

# Neighborhood Management Capacity



## Our Neighborhood Philosophy

*Recognizing the strength of Garland is the character of its neighborhood, we will work in partnership with neighborhood stakeholders and community resources to build a stronger community and keep Garland a quality place to live and invest.*

## What is Neighborhood Management?

Neighborhood management focuses on the willingness and ability of neighbors to successfully manage the day-to-day issues in the neighborhood; increasing neighborhood activities; and increasing the sense of community in the neighborhood.

All neighborhoods regardless of their season have problems. However, what determines if the neighborhood is healthy or unhealthy?

Healthy Neighborhood – Able to manage the day-to-day concerns that arise within the neighborhood.

Unhealthy Neighborhood – Overwhelmed by daily issues, feels hopeless, and stops putting forth effort to manage concerns.

We want to help residents capitalize on strengths and assets that exist in their neighborhoods; and provide a thorough understanding of the city resources available for neighborhood maintenance as well as revitalization. We work with neighborhoods and residents to discover and build on their strengths and to expand their capabilities to improve and manage neighborhood image and outcomes.

## What Makes Neighborhood Management Work?

Building upon existing assets is an effective way to excite, connect and inform citizens. This can be a catalyst and a spark for community change. This may also require a mind shift for many people. Instead of focusing on what is wrong, it may be more appropriate to start with what is working, and more productive to operate from the belief that everyone stakeholder has a gift or talent to share, as well as a responsibility to the community. We call this community accountability.

### Individuals benefit from this process through:

- personal discovery of skills and talents;
- access to people who share common goals;
- increased problem-solving capabilities; and
- building relationships with neighbors.

### Neighborhoods benefit through:

- a heightened sense of community and shared neighborhood pride;
- the sharing of gifts, resources and skills among neighbors;
- improved and effective communication between neighbors (residents, faith community, associations and businesses);
- increased activity in the neighborhood; and
- a strong, vital neighborhood built by strong, excited residents!

**Garland benefits through:**

- increased citizen engagement;
- dialogue with residents;
- direction in providing services effectively at the neighborhood level; and
- improved and stabilized neighborhoods.

**Neighborhood Management Strategies****Strategies to Get Neighbors Working Together**

1. Organize a neighborhood association, crime watch, or hobby club.
2. Research and apply for small grants to implement projects that you have developed as a neighborhood.
3. Organize annual social events.
4. Create a community garden.
5. Recognized the beautification efforts of neighbors
6. Form a committee to meet and greet new neighbors with welcome packets.

**Strategies to Increase Sense of Safety**

1. Organize a neighborhood crime watch.
2. Enroll your Crime Watch in Citizens on Patrol.
3. Cultivate relationships among neighbors.
4. Set up a nightly neighbor-walk schedule to keep “eyes on the street” and to check on neighbors who would like it.

**Strategies to Cultivate Neighborhood Leadership**

1. Register for Garland Neighborhood Management Academy courses.
2. Identify block captains, schedule monthly reasons for them to visit other neighbors (deliver a free packet of flowers, hand out the latest neighborhood newsletter, give away free coupons from a neighborhood business, get neighbors’ opinions on an upcoming project or event, etc.).
3. Give annual “good neighbor” awards with nominations by other neighbors.

**Information Resources**

1. [www.GarlandVitalNeighborhoods.org](http://www.GarlandVitalNeighborhoods.org)
2. Neighborhood Resource Guide
3. Organizing Guide
4. Home Maintenance Brochures (Coming Fall '07)
5. Marketing Guide (Coming Spring '08)
6. Office of Neighborhood Vitality

## Who Do You Know?



No man, or woman, or child, is an island...I've got people...You are only six people removed from anyone else in the entire world—or so they say...

Everyone has connections—family, friends, co-workers, teammates, fellow worshippers, club members, high school and college buddies, and on and on and on. Think about how your network of contacts has helped you throughout your life. Maybe someone you know referred you to a job? Or maybe they set you up on a blind date with your spouse? Perhaps they helped you find a new doctor? There are all kinds of ways we benefit from the relationships we have in life. Probably a day doesn't go by when we don't use the web of resources at our fingertips to get help with something.

This web of resources and connections is social capital and it makes all the difference to the health of your neighborhood.

Hopefully, a good number of the people you know are in your neighborhood. They are the people who live, work, shop, and invest in the neighborhood. If not, maybe you need to work on building your neighborhood's internal social capital. If your neighbors do make up a large portion of your network, maybe you need to develop some relationships to widen your network's reach.

Most people probably fall somewhere in the middle. They know some people in their neighborhood, but they have a lot of family and friends living across town, across the country, and across the globe. All of these relationships are important. And if you put some thought into it, you can come up with ways to utilize these connections to stabilize and improve your neighborhood.

Think about your best friend. Think about their interests and how they make a living. Think if a new connection can be made to change your neighborhood for the better.

Think about where you work. Think about what your company does. Think about your co-workers. Think about getting them involved in making your neighborhood the kind of place you want it to be.

Think about what your hobbies are. Think about the people you have met through them. Think about anything those individuals might know you can use to improve your neighborhood.

Social capital is the glue holding communities together. Think about ways to make the bonds stronger.



## **Taking Action to Improve Your Neighborhood**

Neighborhoods are made up of lots of things—some of them you can touch and see, like the houses, the streets, and the people. Many of them are not—they are the intangibles, like a sense of community, neighborliness, and feeling safe in your home and walking through the neighborhood. These—and lots of others—all come together to create your neighborhood. The neighborhood you experience daily is brought to life by numerous actions by unnumbered actors. You are just one of those actors. But, as is said on the stage, there are no small parts, just small actors—and it holds true in neighborhoods. A single person or a group of people acting together have the power to have a dramatic impact upon a neighborhood.

Think about things you can do by yourself to change your neighborhood.

Think about how you can work cooperatively as a family or household to improve your neighborhood.

Think how working with the other homes on your block can make a difference in the vitality of your neighborhood.

Think how your neighborhood can be different if everyone in the neighborhood—residents, businesses, schools, the faith community—all worked together to move the neighborhood in a positive direction.

Think about the whole community of Garland joining to make the city a better place to live, work, shop, and invest.

Change isn't always monumental; usually, it's lots of small things. In neighborhoods, change comes from someone doing something different. And then it grows...from person to family, from one house to one block, from residents to businesses, and throughout the community.

Everybody is a "somebody"—you can start to make your neighborhood the kind of place you want it to be. You may start small, by making your yard more attractive. But, your action may spark others to do the same. Eventually, you and your neighbors may take on the vacant house down the street. Then, you partner with local businesses and churches to have a neighborhood clean up and spruce up the commercial areas. And it all started from your decision to plant a few shrubs and flowers in front of your house...

Think big. Start small. Change your neighborhood.