

Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative

-Group Five-

A Detailed Action Plan



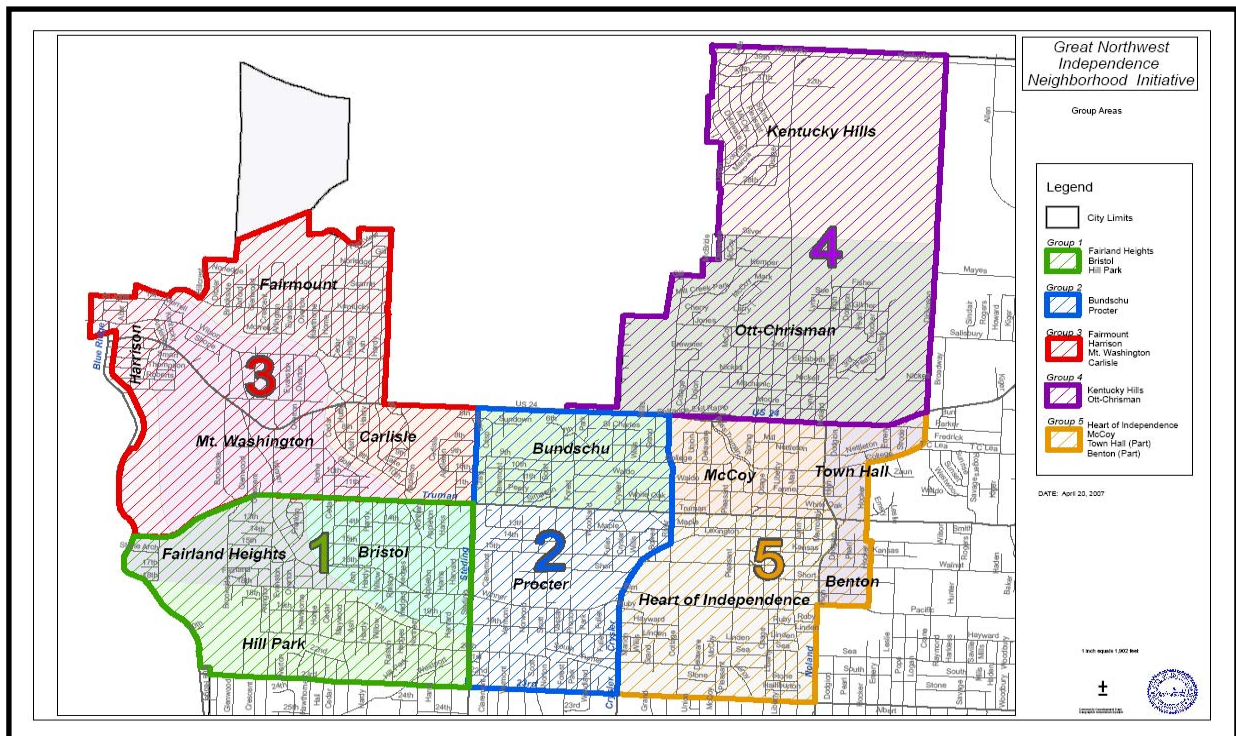
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Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative

Summary

The Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative (GNWINI) is a process whereby residents of the First Council District can create a vision for their area, and ensure that these neighborhoods are great places to live, work, and raise a family. The following Action Plan was developed for Group Five of the Initiative, which is the final Group to complete the planning process. Over the course of three meetings in Group Five of the First Council District, the residents have articulated a vision and identity based upon three positive neighborhood attributes and three points of concern. During the previous meetings, residents thought that the following positive attributes describe Group Five - Friendly, Unique/Historic and Safe/Connected. Similarly, points of concern are that the neighborhood is Less Child Friendly than other areas, some areas are in a state of disrepair, and there are few local shopping opportunities. This document outlines a strategy for building upon the positive neighborhood attributes, and identifies a strategy to address points of concern within the neighborhood.

