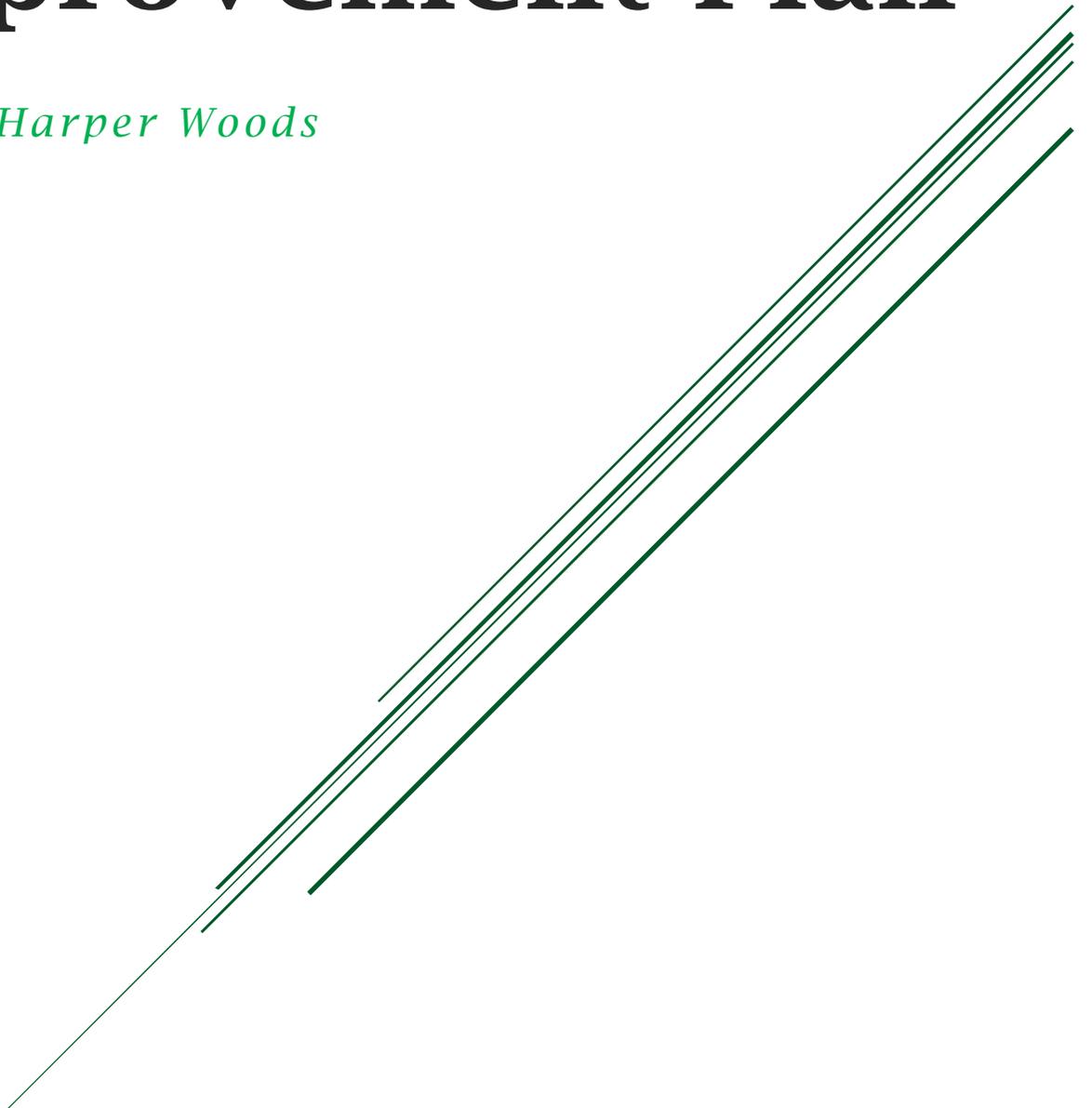


Neighborhoods Improvement Plan

City of Harper Woods



Winter 2017

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Acknowledgements

Without the participation of dedicated residents and officials from Harper Woods and Detroit, this Neighborhoods Improvement Plan would not have been possible.

