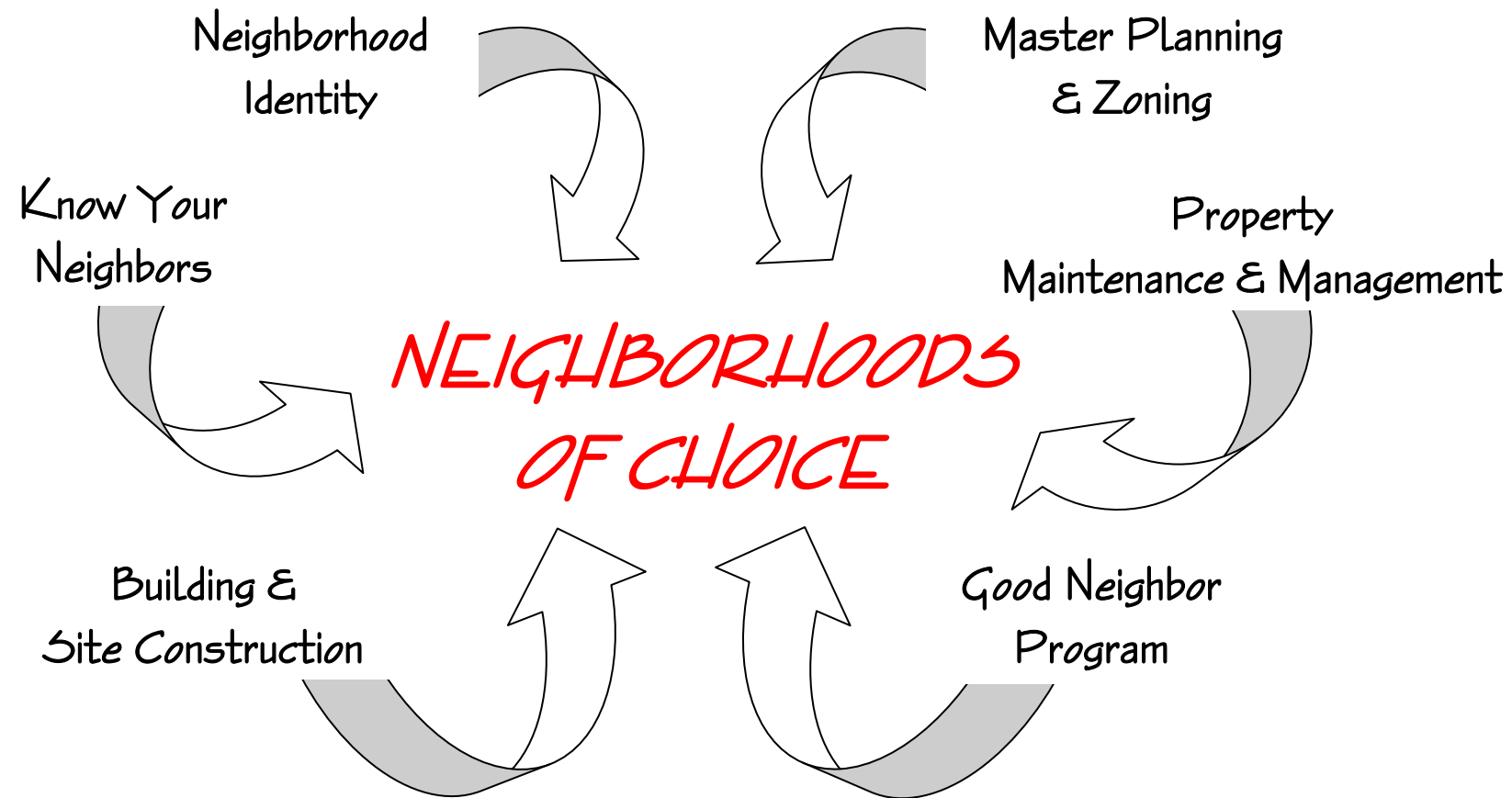


Neighborhoods of Choice Framework

City Neighborhoods will be safe, attractive, welcoming places for all to live, gather, and invest.

Neighborhood Values

1. Safe
A neighborhood must feel and be safe
2. Attractive
A neighborhood must be physically attractive
3. Gathering
A neighborhood must offer places for people to gather and interact as a community
4. Convenient
A neighborhood must have convenient access to services, amenities and transportation
5. Diverse
A neighborhood must be diverse.
6. Worth Investing in
A neighborhood must offer protection of one's investment and be worthy of further investment



Neighborhoods in the City of Holland will possess:

1. No neighborhood consists predominately of low income households.
2. There is housing diversity to accommodate different household sizes, income levels, housing types, and density.
3. Owner occupied housing is encouraged; occupancy or ownership by transient, disrespectful, or non-investing individuals is discouraged.
4. Growth in property values exceeds the growth in property values experienced by the larger Holland Metro Area.
5. Investments in personal property are protected by rising values.
6. Dwelling unit's occupancy does not exceed the maximum design for occupancy.
7. There are no long term vacant structures.
8. The "standard" is well maintained properties throughout the neighborhood.
9. Design of new construction and alterations complement and enhance the character of the existing neighborhood.
10. Public and private open space is appropriate to the scale of the surrounding neighborhood.
11. Empowered residents are organized and invested in their neighborhood.
12. Neighbors connect with one another at neighborhood focused events, at neighborhood gathering places and through electronic media.
13. The neighborhood is free of environmental nuisances, including external noise.
14. People feel safe.
15. Reasonable traffic patterns and speeds in the neighborhood do not detract from the neighborhood but ensure safe travel.
16. The neighborhood is connected by a series of sidewalks and pathways to encourage walking.
17. Public infrastructure is properly maintained and complements and enhances the character of the neighborhood.
18. There are recreational opportunities for all residents.
19. The neighborhood is adequately served by public transportation.
20. Excellent schools and other well maintained institutions serve as community centers are immediately accessible to residents.
21. There are commercial centers to meet the daily needs of the neighborhood and also provide an identity and gathering place.
22. There are opportunities for work within and near the neighborhood.
23. Government and civic services are easily accessible to residents.
24. Energy efficient and green homes are found throughout the neighborhood.

see reverse side for policy recommendations

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

A neighborhood has to mean something. Creating a neighborhood identity will result in pride and ownership in that neighborhood. What good is it to try to attract someone to live in a neighborhood if one can't state what makes it different from other neighborhoods or subdivisions? To accomplish this task, the City must implement the following actions:

- Work with community organizations and residents to formally identify the different neighborhoods throughout the City.
- Work with community organizations and residents to develop the story of what makes each neighborhood unique.
- Use the story and assets of each neighborhood to create individual neighborhood guides promoting the benefits of living in that particular neighborhood.
- Invest in signage for the different neighborhoods, aiding in identification and in letting people know that this area is more than just another group of city blocks.

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS

The basic building block of a strong neighborhood is the people who live there. For a neighborhood to feel like home there needs to be a connection between neighbors. To accomplish this task, the City must implement the following actions:

- Identify Neighborhood Ambassadors in each of the neighborhoods to serve as a cheerleader and facilitator for neighbor interactions.
- Develop a "Welcome to the Neighborhood" folder which highlights the benefits of living in the various neighborhoods. This folder will be distributed to new households moving into each of the neighborhoods and include a narrative of the neighborhood, neighborhood commercial coupons, map of the neighborhood, contact information for neighborhood representatives and the Good Neighbor Brochure.
- Establish Neighborhood Social Groups throughout the City and develop a broad educational program for these associations such as building community, marketing your neighborhood, running small organizations, and getting involved in improving your neighborhood.
- Work with Neighborhood Social Groups and local institutions to provide the electronic mechanism for NSG's to network within their Group and to share information and ideas outside of their Group.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE and MANAGEMENT

A neighborhood cannot look tired and rundown if it is to bring in new investment and be attractive to new residents. To ensure Holland's Neighborhoods remain their best, the City must implement the following actions:

- Update the Property Maintenance Code to extend beyond purely safety concerns to include broader "welfare" issues such as aesthetic concerns, including conditions that suggest disregard for property or neighbors like paint splatter on windows, roofing and siding, prohibiting plywood (T-III) used as exterior siding, prohibiting indoor furniture stored outdoors, require functioning appliances, defining appropriate exterior wall and floor coverings, etc.
- Aggressively enforce the new Property Maintenance Code, to require non-complaint based enforcement in addition to complaint based enforcement. Encourage neighbors to report homes in disrepair, and implement Point of Sale Inspections to ensure all residential properties - rental and owner occupied - meet the new Property Maintenance Code.
- Ensure that all public property is maintained in excellent condition. Organize neighborhood groups to assist in this effort.
- Explore opportunities to encourage and assist property owners in maintaining their homes such as re-establishing a tool lending library.
- Review housing code enforcement to ensure service is provided in a user-friendly and helpful manner; change service standards when warranted. For example, provide a list of resources to those homeowners in violation who may not know where to begin.

MASTER PLANNING and ZONING

Approach neighborhoods from a holistic point of view. We need nearby options for residents to gather in first-rate public spaces, shop for daily needs, walk or bike to elementary schools, and be willing to eliminate lower quality housing in favor of newer development. To accomplish this task, the City must implement the following actions:

- Ensure and promote Public and Private Gathering Places within a 5 to 10 minute walk or bicycle ride of residential properties.
- Invest in high quality public projects to make neighborhoods more attractive to new investment.
- Provide sidewalks throughout all neighborhoods that connect within the neighborhoods as well as connecting the residents with nearby services and facilities.
- Identify and preserve historic and architecturally significant homes while encouraging creative continued revitalization through replacements of other houses.
Aggressively identify areas where we should lose lower quality housing in favor of new development.