The following figure identifies all of the neighborhood groups in the First District.



To ensure implementation of the Action Steps in this document, it is recommended that three residents from Group Five will be selected to be members of the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative Advisory Team to identify, prioritize, and refine the Action Steps for Implementation described in this document. Other members will include department directors, City staff, and civic and business leaders from the community. As each group has completed the planning process, additional members have been added to facilitate the overall implementation strategy. This team will be the overall coordination body to ensure the long-term implementation of the plan.

Time Objective: **The Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative Advisory Team will continue to meet monthly or as necessary to implement the objectives of the plan.**

Outcomes: **Established meeting schedule.**

Progress Tracking

For the Great Northwest Independence Neighborhood Initiative Action Plan to be successful, there must be a resource to distribute updates on progress and future action steps. In response to this need, a specific web page address has been established on the City of Independence web-site to update residents on progress and facilitate the planning process. In addition, updates on the implementation of the Action Plans will continue to be included in the City Scene, Channel 7, and other sources.

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The Positive Neighborhood Attributes identified by Group Five are that the area is Friendly, Unique/Historic, and Safe/Connected. Given these attributes, the following Action Steps, Time Objectives and Outcomes have been developed.

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Friendliness:

1. The GNWINI Advisory Team, in coordination with the Community Development Department, will identify neighborhood leaders within the McCoy, Heart of Independence, Benton, and Town Hall Neighborhoods to sustain leadership and to continue to support the neighborhood newsletters.

Time Objective: Neighborhood leaders and meeting schedules established in June 2008.

Outcomes: Identify neighborhood leadership and the creation of strong neighborhood associations.

2. The Neighborhood Services Division (NSD) will develop a Neighborhood Development Program which will result in a recognized neighborhood program to engage neighborhoods with City Hall and foster civic pride. This Action Step will be developed as a Pilot program for neighborhoods within the First Council District, and implemented in other areas upon successful implementation.

Time Objective: Program guidelines will be developed by July 2008.

Outcomes: Development of program parameters and guidelines.

3. The NSD will expand and update current information sources on the City web page, Channel 7, and other media sources.

Time Objective: Completed by July 2007 but will be refined throughout the process.

Outcomes: Updated web-site information and neighborhood links.

4. The GNWINI Advisory Team will assist the McCoy, Heart of Independence, Benton, and Town Hall Neighborhood Associations in strengthening existing Welcome Wagon programs for residents in these neighborhoods. Presently, it appears that McCoy has a well organized, active neighborhood association that utilizes some concepts of a Welcome Wagon program. Tools used by this neighborhood could be utilized in other neighborhoods throughout the City to encourage sociability.

Time Objective: Packets developed by May 2008 and on-going.

Outcomes: Development of program and distribution of packets.

Support Department: Neighborhood Services Division
Community Development Department

Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Neighborhood Uniqueness/Historic Character:

1. The GNWINI Advisory Team and the Historic Preservation Division within the Community Development Department will continue to work with existing entities to sponsor "How To" seminars targeted to local property owners and investors covering such topics as, "Identifying Significant Historical Features of Your Property", and "Refinishing Wood Floors and Windows in your Historic Home." These workshops will also include opportunities to "sell" the attributes of historic properties to local realtors.

Time Objective: Seminars began January 2008, and are scheduled monthly. Also may be included in activities sponsored by the Fairmount Carlisle Redevelopment Corporation.

Outcomes: Scheduling and coordination of seminars and events.

2. The Historic Preservation Division will review area for potential historic or conservation districts and advise residents and business leaders on the review process and documenting the history.

Time Objective: Complete preliminary reviews by August 2008, and on-going.

Outcomes: Completion of survey forms if applicable.

3. The GNWINI Advisory Team will assist neighborhood leaders and property owners to create and maintain an organization dedicated to preserving historic homes and history within the City of Independence similar to Preservation Renaissance, a not for profit preservation advocacy organization. As an alternative, an existing organization may be identified to serve in this capacity.