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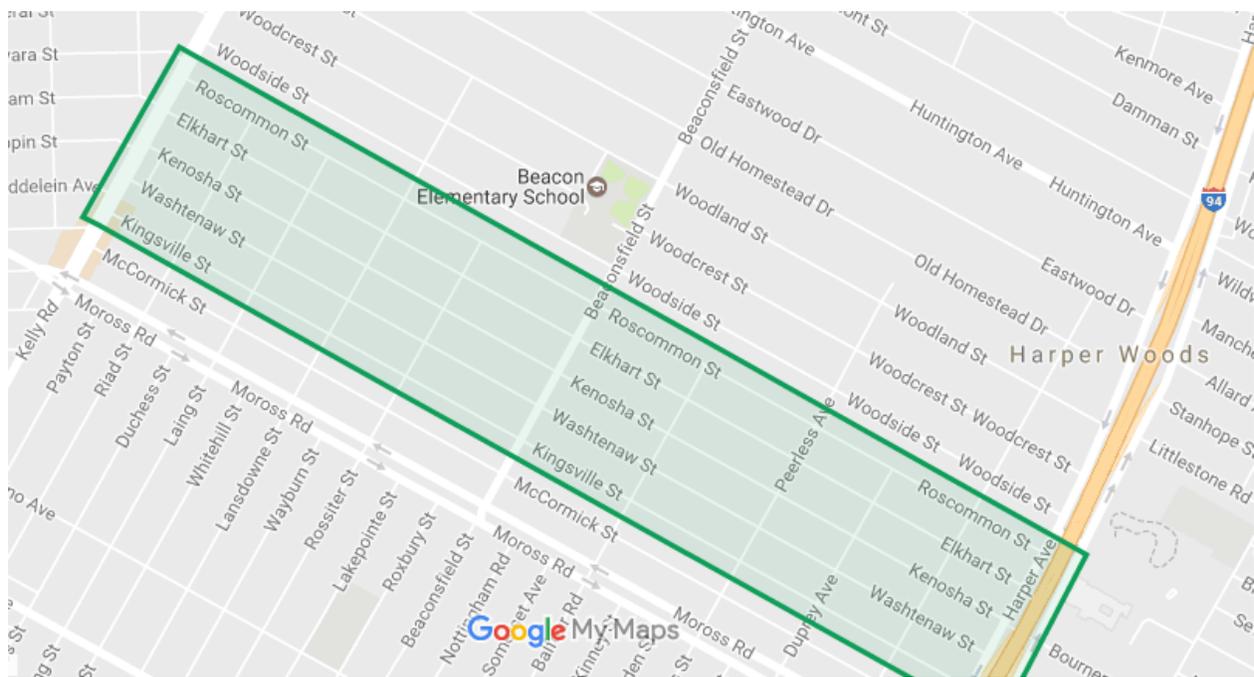
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Introduction

Background: *How and Why?*

In the winter of 2016, Harper Woods' City leadership decided to directly address deteriorating conditions beginning in the southwest corner of Harper Woods. Property values were dropping. Homeownership rates were decreasing while the population of renters was increasing. There had been an increase in the number of vacant homes; some were abandoned. Conditions of "creeping blight" were setting in, and homeowners became increasingly alarmed about the fate of their neighborhood and their investment.



This particular section of Harper Woods extends from Kingsville to Roscommon, adjacent to Detroit, near the intersection of Moross and Kelly Road; here, neighborhood conditions were deteriorating rapidly. It was decided that Harper Woods should conduct a joint effort with City of Detroit officials to bring the neighbors who were residents of both cities together to: (a) get to know each other, neighbor-to-neighbor and (b) discuss how to effectively address deteriorating conditions. After several preliminary meetings with Detroit's Deputy Mayor, Ike McKinnon, and officials from the City of Detroit's Department of Neighborhoods, it was decided that the two communities would cooperate to conduct a series of neighborhood planning meetings, starting with an initial community meeting at the Harper Woods High School Auditorium.



The Neighborhoods Improvement Planning Process

August & September 2016: Initial Resident Meetings

On August 11, 2016, approximately 70 residents from Harper Woods and the neighboring Detroit communities gathered at a meeting held at Harper Woods High School to kick off community participation in the Neighborhoods Improvement Planning process. That meeting was hosted by Harper Woods Economic & Community Development Director Ty Hinton, Harper Woods Mayor Ken Poynter, Harper Woods City Manager Randolph Skotarczyk, and Detroit's District 4 Manager O'Dell Tate.



Community members shared their concerns and visioned for the future of Harper Woods in community planning meetings.

On September 15, 2016, the second community meeting was held and approximately 80 residents attended. Residents were asked to share their perceptions of Harper Woods' strengths and challenges. Feedback was gathered for forming the initial outline of the Neighborhoods Improvement Plan, and residents were invited to participate in a series of weekly planning meetings throughout October and November 2016. Consultants Hannah Colborn and Julie Phenis were asked to sort out the feedback from the second community meeting.

