

Department of Neighborhood Services

Neighborhood Services Coordination

July 2003 to June 2005
Two-year Report

Report Topics:

Neighborhood Coordination

- ◆ Executive Summary
- ◆ Mission, Vision and Goals
- ◆ Service Requests
- ◆ Communicating Neighborhood-to-Neighborhood During Natural Disasters
- ◆ Directory of Civic Leagues and Neighborhood Associations
- ◆ Neighborhood Leadership
- ◆ Neighborhood Quality of Life Study
- ◆ Permit Process for Churches and Places of Worship
- ◆ *World Changers*

Executive Summary

Neighborhood Coordination

2003

- ◆ July - Neighborhood Services Coordinator hired.
 - ◆ **First** step toward implementing *Save Our Communities Task Force* recommendations
- ◆ September - In the wake of Hurricane Isabel, Neighborhood Coordinator worked through the City's Emergency Operations Center to help establish water and ice distribution centers. As part of the City's humanitarian efforts, collaborated with City employees and volunteers to distribute:
 - ◆ 380,000 bottles of water
 - ◆ 66,000 bags of ice

2004

- ◆ June - Neighborhood Symposium.
 - ◆ **First** city-wide symposium in Chesapeake
 - ◆ Attended by approximately 150 residents and included exhibits of services from community service organizations
- ◆ June - Chesapeake's Civic League Directory
 - ◆ Published **first** directory
- ◆ June - Development and presentation of Neighborhood Coordination model to City of Chesapeake City Council

Executive Summary

Neighborhood Coordination

- ◆ June/July - Chesapeake's *World Changers* Project
 - ◆ **First** project in Chesapeake
 - ◆ Repairs made to 21 single family dwellings
 - ◆ Improved housing conditions in South Norfolk, a City Council revitalization focus area
 - ◆ Involved 350 volunteers from six states and thirteen cities
- ◆ July - Consolidation of Neighborhood Coordination to Neighborhood Services Department
- ◆ August- Neighborhood Quality of Life Research Agreement established with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte for development of a city-wide Neighborhood Quality of Life Study.
- ◆ September - Neighborhood Quality of Life Steering Committee appointed by the City Manager
- ◆ October - Neighborhood Leadership Class
 - ◆ **First** time class offered to Chesapeake residents
 - ◆ Trained 17 residents in neighborhood leadership
- ◆ October - *Communicating with Neighborhoods during Natural Disasters* Informational Meeting
 - ◆ Development of grassroots system to communicate via non-traditional means during emergency conditions
 - ◆ Helped to establish list of neighborhood emergency contacts

Executive Summary

Neighborhood Coordination

- ◆ December - *Permit and Development Review Process* Informational Meeting
 - ◆ Provided information to churches and places of worship about development and permit requirements
 - ◆ Attended by more than 100 clergy and church representatives

2005

- ◆ March - Albemarle Acres Neighborhood Informational Meeting
 - ◆ Provided information about private sewage disposal, stormwater runoff and water/sewer needs to more than 100 residents
- ◆ April - Second Annual Neighborhood Symposium
 - ◆ Provided information about police-community relations, the role of churches and places of worship in community improvement, public works customer service, and code compliance
- ◆ May - Second Neighborhood Leadership Class
 - ◆ Trained 29 residents in neighborhood leadership
- ◆ May - Chesapeake's Civic League Directory
 - ◆ Made available via the Internet for the first time
- ◆ June/July - Second *World Changers* Project
 - ◆ Made repairs to 21 single-family homes

Mission, Vision & Goals

Neighborhood Coordination

Mission

The Chesapeake Neighborhood Coordination Division coordinates revitalization efforts and connects residents to services and information to enhance the quality of life in the City of Chesapeake, Virginia.

Vision

The Chesapeake Neighborhood Coordination Division shall be a national model for its innovation and empowerment of communities to actively develop, revitalize and maintain healthy neighborhoods.

City of Chesapeake Neighborhood Goals

The City Council adopted the City's goals for 2003-2004. Neighborhood Services supports and has a direct role in implementing several of the City's goals indicated below:

- Establish a Neighborhood Services Department and Community Action Teams to improve code enforcement and neighborhood quality of life.
- Support established neighborhoods by keeping housing and infrastructure up-to-date.
- Enhance community involvement.
- Decentralize services where appropriate to ensure better responsiveness.

