

Overview

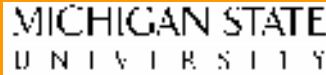
Building Great Neighborhoods outlines a neighborhood planning process that can assist residents, businesses and other neighborhood stakeholders in taking control of their future. It provides *one* potential approach to neighborhood revitalization. This manual explains how a neighborhood can develop a Vision for its redevelopment and construct an Action Plan to implement that Vision. Together, they form the basis of a Neighborhood Plan.



To Request a Copy of *Building Great Neighborhoods*:

Building Great Neighborhoods is available for downloading at <http://www.msue.msu.edu>. Go to "Publications," then "Search." Enter the Inventory Number: WO1024. On the next page, click on the highlighted inventory number and then on "available."

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Publication Available: **Building Great Neighborhoods** A Citizen's Guide for Neighborhood Planning



"Remember that it is the neighborhood's responsibility to make sure its plan is implemented. The neighborhood must initiate action. Do not wait for City Hall or anyone else to realize your neighborhood goals."

—*Building Great Neighborhoods*



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***Building Great Neighborhoods* helps communities shape their future.**

During the last half of the 20th century, core cities in Michigan experienced the twin trends associated with urban sprawl - abandonment and disinvestment. As middle- and upper-income people fled to the suburbs, primarily low-income households were left in the central city. Neighborhood and business associations were organized to fight the deterioration, reduction in city services, and the crime that followed. The 1990s brought new prosperity to some of our cities as young people and former suburbanites discovered the amenities of city living.

Cities in the process of revitalization are now faced with a new set of challenges: gentrification, a lack of tools to maintain housing that is affordable to a range of household incomes, and valued neighborhood businesses squeezed by increasing property values. Cities still suffering from economic decline struggle to build a sense of community. Residents and business owners in both types of neighborhoods share a feeling of uncertainty about their future and that of their neighborhood.

Why Neighborhood Planning?

Traditional planning has generally meant that City Hall or other outside parties impose their ideas of redevelopment onto the people who know the neighborhood best – the people who live and work there. Neighborhood-based planning is an alternative. It is a natural outgrowth of citizen-based initiatives, a hallmark of democratic governments. It takes citizen participation to the next level: citizen decision-making. A Neighborhood Plan is a self-improvement plan.

Adapt this Process to your Neighborhood

Any community-based organization interested in planning for its neighborhood's future can use this manual. Each chapter explains a step in the process of developing a neighborhood improvement plan. This process has been proven effective in organizing a neighborhood to manage change. ***This process can be adapted to meet the specific conditions of your neighborhood.***

Neighborhood planning differs from the kind of planning done by professional planners in several ways. Most importantly, the physical design of place does not drive this planning process. ***Finding out what residents and business owners want in the neighborhood and how the area should feel is what drives neighborhood planning.*** How those things are accomplished through design and physical improvements largely becomes the role of the professional planner.



BUILDING GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS* *A Citizens' Guide for Neighborhood Planning

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