As a result of the consultants' review and interpretation of the residents' feedback, the most common values and concerns expressed were grouped into the following six categories:

- I. **Beautiful Neighborhoods**
- II. **Education**
- III. **Crime Reduction and Law Enforcement**
- IV. **Community Mindedness**
- V. **Community Activities**
- VI. **Functioning Infrastructure and City Services**

October & November 2016: *Community Planning Meetings*

A series of four community meetings were held weekly from October 12 through November 1, gathering an average of 30 residents per meeting. These meetings endeavored to expand upon perceived strengths and challenges Harper Woods faces and to prioritize needs. Consultants Hannah Colborn and Julie Phenix supported Ty Hinton in facilitating the community meetings, using audience response technology to gain quality and efficient resident feedback.

November 2016: *Task Force Draft*

A Task Force of ten residents joined Ty Hinton and the consultants in two meetings to begin creating the draft of the Neighborhoods Improvement Plan. An outline of the draft was presented to and approved by the larger community meeting group on November 29.



Members of the Task Force met in November to create a draft of the Neighborhoods Improvement Plan.

December 2016: *Final Draft*

Ty Hinton and the consultants finalized the Neighborhoods Improvement Plan using the outline and feedback provided by residents.

The NIP's Format & Content

The following section introduces the six value categories of the Neighborhoods Improvement Plan broken down into *problem points* and *action points*. The problem points are the discussed concerns of the community, while the action points are intended to address the problems. The actions will be undertaken as a cooperative effort between the residents of Harper Woods and city officials. These points will be expanded upon in the following sections of this document.

I. Beautiful Neighborhoods

Problems:

- ❖ Vacant and abandoned homes
- ❖ Unkempt properties
- ❖ Blight and trash

Actions:

- Develop home ownership programing
- Organize community cleanups
- Better code enforcement of ordinances around property upkeep



- Improved communication from the City regarding trash pickup requirements
- Harsher penalties for those who don't comply

II. Education

Problems:

- ❖ Many high school graduates not attending college or furthering their education
- ❖ Perception that the public has low expectations our students
- ❖ Need to ensure safe schools and ensure an accurate public perception of our schools

Actions:

- Express high expectations of students in academics, extracurriculars, and in citizenship
- Expect and inquire about students' life plans upon graduation from high school
- Provide mentoring services to students
 - Contributes to high performance of school district
 - Contributes to increased graduation rates
 - Contributes to students' post-graduation preparedness
 - Contributes to assisting exceptional education needs of students
- City to support efforts by emphasizing the importance of post-secondary planning for high school students
 - Request a formal proclamation
 - Consider formal establishment of city council sanctioned School Partnership Committee
- Conduct safety assessment of all schools
- Consider the need for a safe routes program to our schools
- Increase the School Resource Officer (Police Officer) program

III. Crime Reduction & Law Enforcement

Problems:

- ❖ Home and vehicle break-ins
- ❖ Increase in visible police presence
- ❖ Speeding on residential streets Enforcement of noise violations
- ❖ Enforcement of curfew
- ❖ Dormant Neighborhood Watch program
- ❖ Request for more police contact with the public to gain increased familiarity

Actions:

- Assist in being additional eyes and ears for law enforcement
- Establish Neighborhood Watch best practices
- Require positive public contacts for police with residents

- Increase visible police presence
- Continue to provide quality patrolling in all areas of the city
- Conduct Department of Public Safety community town hall meetings

IV. Community Mindedness

Problems:

- ❖ Many areas exist in the city where residents are not acquainted with the people that live next door to them
- ❖ Neighbors lacking pride in their homes and neighborhoods
- ❖ Lack of respect and consideration among neighbors
- ❖ Lack of neighborhood unity

Actions:

- Keep in mind the need for inclusion in all neighborhood efforts
- Residents must play a part in communicating neighborhood norms
- Resident-led/city-supported campaigns urging residents to take pride in their homes
 - Yard signs stating “I take pride in my block”
- Re-energize the existing Block Captain Program
 - Welcome new neighbors
 - Distribute literature regarding city operations
 - Act as neighborhood diplomat to foster mutual respect
 - Act as hub of information
 - Act as liaison for citizen concerns, complaints, and suggestions
 - Potentially become a trusted neighborhood mediator
 - Encourage block groups and block parties
- Improve information dissemination
 - New neighbor arrivals
 - Codes and enforcement
 - Promotional events

V. Community Activities

Problems:

- ❖ There are few large special events that make our city a destination spot
- ❖ The lack of exciting and well-publicized activities designed for different age groups and different interests

Actions:

- Optimized communication and promotion of currently well-loved events such as “Target Night Out” (a.k.a. National Night Out Against Crime hosted by Target)



