

The Near Northwest Neighborhood

Quality of Life Plan

Near Northwest
Neighborhood
INCORPORATED 
Avenues • Homes • Neighbors
Where We Live!

October 2013



WHAT IS A QUALITY OF LIFE PLAN?

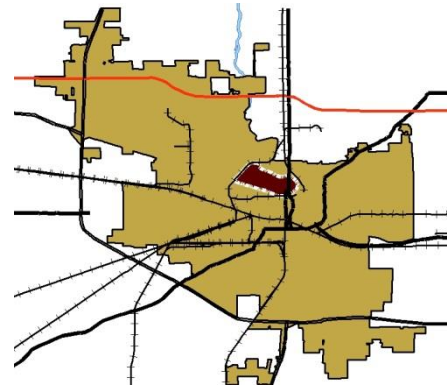
In short, a Quality of Life Plan is a neighborhood's roadmap for the future. It is a collection of hopes, dreams, and practical action steps. The near northwest neighborhood Quality of Life Plan was developed through the collaborative efforts of residents, stakeholders, and civic leaders. It gives voice to the vision of the near northwest community and describes the steps and partnerships necessary to make that vision a reality.

Comprehensive Community Development

Comprehensive Community Development takes a broad approach to revitalization, addressing not just single issues, but the interconnectedness of civic, social, and economic conditions – and builds on local assets to improve the quality of life in a neighborhood. Comprehensive Community Development is about empowering community residents to lead.

The Comprehensive Community Development process begins with community **organizing**, engaging residents and leaders to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the neighborhood. Then from the vision that emerges residents and leaders **decide** on the goals and actions to carry the neighborhood forward. Following development of the Quality of Life Plan, the **action** of implementation begins.

near northwest



VISION

Near northwest neighborhood is a thriving, diverse, and attractive neighborhood with vibrant business districts and corridors providing local opportunities to work and build wealth, active parks and open spaces connected to the river, and numerous neighborhood and community events. It is a beautiful neighborhood that values and celebrates everyone, is walkable with strong connections between the neighborhood and jobs, and celebrates its rich history with the work of local craftsmen and entrepreneurs. Youth are fully engaged in the life of the neighborhood, as are institutional neighbors like Memorial Hospital and Notre Dame. Near northwest is a neighborhood of choice and seen as a highly desirable place to live, work, and play.

Roots run deep in the near northwest. I not only grew up in this neighborhood, but have made my home on Diamond Avenue for the past 30 years. I love the near northwest! ~ Becky Kaiser



Who is leading the way?

The Near Northwest Neighborhood, Inc. (NNN) was founded in 1974 as a private not-for-profit 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. NNN, Inc. is a community development corporation (CDC). It is also a member organization and membership is offered to all business and property owners as well as residents. Members are encouraged to participate in activities and committee work. Volunteers are a critical part of NNN's success as officers, board members, and committee members are not compensated.

Existing Initiatives

Adopt-a-Block – This resident driven litter reduction program provides the neighborhood with its yearly spring cleaning around Earth Day.

Chili Supper – Held annually in March, this event is a great way to catch up with friends and meet new neighbors.

Garden Walk – The NNN Garden Walk is bursting with color and creativity. Residents prune, coax and sweet talk their flower and vegetable gardens to be at their best.

Arts Cafe - Arts Café opens up recently rehabilitated properties to showcase their character. The homes provide a unique backdrop for artists, musicians, and culinary specialists.

Connections & Communications

- Develop a new block captain program to facilitate increased positive interactions between neighbors, covering 90% (at 50) of the neighborhood by 2018.
- By October 2014, establish a landlord contact list with the intention of bringing landlords into better communication with the neighborhood, improving contact with new neighbors, keeping properties up to code, and raising awareness of the Quality of Life Plan among non-resident landlords.

Quality Housing

- Reduce the negative impact of at least 95 vacant and abandoned or substandard housing units in Census Tract 6 by strategic rehabilitation of single family homes, production of quality market rate and affordable rental housing, demolition and redevelopment and other measures by end of 2018.
- Increase the knowledge base and accountability of landlords and tenants in the neighborhood to improve rental property maintenance and reduce the number of nuisance rental properties.
- Improve the condition and appearance of 3-5 structurally sound properties through needed repairs and maintenance each year.

Economic Opportunity & Redevelopment

- Engage in the city's initiative for Lincoln Way West.
- Adopt a Portage Corridor Vision Plan with a particular focus on the area between Golden Avenue and Van Buren Avenue by 2015.
- Restore the Ford distribution building site at 906-908 Portage Avenue to provide affordable rental housing and first floor commercial development.

Safety

- Create a neighborhood campaign to add a working porch light and one motion activated security light to 100 households as part of a pilot program to deter property crimes throughout the near northwest by January 2015.
- Improve neighborhood safety by designing an awareness campaign (to launch by April 2014) to inform neighbors on street light operations and maintenance in the near northwest.
- Establish a quarterly 'crime awareness' training seminar program to teach neighbors how to be more observant of crimes and crime opportunities.

Infrastructure & Connectivity

- Improve connectivity within the neighborhood and between the near northwest and downtown South Bend and other South Bend points of interest through investment in bike and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Improve bike and pedestrian safety at key intersections throughout the near northwest by installing crosswalk safety features in 2016.
- Improve the character of the neighborhood by adding 10 park benches and planters to key locations by 2016.
- Establish a neighborhood tree planting initiative to encourage planting of certain flower, fruit, and heritage trees.
- Establish a long-term plan to identify and repair sidewalk and curb hazards in the neighborhood by July 2014.

Youth & Families

- Engage more neighborhood youth in structured activities in the neighborhood and broader community.
- Engage neighbors in activities to promote healthy lifestyles.
- Facilitate connections among diverse groups of the near northwest residents.