Neighborhood Coordination Goals:

- Establish Community Action Teams to improve neighborhood quality of life.
- Support established neighborhoods by keeping housing and infrastructure up-to-date.
- Enhance community involvement.
- Develop, revitalize and maintain healthy neighborhoods.
- Improve access to information and resources that support the community.

Service Requests

Neighborhood Coordination

Neighborhood Coordination responds to questions, concerns or complaints from citizens, community groups and organizations about City services or requests for City services and facilitates equitable solutions.

- ◆ Service Requests/Complaints
 - ◆ FY 2003-04: 208 requests
 - ◆ FY 2004-05: 260 requests
- ◆ Serves as liaison between the City Manager and City Council and citizens and community groups in neighborhoods desiring revitalization.
- ◆ Follows up with departments and citizens regarding the resolution of issues.
- ◆ Coordinates with staff in departments to facilitate activities and accomplish goals.
- ◆ Increases public awareness about City services that support the enhancement of neighborhoods.
- ◆ Develops related long and short-range plans and reports, including conducting surveys to address revitalization concerns.
- ◆ Implements programs by consulting with citizens, community groups and businesses regarding specific needs to address the revitalization of the neighborhood.

Communicating Neighborhood-to-Neighborhood During Natural Disasters

Neighborhood Coordination

August 31, 2004, a public informational meeting, *Communicating with Neighborhoods during Natural Disasters*, was presented to the community at Truitt Intermediate School.

- ◆ The purpose of the information meeting was to engage residents in discussion about non-traditional strategies to communicate neighborhood-to-neighborhood when natural disasters cause electrical power outage and loss of telephone service for an extended period.
- ◆ The idea for the meeting came from Hurricane Isabel, September 2003. The post-Isabel clean-up and return to normalcy were complicated by loss of electricity and traditional communications outlets. It quickly became evident that thousands of residents were not able to access information via traditional sources and residents had difficulty passing on information about basic health and welfare conditions in their neighborhoods.
- ◆ Citizens provided feedback on the type of information needed at the neighborhood level during emergency situations and advice about residents going to pre-selected locations to pickup flyers and distribute door-to-door at the neighborhood level. Attendees represented civic leagues, neighborhood associations, multifamily property managers, and community service organizations.

Directory of Civic Leagues and Neighborhood Associations

Neighborhood Coordination

The Directory of Civic Leagues and Neighborhood Associations was first published during 2004. It identifies and facilitates communication among neighborhood groups and is used by the City to inform residents about City services and programs. The directory:

- ◆ Compiles contact information for approximately 100 neighborhood organizations
- ◆ Used by private, commercial, and non-profit groups for public notification of projects and services.

The directory, available for viewing on the City's web site, is updated annually and distributed during the City's Neighborhood Symposium.

- ◆ More than 1000 printed copies of the directory have been distributed city-wide.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP

Neighborhood Coordination

The inaugural class of Chesapeake's Neighborhood Leadership Program took place October thru November 2004. Sixteen residents completed training and were recognized during a class celebration on December 14, 2004. The second class met during March and April 2005 and consisted of 29 residents.

- ◆ Participants increased their knowledge and skills to lead neighborhood improvement groups and increased the effectiveness of neighborhood organizations through strategic planning and partnerships.
- ◆ Courses included:
 - Successful Organizing for Neighborhoods
 - Developing Vision & Mission Statements
 - Strategic Planning and Problem Solving
 - Neighborhood Improvement Initiatives
 - Accessing Resources & Developing Partnerships
 - Effective Communication & Presentations.
- ◆ Participants met once a week during a six-week period.
- ◆ Instructors provided by City departments, non-profit organizations and local colleges.
- ◆ Training materials were provided by the City's Neighborhood Services Department.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP GRADUATES

Neighborhood Coordination

Fall 2004

Kathy Gianquitto
Stehpanie Gibson
Art Guertin
Robin Hommerbocker
Berlyn Howard
Juliete James
Harvey Jenkins
Janet Kelly
Rudolph Lester
Rick Scruggs
Danielle Springs
Fabius Tucker
Adrienne Ward
Denise Waters
Troy Williams
Carmen Wood