- Create a task force of Harper Woods residents dedicated to event planning
 - Consider activities for teens, seniors/“age-specific groups”
- Establish a community recreation center
- Participate in the community outreach element for the new Recreation Master Plan
- Assist in the establishment of the Community Outreach Center
 - Foster interest-specific groups such as gardeners group; home improvement/beautification instruction programs; youth sports programming; Alcoholics Anonymous and other support groups
- Engage the school district for potential utilization and optimization of facilities for community activities such as open gym, open swim, social/interest group meetings
- Create awareness of opportunity for neighborhoods to host block parties

VI. Functioning Infrastructure and City Services

Problems:

- ❖ Eastland Mall tenants are leaving and the site needs redevelopment
- ❖ Kelly Road now host vacant buildings and lacks its once significant vibrancy

Actions:

- Think big and be innovative to implement changes
- Consider types of partners it attracts to assist in development
- Include citizen outreach for the visioning for what Harper Woods could be, thinking outside the box to provide a broad spectrum of possibilities.
- Development of charrette for Eastland Mall redevelopment
- Promote Harper Woods as a cooperative partner for potential re-developers at Eastland Mall
- Assist in the establishment of the Community Outreach Center (20010 Kelly Rd)
- Code enforcement on Kelly Road
- Branding of Kelly Road revitalization
- Potential establishment of Kelly Road business group
- Improve the physical appearance of Kelly Road
 - Hanging baskets/greenery, attractive signs and banners, adopt a median program
- Ensure community awareness of the PAATS service for our disabled and seniors residents

*Harper Woods Values...*I. *Beautiful Neighborhoods*

- **In Harper Woods, there are many** properties that are well cared for. **There are also many** vacant, abandoned, and unkempt properties.
- **In order to create a better community for all, we need** all landlords and residents to participate in property upkeep.
- **We are prepared to** organize community cleanups and to encourage our neighbors to help keep Harper Woods a beautiful place for all.
- **We would like the city to provide** better code enforcement of ordinances around property upkeep and harsher penalties for those who don't comply.

“Beautiful neighborhoods are important for Harper Woods because they improve property values, promote hometown pride, attract people with similar values, and promote positive interaction between neighbors.”

–Neighborhoods Improvement Plan Task Force



Each value section includes a summary like the one above. These summaries were composed by members of the NIP Task Force. They include a positive statement, a statement of need, an offer of support on behalf of the Task Force and/or other community members, and an ask for support from the city or other entities.

Harper Woods residents value beautiful neighborhoods with properties that are cared for and well-kept by both residents and landlords.

Community members envision Harper Woods as a place where neighbors hold a shared sense of pride and accountability for the physical appearance of the community. This includes not only homeowners, but also renters, landlords and business owners.

1. Landlords and property management companies being held accountable

- **Ordinances need to be enforced.** During discussions in community meetings around ordinances related to property upkeep, it became clear that many residents are unsure of what ordinances actually exist, how exactly ordinances are communicated to community members, and the process by which ordinances are enforced within the community. The Task Force suggests communication of ordinances and related



procedures between city officers and the community be prioritized in order to resolve this confusion and promote shared understanding.

- **Stricter penalties be given to those who don't comply.** If property owners are ticketed, unpaid ticket fees can be added to taxes. When noncompliance turns into a financial hardship for offenders, community members are more likely to comply!

2. Less blight and trash

- **The presence of blight and trash negatively influence impressions of a community for both residents and visitors.** In order to work to promote a sense of pride in Harper Woods, blight and trash need to be eliminated.
- **Community members seek better communication from the city and enforcement of rules around trash pickup.** Specifics that need to be communicated to each resident and property owner include:
 - ✓ What the pickup day is in each area of the neighborhood
 - ✓ Regulations around trash receptacles:
 - Whether or not trash cans are required should be clear; issues around pest control should be considered if no requirement for using trash cans is currently in place, as pests are more apt to tear apart trash bags laying on the street than those in cans
 - The timeframes within which trash cans can be set out before pick-up and must be brought in after pick-up
- **Organized community clean-up days can be a beneficial tool for employing community participation to eliminate blight and trash in the community.** Task Force members can commit to leveraging their personal networks and organizing community clean-up days, whether several smaller clean-ups are planned in different areas throughout the year, or one large clean-up is planned across the whole city annually.

3. Fewer vacant and abandoned buildings

- **Homeownership is seen by residents to be of much higher long-term value to the community than rentership.** Homeowners are thought to take better care of their properties because they share a stake in the community they live and own property in. Promoting homeownership is seen by community members as a means to reduce the number of uncared for properties in the community, specifically the number of properties that appear vacant or altogether abandoned. Education for homebuyers as well as strict enforcement of rental property standards are two ways to promote home

ownership in order to decrease abandoned and uncared for properties in Harper Woods.