Time Objective: Identify leadership of organization by May 2008.

Outcomes: Establishing and nourishment of organization dedicated to preserving historic housing and its connection to history.

Support Department

**Historic Preservation Division
Community Development Department**

**Proposed Action Steps to Maintain Perception of Neighborhood Safety/
Connection:**

1. The City of Independence Police Department, Parks and Recreation Department, and Community Development Department will sponsor monthly neighborhood walks involving police officers, local churches and social service agencies.

Time Objective: Schedule developed by June 2008, and on-going.
Outcomes: Development of event planner and schedule.

2. Utilize the Independence Examiner, "Life on the Beat", articles to promote the Neighborhood Watch Program on the Police Department web page. The web-site includes information on reasons why and how to form a Neighborhood Watch Program. This site will be linked to the Community Development Department web-site in the Neighborhood Services Division.

Time Objective: Completed by June 2008, and on-going.
Outcomes: Updated web-site information and neighborhood links.

3. The Independence Police Department will recruit additional residents for the Volunteers in Police Service, and the Police Citizen's Academy from the McCoy, Town Hall, Benton, and Heart of Independence Neighborhoods.

Time Objective: The next recruiting class for both programs, and on-going.
Outcomes: Additional recruitment of residents.

Support Department **Independence Police Department**

In addition to building upon the strengths of the previous positive attributes, the residents have three areas of concern that create a negative perception of the neighborhood. These areas of concern are that the neighborhood needs more child friendly amenities; some areas are in a state of disrepair, and that there are few local shopping opportunities.

Proposed Action Steps to Encourage Additional Child Friendly Amenities:

1. The GNWINI Advisory Team will review existing programs provided by the City of Independence, Independence schools, and churches within the McCoy, Benton, Heart of Independence and Town Hall Neighborhoods to possibly recommend additional programs to provide needed services to school age children. Ideas may include “neighborhood safe houses”, or increase neighborhood foot patrols, and creating after school programs targeted to older teens.

Time Objective: Review of current programs conducted by July 2008.
Outcomes: Consolidation of programs if possible, and the creation of new programs based upon unmet community needs.

Support Department: Neighborhood Services Division
Community Development Department

Proposed Action Steps to Address Disrepair of Structures, especially in areas south of Truman Road.

1. The NSD in conjunction with the GNWINI Advisory Team will review existing city planning documents, and review potential for creating/expanding 353 tax abatement, First Time Homebuyer, and other residential and commercial improvement programs to encourage renovation of existing structures.

Time Objective: Completed by October 2008, and on-going.

Outcomes: Creation or refinement of programs.

2. The GNWINI Advisory Team will work in conjunction with the established neighborhood associations to expand the marketing of the Adopt A Block program through the Public Works Department.

Time Objective: Completed by July 2008, and on-going.

Outcomes: Expanded marketing of the program through neighborhood associations.

3. The GNWINI Advisory Team will meet with representatives of the Independence Landlords Association to determine what programs would best target unmet need in the community, and revise/create programs accordingly.

Time Objective: Completed by July 2008, and on-going.

Outcomes: Possible development of housing program.

4. The Health Department will expand marketing efforts of the Repeat Offender Program and the Voluntary Clean-up Program for both rental and owner occupied properties, and ensure compliance.

Time Objective: Completed by July 2008, and on-going.

Outcomes: Better compliance of rental property, and awareness of program.

**Support Department: Neighborhood Services Division
Community Development Department**

Proposed Action Steps to Improve Local Shopping Opportunities:

1. The City will work with the Chamber of Commerce to expand “Shop Here First Programs”. The Chamber of Commerce and the City will also develop programs to market to specific businesses.

Time Objective: Completed by October 2008, and on-going.

Outcomes: Development of program parameters in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce.

Support Department

Community Development Department