BUILDING AND SITE CONSTRUCTION

Neighborhoods of Choice have recognizable patterns. While not appearing the same, Houses and Lots should be sustainable, era appropriate, and compatible in relation to one another when being constructed or renovated. Contemporary compatible alterations and additions are encouraged. To accomplish this task, the City must implement the following actions:

- Develop a pattern book to highlight compatible designs for new construction and exterior alterations for the different neighborhoods.
- Update the Infill Review Ordinance to include exterior renovations to ensure compatible design is achieved during a renovation project.
- Develop a pattern book to highlight the use of "green" building practices in regards to construction, renovation and maintenance, site planning, and infrastructure.
- Develop a pattern book to highlight opportunities for landscaping and beautification of one's property.
- Provide an electronic mechanism (i.e. blog) that allows citizen-led design help to neighbors.

GOOD NEIGHBOR PROGRAM

A Neighborhood has to be, well, neighborly. There has to be a sense of what behavior in the neighborhood is appropriate and what behavior is not appropriate. To accomplish this task, the City must implement the following actions:

- Create a Good Neighbor Brochure that sets expectations of living in the City. This brochure will address several behavioral expectations and provide information on City Ordinances ranging from noise levels to yard maintenance, and from refuse pick up to a guide to City Services.
- Distribute the brochure to local realtors to pass on to home buyers during the real estate closing as well as to landlords to pass on to their tenants.
- Place the brochure in the "Welcome to the Neighborhood" Folder to be distributed when a new person moves into a neighborhood and incorporate into the Neighborhood educational programs.
- Have City Departments including the Police Officers keep copies of the brochure with them to distribute when visiting properties as part of a complaint or general visit.

POLICY LENS FOR URBAN REVITALIZATION DISTRICT

- All existing programs must be re-evaluated as they relate to this new plan.
- The City must be willing to lose some less desirable housing and redesign programs to gain the housing they desire.
- There needs to be a single commission/committee with a mandate from City Council to be responsible for the oversight of implementation of this plan and have the ability of cross department oversight to ensure all components of the plan are equally implemented.
- Investment needs to be defined as improvements rather than simply maintenance.
- Programs should be designed in such a way that owners quickly become knowledgeable and improvements are easily transferable from one property to another, such as a landscaping plan for narrow lots.
- Programs should be designed to use the city's expertise, negotiating power and buying power, to assist groups of citizens looking to make significant improvements in their neighborhoods. This can be in the form of block long landscape blitzes, new garages throughout a neighborhood, or bulk insulation purchases to weatherize homes.
- Create programs that reward what we want, and penalize what we don't want.
- Single Family Homeownership in this district is not for everyone.
- Protect investment. Covenants and restrictions work.
- This District needs to be biased towards sustainable homeownership, with homeowners having sufficient financial capacity to meet the vagaries of homeownership.
- The District will continue to require subsidies - they should be biased towards ending the conditions that require subsidies, not perpetuating them



INITIAL POLICIES FOR URBAN REVITALIZATION DISTRICT

- Create a Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ). A NEZ is an area in the City will property taxes are frozen for a set amount of years. To encourage significant private investment, this NEZ shall be only applicable to new construction and/or additions or remodels valued over \$20,000.
- Through an assessment program expand the current historic district pedestrian lighting (as should be modified to include LED fixtures) throughout the Urban Preservation District to complement its current pedestrian environment.
- Expand review within the infill district ordinance to include exterior renovations in addition to building additions.
- All future construction in the city and especially in the URD must be green. Develop easy checklists and education materials for building permit seekers.
- The Urban Revitalization District has the oldest housing stock in the city. Significant energy savings will be found here. Programs to educate homeowners and conduct home energy audits will begin to make the Urban Revitalization District more energy efficient.
- Create a low interest loan program to allow all homeowners in this district access to funds for new construction, i.e. such as new family room, additional bedroom, or new garages.
- Encourage demolition where warranted and provide planning assistance to facilitate the appropriate reuse of the property. This might include assembling strategic located properties for redevelopment by third properties. Or this can include the potential sale of vacant property to adjacent property owner(s).
- Demolish residences where warranted and create a localized "land bank" that allows the City to hold the property for an extended period of times (years) until there is a demand for new high quality homes in the district. Meanwhile, the city might grant adjacent owner(s) an interim usage easement that allows them to use the property as their own as long as they maintain to the City of Holland's standards.
- A thorough historic resources inventory should be conducted to identify historic properties throughout this target area where historic preservation tools and incentives can contribute to revitalization and where, conversely, other properties shy of any redeeming historic or architectural quality might be identified as "susceptible" for acquisition, removal and new construction.
- Provide additional incentives for reducing the number of two family properties in the district.
- Develop both a short and long term plan for the 16th and 17th street corridor. From Ottawa to Lincoln/Fairbanks