- ***Vacant and abandoned buildings on Kelly Road are of particular concern to residents.*** Community members expressed concern that property owners are not maintaining their properties on this busy commercial corridor.

4. Property upkeep, beyond just lawn maintenance

- ***Community members value all residents and property owners in Harper Woods being held to an equal standard of property upkeep.*** Properties should be kept up particularly by landlords and renters based on legal and agreed upon standards between parties in rental agreements. This extends beyond simply cutting the grass, to cover:
 - ✓ Raking leaves, shoveling snow on sidewalks, and other environmental clean-up
 - ✓ Removing trash, pet waste and other refuse
 - ✓ Keeping up the external appearance of the home, garage and other structures to appropriate standards



*Harper Woods Values...*II. *Education*

- **In Harper Woods, there are** strong high school graduation rates. **There are also** many high school graduates not attending college or furthering their education.
- **In order to create a better community for all,** we need to express higher expectations of our students that they are expected to go on to bigger and better things after high school, regardless of if they attend a trade school, community college, or university.
- **We are prepared to provide** mentoring services to students.
- **We would like the city to support our efforts by** emphasizing the importance of post-secondary planning for high school students.

“Quality education is important to current and future Harper Woods residents in order to preserve and increase property values. Educating our youth in a positive and dynamic environment will provide for their personal growth and develop good citizenship in our community!”

–Neighborhoods Improvement Plan Task Force

Harper Woods residents believe that a strong educational system is vital to the future of the community. The residents who participated in the creation of this plan believe that a separate committee should work on an educational plan for Harper Woods, or review any existing educational plans that may be available. While matters of neighborhood beautification, development, safety, and neighborhood relations were more widely discussed among the group than education, when it came to prioritizing areas for the city to focus on, education was highly ranked. High performing schools, safety at schools, and graduation and college attendance rates all fell into the top 10 priority items for residents (*see Appendix for priority ranking*). Also on the priority list is ensuring that adequate special education programming is available.

1. High performing schools

- ***Exploration by a separate committee should focus on ensuring that Harper Woods schools provide the highest quality of education to the children of Harper Woods.*** Benefits of high performing schools include retaining and attracting residents to the city and creating a strong workforce for the city.

2. Safety in schools

- ***Safety should continue to be prioritized in Harper Woods schools.*** Some comments from students in the early stages of the Neighborhoods Improvement Plan development process requested stricter safety measures at schools, including metal detectors and a stronger security presence. While others report safety in schools is not a particular area of concern, continuing to value school safety will ensure this remains a non-issue.
- ***Bullying was also raised as a concern by some students.*** Anti-bullying efforts should continue to be promoted in Harper Woods schools.

3. High graduation and college attendance rates

- ***Students need to see greater opportunities for after they complete high school, whether they be trade or vocational training, community college, or a four-year university.*** Harper Woods residents concerned with enhancing the educational outcomes in Harper Woods believe that for students to go on to be successful in life, “a high school diploma is not enough.”

4. Special education available

- ***Educational opportunities should be provided to all our young people.*** All students are unique, and some require more individualized learning than others. Harper Woods should be a place where all children can thrive educationally, and an emphasis on quality special education services is just one way that the city can stand out in the educational field.



*Harper Woods Values...*III. *Crime Reduction & Law Enforcement*

- **In Harper Woods, there is** a lot of police presence. **There are also many** home and vehicle break-ins.
- **In order to create a better community for all, we need** the community to assist in being additional eyes and ears for law enforcement.
- **We are prepared to** start community watches for our neighborhoods and help other Harper Woods neighborhoods start their own neighborhood watches.
- **We would like the city to** continue to provide quality patrolling in all areas of the city.

“Crime reduction and law enforcement are important in Harper Woods because with proper communication and interaction between police, city council and residents, it would give a peace of mind and could/would draw families with children to want to be a part of our community and feel safe.”

–Neighborhoods Improvement Plan Task Force

Harper Woods Police have a strong and noticeable presence in the community, which is viewed positively by most residents. Even still, a perceived high rate of petty crimes (such as breaking and entering) is viewed by residents as a persistent and worrisome nuisance that damages the perception of safety and the city’s reputation.

In order to ensure that all Harper Woods residents feel safe, community members can commit to working with and assisting law enforcement by being the “eyes and ears” of the community, and communicating concerns through the proper channels. A proposed Neighborhood Watch initiative, in partnership with the police, will support this. In turn, residents ask that the police continue to provide high quality patrolling in all Harper Woods neighborhoods.