Spring 2005

Tawanda Anderson
Eloise Casper
Roslyn Covington
Donna Daniels
Eva Deese
Kelvin Dolzier
Christine Enochs
Pat Faircloth
Alice Featherston
Jesse Featherston
Josephine Felder
Reginald Foote
Raymond Futrell
Aaron Gallop
Pamela Gordon
Berry Hightower
Marylyn Hurdle

Spring 2005

Patricia Jefferson
John Leach
Lorraine Leach
Gail Marshall
Eddie Matney
Henry Muhammad
Jacqueline Muhammad
Valma Ricks
Randolph Sykes
Dorothy Whitmore
Garland Williams
Patricia Wright

Neighborhood Quality of Life Study

Neighborhood Coordination

“A neighborhood QOL project will provide the City a resource for benchmarking and the development of performance measures neighborhood-by-neighborhood; thus becoming an invaluable tool for City government, residents, and agencies as decisions are made about resources. This project is a major change initiative for our organization. It will significantly enhance our ability to achieve Council’s neighborhood goals.”

– Dr. Clarence V. Cuffee, City Manager

During 2004, the City established a research agreement with the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC) to design and implement a neighborhood quality of life measurement system for Chesapeake.

- ◆ UNCC shall develop and construct a measurement tool that will enable the City of Chesapeake and its local government partners to quantitatively measure and assess neighborhood scale quality of life assets across the City.
- ◆ The research outputs will be geographically coded to match neighborhood scale boundaries and will be calibrated to allow for intra-city neighborhood level comparisons.
- ◆ UNCC will work with staff to develop an appropriate methodology for measuring neighborhood quality of life and implementing the research process over an 18-month time period.
- ◆ The project deliverables will be presented to City Council at the completion of the project, April 2006.

PERMIT PROCESS FOR CHURCHES & PLACES OF WORSHIP

“The meeting will help explain City processes to those who may be unfamiliar with them. While the permit process can be confusing for anyone, we know it can be more challenging for property owners or lessees who work on building and Development matters infrequently. We believe this informational meeting will be particularly helpful for these people.”

-Robert Smalley, Chesapeake Codes Administrator

On December 6, 2004, Neighborhood Coordination organized an informational meeting on the City’s building permit and development review process for churches and places of worship. The meeting, held at Mount Lebanon Baptist Church, focused on processes, services, informational needs and challenges specific to places of worship. Topics included:

- Storefront churches
- New construction
- Expansion or renovation
- Off-site outreach or mission programs
- Special events functions
- Enterprise functions, such as day care or day schools.

Participants had the opportunity to have an in-depth discussion about specific issues or concerns and were able to establish one-on-one communication with City staff involved in the permit and development review process.

World Changers

“World Changers will aid the City’s neighborhood revitalization efforts through the rehabilitation of homes and contribution of volunteer resources. The partnership with World Changers is in line with the City’s goals of supporting established neighborhoods by keeping housing and infrastructure up-to-date and enhancing community involvement.” - Theo McClammy, Neighborhood Services Coordinator

Started in 1990, *World Changers* has seen more than 115,000 participants repair 7,500 homes in 375 communities in the United States and around the world. During a *World Changers* project, youth volunteers form construction crews and work together to complete home repairs. The youth are supervised by adults experienced in home renovation projects. Twelve to fifteen volunteers are assigned to each site with a responsibility to complete the work in one week.

- ◆ Chesapeake project dates: June 26 - July 3, 2004 and June 25 - July 2, 2005
 - ◆ 2004 was Chesapeake’s First *World Changers* Project
- ◆ Repaired 21 houses during 2004 and 22 houses during 2005.
 - ◆ Repairs involved involve painting, porches, roofing, siding, windows, and handicap ramps.
- ◆ Improved housing conditions in South Norfolk, City Council revitalization focus area.
- ◆ Involved 350 volunteers from six states and thirteen cities.
- ◆ Received over 12, 600 volunteer hours contributed (estimated monetary value of \$220,000)
- ◆ Funding for the 2004 project was provided by the Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority with Community Development Block Grant funds.