Transforming Communities
“We Are In This Together...”

Bottom-Up & Top-Down: Making Community Engagement a Priority
Community Engagement with a PURPOSE

Strategies
Commitment to Involvement, Engagement & Empowerment

- African-American Empowerment Network
- North Omaha - Village Community Meeting
- City-Wide Transformation 2025 Council
- 7 Community-based Collaboratives
Levels of Participation

- Involvement
- Engagement
- Empowerment
Audiences & Partners

- Village Community Meeting – Monthly
- Youth (Step-Up and Town Hall Meetings)
- Neighborhood Associations (NONA)
- Pastors and Faith Leaders (Village)
- Community-based Organizations
- Small Businesses (Revive Business Network)
- Major Employers (Advance Omaha!)
- Elected Officials
- Governmental Agencies – Police, Schools, ...
- Philanthropic Community/Foundations
Youth Engagement with Leaders and Police Dept.
Methods of Engagement

Primary Methods
- Community Forums & Meetings
  - Youth
  - Adults
- Weekly and Monthly Collaborative Meetings
- Summits
- Conferences

Additional
- Door-to-Door
- Focus Groups
Primary Meeting Process
Constantly Gathering Information, Recommendations & Feedback

- Blue Sky Brainstorming (Clean Slate)
- Presentations from Residents, Youth and Leaders
- Roundtable Conversations (and Food)
- Review Recommendations/Add New
- Prioritize, Track and Evaluate
Network Approach
Community-based Change...

- **CONNECT** – convene individuals and groups to create a common Vision, Mission and Purpose

- **COMMUNICATE** – consistently at all levels - data, issues, solutions, successes, gaps, trends

- **COLLABORATE** – collectively develop and implement, programs, policies and projects – alignment & investments
The Empowerment Network Process

Overview

**Issue or Opportunity**
- **CONNECT** and Convene Groups and Stakeholders
  - Build on Assets with Common Vision & Mission

**COMMUNICATE**
- Issues, Data, Trends and Solutions
  - Include All Levels Consistently

**COLLABORATE**, Align & Invest
- People, Programs, Projects & Policies
  - Work Together to Implement

**Outcomes**
- Increase Graduation Rates
- Increase Employment & Wages
- Improve Safety & Health
- Increase Ownership – Home & Bus.
- Increase Revitalization

**Collaborative**
Empowerment Network and Transformation 2025 Council
The Empowerment Network Process

Omaha 360: Violence Prevention

**Issue or Opportunity**
- Escalating Gun Violence
- Youth Violence epidemic

**CONNECT** and Convene Groups and Stakeholders
- Build on Assets with Common Vision & Mission

**COMMUNICATE** Issues, Data, Trends and Solutions
- Include All Levels Consistently

**COLLABORATE**, Align & Invest People, Programs, Projects & Policies
- Work Together to Implement

**Omaha 360 Collaborative**
- EN, OPD, UL, Impact One/YouTurn, VBA, CIA, First Responders, BGClub, Village Stakeholders, DCYC, DOJ…

**Outcomes**
- Decreased gun violence
- Developed partnerships with OPD and Law Enforcement
- Connected youth to employment and education
- Mobilized faith communities
- Created stronger neighborhoods
- Added more support services
The Empowerment Network Process
Step-Up Omaha: Employment

**Issue or Opportunity**
High unemployment rate for teens in North and South Omaha

**CONNECT** and Convene Groups and Stakeholders
Build on Assets with Common Vision & Mission

**COMMUNICATE** Issues, Data, Trends and Solutions
Include All Levels Consistently

**COLLABORATE**, Align & Invest in People, Programs, Projects & Policies
Work Together to Implement

**Step-Up Omaha Collaborative**
EN, City of Omaha, OEDC, ULN, Hope Center, LC, PACE, BLA, MCC, OPS, BGC, Girls Inc. and others

**Outcomes**
- Decreased unemployment rate by 45% among teens
- Increased graduation rates
- Increased employment of young adults
- Increased college entrance
**The Empowerment Network Process**