1. Increase in visible police presence

- **Residents state that they notice police presence in certain areas, but not all areas of Harper Woods.** Eastland Mall and Eastland Village were identified anecdotally as areas where police presence isn’t often visible. Residents ask that police be consistently present throughout the entire community.

- **Residents desire more interaction and familiarity with officers.** Residents would like to have closer interaction with patrolling officers. They would like to see more officers patrolling on foot, on bikes, etc., so officers appear more present and approachable.
- **A positive relationship with the City of Detroit, including with Detroit Police, should be promoted.** Harper Woods residents want to feel safe and know that if they make a report to the police, their report will be acted upon, even if it's about something going on on the other side of Kelly Road.

2. New or enhanced crime prevention measures such as a Neighborhood Watch

- **There is a Neighborhood Watch program in effect in Harper Woods, however, most neighbors aren't aware of it or don't know how to use it.** Participants in community meetings expressed a great interest in engaging community involvement in helping to decrease crime in the community. Expanded efforts to communicate opportunities for citizens to be involved in stopping crime—whether by participating in a Neighborhood Watch program or just as individuals—would be very useful.

3. Reduction of speeding on residential streets

- **In addition to petty crimes, an area of concern for residents is cars traveling at high rates of speed down residential streets.** Speed bumps and increased patrol are two suggestions for addressing these concerns.

4. Greater enforcement of noise violations

- **Complaints were raised about the noise level coming from people in their yards or in the streets, from inside homes and from cars.** In order to maintain a comfortable living arrangement for all, Harper Woods residents hope to be able to convey to their neighbors that disruptions such as unreasonably loud music and voices are not tolerated.

5. Enforcement of curfew

- **Curfew should be enforced to deter young people from moving around on foot or loitering after dark at both Eastland Mall and out in the community.**



*Harper Woods Values...*IV. *Community Mindedness*

- **In Harper Woods, there are many** close-knit pockets of connected neighbors. **There are also many** areas where residents are not acquainted with the people that live next door to them.
- **In order to create a better community for all, we need** to implement plans which will integrate neighbors so they feel connected and willing to strive toward a common purpose.
- **We are prepared to** take the initiative and assist in creating solid, sturdy neighborhoods—for example, block captains, distributing literature, whatever it takes.
- **We would like the city to provide** information that will help us achieve this goal; for example, have information easily accessible that will enable block captains or other residents to know when new residents arrive, as well as access to all events in the city, which we can promote.

“Community mindedness is important to Harper Woods because by creating an atmosphere of ‘we are all in this together,’ unity between residents can be promoted; streets can become more than just names on a map, they can become neighborhoods.”

*–Neighborhoods Improvement Plan
Task Force*

In addition to the vision for the physical community, Harper Woods residents value a neighborhood *of neighbors* who are connected to one another and can come together over shared values and common ground. They want Harper Woods to be more than just a place to live; they want it to be a warm and inviting community.

1. Neighbors taking pride in their homes and neighborhoods

- ***Neighborhood pride is gained from living in a community of people who take care of the physical environment around them.*** Resident-led and city-supported campaigns urging residents to take pride in their homes, blocks, and neighborhoods are suggested. For example, yard signs stating “I take pride in my block” could be given to residents who commit to beautifying their property, or another similar incentive could be created to spark pride in residents.

2. Being respectful and considerate of neighbors

- ***Widespread understanding of what is expected of residents, homeowners and renters alike, will help to build a sense of respect and consideration.*** It is suspected that some residents do not know the regulations around regular nuisances such as trash cans being put out too early, or lingering too long after trash pick-up. A diversified communication plan from the city to disseminate expectations around subjects that promote a sense of respect and consideration will be vital to making this happen. Residents also must play a part in communicating with one another about neighborhood norms.

3. Increase in neighborhood unity

- ***Residents must take the lead in building a sense of unity within their blocks.*** The city can support residents' efforts by providing resources to block clubs and neighborhood associations (or making currently available resources known).
- ***Resources should be put to promoting unity among neighbors along the border of Harper Woods and Detroit.*** City of Detroit District 4 staff are in relationship with Harper Woods City staff to foster partnerships that will help to support this, but a continued focus on this among residents and officials alike will be vital.

4. Introduction of a "Block Captain" model to welcome new neighbors

- ***The Block Captain program should be reviewed, updated, implemented and promoted widely as a strategy for circulating information and building community.*** Opportunities, expectations and incentives related to the Block Captain program should be communicated to neighborhood leaders. Residents have suggested that Block Captains could be responsible for welcoming new neighbors, spearheading neighborhood events, and reporting neighborhood concerns to city officials.



