well as the registered organizations. Those notices contain general information about the proposal, as well as names and contact information for the petitioner/their representative and city staff. At a minimum, contact those individuals if you have questions about the proposal or the hearing process.

Notices are also required on the property. Those notices are black/orange signs that contain contact information that can be used to find out what is proposed for the property. Anyone can call and find out the information and anyone can be involved in the hearing process.

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