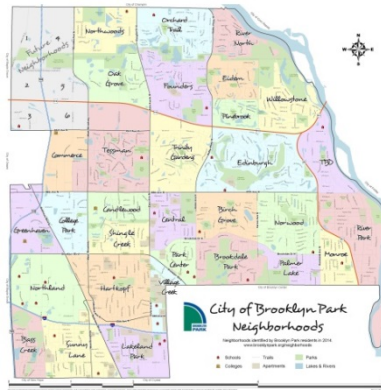


# Neighborhoods Task Force Report



## Overview

The Neighborhoods Initiative grew out of the Neighborhood Action Program and Community Engagement Initiative. In December 2013 the City Council approved the establishment of the Neighborhoods Task Force for the purpose of leading the community input and engagement process for residents to self-identify neighborhood names and boundaries in Brooklyn Park. The Neighborhoods Task Force (NTF) was comprised of 12 members representing a variety of perspectives.

## Timeline

Between January and May 2014 the Neighborhoods Task Force met monthly. Below is a summary of those meetings:

**January 2014:** Planned community café events

**February 2014:** Drafted 2/3 of the neighborhoods map using East and Central District feedback

**March 2014:** Drafted last 1/3 of the map using West District's feedback. Planned outreach for draft map public comment.

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014:** Neighborhoods Draft Map Open House

**April 2014:** Adjusted draft map in response to initial feedback. Planned strategies to get further input

**May 2014:** Finalized map using additional feedback

## Actions

Three Community Café events were held in February and March (one per Council District). Every household in the City was invited by a postcard mailed to their home. Over 200 residents attended. Using the input from those events, the NTF compiled a draft map. A 6 week public comment period followed in which they solicited feedback from almost 650 residents. Half of the feedback was done online through an online survey while the other half was done in person at events, meetings, and through door-knocking. That outreach is detailed in Exhibit A.

## Results

The resulting neighborhood map (Exhibit B) consists of 31 current neighborhoods and 6 future neighborhoods. The intention is for residents to draw the boundaries and name the future neighborhoods themselves when they are more populated. Overall the feedback on the draft map was very positive. Ninety percent of respondents agreed with their neighborhood's boundaries and about 70% agreed with their neighborhood's name. Additional polls were sent out by email to areas with less agreement. Task Force members also did door-knocking in 5 neighborhoods. When adjustments were made to the draft map, staff emailed those we had contact information for to alert them to the change and explain the task force's rationale.

## Clarification

It is not a goal of the Neighborhoods Initiative for residents to form formal neighborhood organizations or associations as Minneapolis, St. Louis Park and Edina have. Rather, the City will look to build a network of neighborhood contacts that, in turn, have their own neighbor contacts. Therefore, each of the larger (macro) neighborhoods identified by residents through this process will consist of many smaller (micro) neighborhoods (a cul de sac, neighborhood watch area, or homeowners association, for example). This will create a more easily accessible structure for residents since this is how they already organize.

## Next Steps

The community input process of identifying the neighborhoods has been the first step towards developing neighborhood identity and pride. Having neighborhood names and boundaries will also allow for the following:

- The ability to email contacts neighborhood-specific updates
- Sharing the boundaries with Nextdoor.com so that neighbors can use that tool for communicating
- Tip 411 crime alerts can correspond with the neighborhoods identified by residents
- Departments can assign staff to neighborhoods

The Neighborhood Relations Specialist will also work with residents and staff on the following:

- Continue to build relationships with neighborhood contacts including homeowners associations, crime watch captains, block contacts, rental property managers and others
- Solicit residents' ideas and develop strategies and resources that help them communicate and collaborate more within their neighborhoods and with the City
- Build leadership capacity among residents so they can better solve their own neighborhood problems
- Build a neighborhoods web application to increase residents' access to information and resources
- Expand the BP New Connect program (welcome bags delivered by volunteers to new residents)

## Recommendation

The neighborhoods map and strategies outlined above will address the Neighborhoods Initiative's goals of increasing pride, stability, engagement, livability, communication and collaboration in and with Brooklyn Park's neighborhoods.

The Neighborhoods Task Force recommends that staff continue to implement the Neighborhoods Initiative using the framework established by Brooklyn Park residents.

## Acknowledgement of Task Force members

Gerry Gibbs, Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) Resources Team member (staff, Brooklyn Park resident)

John Granger, Citizen Long Range Improvement (CLIC) Commissioner

Ryan Jancik, Crime Watch Captain

Bob Mata, Council Member

Michelle Mersereau, Recreation and Parks Commissioner

Reuben Mugula, CEI Resources Team member

Brenda Reeves, CEI Diversity Team member

Carrie Scully, CEI Resources Team member (staff, Brooklyn Park resident)

Josie Shardlow, Neighborhood Relations Specialist

Albert Smith, CLIC Commissioner and CEI Diversity Team member

Tonja West-Hafner, Planning Commissioner

Carol Woehrer, CEI Diversity Team member

**Exhibit A: Summary of Outreach**

Summary of Outreach Methods For Feedback on Draft Neighborhoods Map April – May 2014				
Events	Meetings	Door-knocking	Homeowners Association meetings	Other
Realtors Forum	CEI meetings Citizens Academy	4/28 Bass Creek	Towns Edge Village East	Rental Property Managers meeting
Zanewood Bunny Hop	Lion’s Club Rotary Club Multicultural	5/1 Brookdale Park	Parkwood	City Hall walk-ins Commissioner updates Sun Post
Volunteer Appreciation Event	Advisory Consultants (MAC) Business Forward Crime Watch Captain meeting	5/7 Park Center	Maplebrook Estates	Channel 12 interview Park Pages City website/Facebook CAC TV
Safety Expo	Brookdale Park meeting	5/7 College Park	Brook Oaks II	Staff outreach/survey (not included in feedback #s)
Lion’s Club Smelt Fry	Sunny Lane Park meeting Beyond the Yellow Ribbon Proposed “Jewell Oaks” neighborhood	5/9 Jewell Oaks	SummerCrest Condos  Shingle Creek	Police’s Citizen Update Get up and Know (Rec and Park e-newsletter) CEI newsletter

**644+** people gave feedback (both online and in person)  
**51%** of people gave feedback in person

# Exhibit B: Neighborhoods Map