*Harper Woods Values...*v. *Community Activities*

- **In Harper Woods, there are** community events in schools and at the library, **but few** large special events that draw big crowds or make our city a destination spot.
- **To enhance our community** through special events, **we need to** offer exciting and well-publicized activities designed for different age groups and different interests.
- **Working with city official and business owners, we are prepared to** design, promote and put on special events.
- **We would like the city to work with us on** special event ideas and plans by reviewing our ideas and advising us.

“Community activities are important to Harper Woods because they build a stronger community through unifying and creating cohesiveness among the residents, and they serve to unify, enlighten, energize and boost pride for our city.”

–Neighborhoods Improvement Plan Task Force

While community events might not seem as essential to the day-to-day workings of a healthy community as functioning infrastructure or law enforcement, they are just as important to a community’s functionality and the contentment of its residents. A thriving community hosts community activities that highlight the area’s assets, excite and engage residents, and attract people from all over the region to come explore what the community has to offer. While they might not be necessary to survival, a community like Harper Woods can strengthen and promote its unique identity by pouring resources into community activities and events.

1. Activities and events that make Harper Woods a destination

- **Resources should be pushed toward optimizing currently operating events and creating new fun, engaging events for current residents and neighbors from other communities.** In order to push Harper Woods toward becoming a community of choice, offerings should be available both to attract residents from other communities, and to enrich the experience of current Harper Woods residents and their families and friends. Examples of this include farmers markets, block parties, seasonal festivals, and more.
- **Optimized communication and promotion of currently well-loved events and attractions is necessary.** “Target Night Out” (a.k.a. National Night Out Against Crime hosted by Target) is an example of a well-loved event that takes place annually in

Harper Woods. While the event is popular, further promotion within and outside of the community could be beneficial. Promotion of this and other events needs to be done in a variety of ways in order to meet people's diverse needs; for example, a community newsletter might be very important to some people, while others might toss a newsletter aside and prefer to read calendar updates via email or social media.

- **Residents want a voice about what community activities are available.** Creating a task force of Harper Woods residents dedicated to event planning or otherwise involving residents in the planning process for events could be very valuable.

2. Activities for age-specific groups (teens, seniors)

- **Age-specific populations need special consideration when planning for community activities.** Both young adults and older adults could benefit from targeted programming to meet specific needs they might share with each other.
- **Teens need places to hang out other than the mall!** Young people need spaces they can be independent and use their time productively and in enriching ways. Formal or informal mentorship opportunities could be a good solution.
- **Seniors also need enriching activities to keep them occupied and interacting with one another.** Programming specific to the needs of seniors was a commonly raised concern.

3. Community recreation center

- **Residents expressed a desire for a place where everyone can go that would provide activities for seniors, youth, and everyone in between.** A community center could meet these needs by offering both organized activities and "open" activities (i.e. open gym, swim, etc.). Some residents are concerned with youth being out in the neighborhood late at night without regard for the volume of their voices and activities. A community center that is open late could provide relief for these concerned residents and provide valuable ways for young people to spend their time.

4. Block clubs and block parties

- **Block clubs and other community groups should be encouraged and equipped to host gatherings to build a sense of community across the neighborhood.** Block parties and other community gatherings serve to bring people together around a shared purpose, even if it's just having fun! These celebrations and gatherings could be resident-led, but support from the city would be helpful.



5. Interest-specific groups

- ***New activities and groups for residents to come together around shared interests were requested.*** Residents expressed interest in the addition of new groups and programs, and the strengthening of existing groups and programs that benefit residents. Suggested groups and programs include: a gardeners group, home improvement/beautification instruction programs, youth sports programming, Alcoholics Anonymous and other support groups.

*Harper Woods Values...*VI. *Functioning Infrastructure & City Services*

- **In Harper Woods, there are** high quality city services. **There is also** great potential in the existing physical infrastructure, especially at the site of Eastland Mall.
- **In order to create a better community for all,** we need be future-forward in our thinking about how to implement changes in how the city functions and what types of partners it attracts to assist in development.
- **We are prepared to provide** visioning for what Harper Woods could be, thinking outside the box to provide a broad spectrum of possibilities.
- **We would like the city to** make future development decisions from the standpoint of sustainability, innovation, and with an eye toward attracting businesses with vision and integrity.

“Functioning infrastructure and city services are important to Harper Woods because when it is working well, our lives function smoother. We can get to work & school efficiently and safely.”

