



GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS ROCKFORD REGION 2022 - NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGY

Great Neighborhoods is committed to developing an overarching plan that supports all of our neighborhoods while remaining sensitive to each neighborhood's unique needs and desires. Our plan has been developed with the focus of our neighborhood residents leading and sustaining the activities that make all our neighborhoods a great place to live, work, play, worship and more.

Great Neighborhoods has used the Rockford Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy as a guide. This strategic plan was developed in December of 2019 by the National Resource Network along with many other community partners and stakeholders. Great Neighborhoods is referenced in two primary areas in this strategy, Community Connection and Neighborhood Placemaking. These two areas are areas that we currently support in our Great Neighborhoods model and has shaped our overarching plans for neighborhoods.

Goal 1

Encourage neighborhoods to have a strong sense of place that are welcoming and project community well-being with their character and history being supported.

Strategy

Recommended neighborhood initiatives include landscaping and neighborhood beautification through landscaping, gardening and community art installations – particularly in areas where vacant lots provide opportunities for creative reuse. Recommendations also build on community organizing efforts to focus civic engagement on the physical improvement of the neighborhood through mini-grants and collective implementation. We will encourage improvements and empower neighborhoods to take part in these initiatives, connecting them to the resources including funding, providing before and after examples, and more.

Goal 2

Establish strong community connections that provide the foundation for sustained participation, engagement and civic leadership in neighborhoods. Work with the leaders in the neighborhoods so we can support their efforts and develop future leadership.

Strategy

Strengthening neighborhood associations and providing early supports to ensure that group participation is sustainable are key priorities. Associations should prioritize outreach and inclusion to ensure maximum participation by neighbors representing Rockford's diversity – homeowners, renters, longtime residents, new residents and immigrants. Recommended strategies include initiatives to improve outreach to residents with information about neighborhood history, participation in community events, local programs and services.

Goal 3

Attractive neighborhoods recognize and utilize their assets that create a sense of place that inspires connection and investment.

Strategy

Neighbors work together to articulate a shared vision for their neighborhood that respects the past while looking ahead to a vibrant future. In addition, neighborhood associations should highlight assets and the neighborhood's identity to actively brand and market the area to prospective residents, while also creating an identity that fosters a sense of ownership in ALL residents.