*–Neighborhoods Improvement Plan
Task Force*

Harper Woods residents desire a strong infrastructure and high quality city services, with the two highest priorities falling into this category. The redevelopment of Kelly Road was voted the highest priority for the Neighborhoods Improvement Plan, and the redevelopment of Eastland Mall was a close second. Kelly Road and Eastland Mall are seen as icons of Harper Woods, and hubs for commerce and entertainment, with storied pasts and great potential for the future.

Public transportation and lower taxes and utilities were also discussed as priorities within the plan, but are ranked #20 and #24, respectively, out of 27 priority items.

1. Kelly Road redevelopment

- ***Physical redevelopment of Kelly Road should include improvements and beautification treatments to medians.*** These might include flowers, greenery and attractive signs welcoming people to Harper Woods. Residents could “adopt a median,” providing maintenance of flowerbeds, gardens, and lawns.
- ***Kelly Road businesses should be given incentives to improve their properties.*** Community members suggested incentive programs for businesses on Kelly Road to improve their properties. These include incentives for business who undergo facade



improvements, and incentives for businesses to keep their properties clean and free of litter. In addition to keeping up current businesses, redevelopment and investment should be sought to bring new, high quality businesses to Kelly Road.

2. Redevelopment of Eastland Mall

- ***A well-researched and sustainable redevelopment plan for Eastland Mall should be created.*** Eastland Mall has a wealth of potential for redevelopment. Community meeting attendees expressed eagerness to work with city officials to reimagine the Eastland Mall site and what its future could look like. Initial ideas of what residents could imagine at the Eastland Mall site include a community center, new shopping options, new residential development, business office space to attract high paying businesses to Harper Woods, and a tech business incubator.

3. Public transportation access increased

- ***Public transportation should be widely accessible.*** While some residents have cars to get around with, other young people, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those who can't afford a personal vehicle might need to rely on other transportation options. Inexpensive and expedient service to and from key destinations such as Downtown Detroit and Metro Airport was a particular request.
 - *Community rideshare initiatives were not discussed by residents, but may be a smaller scale option for residents to consider in meeting expressed interests.*

4. Lower taxes and utility costs

- ***Affordability of taxes and utilities is vital, so current residents can afford to stay and new residents are attracted to the community.*** Many residents note that Harper Woods taxes and utilities are reasonably priced, but request a focus on maintaining that reasonability. Harper Woods residents are willing to do their part in keeping costs low by volunteering to make events and initiatives happen where funds are lacking.

5. Basement backup issue resolved

- ***Harper Woods residents need to be able to trust that infrastructure will continue to work for them.*** Residents ask that resources be designated to address the concern many are facing of water backup entering their homes through basement drains.

Appendix: Priority Ranking

Harper Woods Priorities Sorted in Order of Resident Ranking (higher score = higher priority)			
	Value Category	Priority	Score
1	Functioning Infrastructure & City Services	Kelly Road redevelopment	147
2	Functioning Infrastructure & City Services	Redevelopment of Eastland Mall	145
3	Beautiful Neighborhoods	Landlords/Property Management Companies held accountable	141
4	Education	High performing schools	141
5	Beautiful Neighborhoods	Less blight	140
6	Education	Safety at schools	140
7	Education	High graduation/college attendance rates	138
8	Beautiful Neighborhoods	Less vacant/abandoned buildings	136
9	Crime Reduction & Law Enforcement	Increase in visible police presence	134
10	Community Mindedness	Neighbors taking pride in their homes/neighborhoods	133
11	Crime Reduction & Law Enforcement	New crime prevention measures, such as a neighborhood watch program	133
12	Crime Reduction & Law Enforcement	Reduction of speeding on residential streets	132
13	Beautiful Neighborhoods	Less trash	130
14	Functioning Infrastructure & City Services	Police/resident relations	127
15	Beautiful Neighborhoods	Property upkeep (beyond just cutting grass)	125
16	Community Mindedness	Being respectful and considerate of neighbors	125
17	Community Mindedness	Increase in neighborhood unity	125
18	Community Activities	Activities/events that make Harper Woods a destination	123
19	Crime Reduction & Law Enforcement	Greater enforcement of noise violations	120
20	Functioning Infrastructure & City Services	Public transportation	120
21	Community Activities	Activities for teens, seniors	119
22	Education	Special education available	117
23	Community Activities	Community recreation center	116
24	Functioning Infrastructure & City Services	Lower taxes and utilities	106
25	Crime Reduction & Law Enforcement	Enforcement of curfew	104
26	Community Mindedness	Introduction of a "Block Captain" model to welcome new neighbors	99
27	Community Activities	Block clubs/block parties	92
28	Community Activities	Interest-specific groups	91