**Cradle to Career Education**

**Issue or Opportunity**
- Low grad rates
- Low performance – reading, math and science

**CONNECT**
- and Convene Groups and Stakeholders
- Build on Assets with Common Vision & Mission

**COMMUNICATE**
- Issues, Data, Trends and Solutions
- Include All Levels Consistently

**COLLABORATE**
- Align & Invest People, Programs, Projects & Policies
- Work Together to Implement

**Outcomes**
- Graduation Rates increased
- More students going to college
- Reading and math scores increased

**Cradle to Career Collaboration:**
- EN, OPS, FHAS, UL, College Possible, Mentoring, CFY After School, Early Childhood, LCC, MBK, AAAC, MCC, Bellevue, Creighton, UNO
The Empowerment Network Process
North Omaha Village Zone Revitalization

**Issue or Opportunity**
No Community-based Plan for Redevelopment for North Omaha
Development not coordinated
Few public/private partnerships
Low level of financial investments

**CONNECT** and Convene Groups and Stakeholders
Build on Assets with Common Vision & Mission

**COMMUNICATE**
Issues, Data, Trends and Solutions
Include All Levels Consistently

**COLLABORATE**
Align & Invest People, Programs, Projects & Policies
Work Together to Implement Village Revitalization

**Outcomes**
North Omaha Village Plan
Developments in Each Node
Prospect Village
Village at 24th and Lake
24th and Cuming
Highlander/75 North
30th & Ames/Sorenson

Collaborative
OEDC, EN, NIFA, City of Omaha, Holy Name, FHAS, 75 North, White Lotus
Network Approach
Creating Sustainable Change

- CAPACITY-BUILDING – Individuals, Groups, Organizations and Businesses

- LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – Emerging, Seasoned and Succession Planning

- CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE – Leadership, Representation, Celebration & Recognition
Community Engagement with a PURPOSE

Example: Rebuilding the Village North Omaha & Omaha
College World Series

Old Market

#1 Zoo in the Nation

Warren Buffett

Five Fortune 500 Co.’s

Berkshire Hathaway
$143 Billion  #7

Union Pacific
$19.6 Billion  #143

ConAgra Brands
$12.4 Billion  #215

Kiewit Construction
$10.4 Billion  #255

Mutual of Omaha
$6 Billion  #411
If Omaha wants to do something, it gets done!

#1 – 10 Great Cities to Raise Your Kids  
Kiplinger – May 2012

#1 – 10 Best Value Cities for 2011  
Kiplinger – July 2011

#4 – Best Cost of Living  
Business Facilities – July/August 2011

#1 – America’s Most Affordable Cities  
Forbes – January 2011

$140 Million

Midtown Crossing

$390 Million

$350 Million
### BUT....Status in 2006: Tale of Two Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greater OMAHA</th>
<th>African-American Omaha</th>
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<td>Great Places to Raise a Family</td>
<td># of African-American Children in poverty</td>
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<td>Less than 4% Unemployment</td>
<td>20 % AA Unemployment</td>
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<tr>
<td>90% Graduation Rate</td>
<td>49% Graduation Rate (African-American Males)</td>
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<td>38% Home Ownership</td>
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BUT....Status in 2006: Tale of Two Cities

Greater OMAHA
- Great Places to Raise a Family
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Greater African-American Omaha
- # of African-American Children in poverty
- 20 % AA Unemployment
- 49% Graduation Rate (African-American Males)
- 38% Home Ownership
- Gun violence was moving towards an all-time high

CAN WE WORK TOGETHER TO MOVE THE DIAL?
Community-based Plan
Bottom-up and Top-down

Common Goals

1. Empower African-Americans
2. Empower North Omaha
3. Empower Omaha!
Public Launch of Empowerment Network
Rise Up and Rebuild the Village! April 2007 12 years!

POVERTY AMID PROSPERITY
Alarming figures reveal the reality of a metro area in which economic hardship has a stronger and stronger grip on the black community.

Coalition seeks lead role in charting course

What's next?

The local plan — called Empower Omaha! — involves 13 areas of focus, offering strategies for commitment by individuals as well as at the community level.

3. Prepare our children
4. Embrace our culture
5. Build our wealth
7. Protect our health
8. Raise our voices
11. Stand for justice
12. Improve our communications

By Erin Grace

Black Omahas have the intellectual and financial resources to take the lead in solving problems such as poverty and the educational achievement gap. That was the message today from a broad coalition of black Omahas known as the African-American Empowerment Network.

In a show of unity, more than 20 union network members stood together inside the community cafe at 4th and Lake Streets to unveil the plan. More than 100 people were expected for a day of activities, including a speech by George C. Prager, a national authority on black reviving.

"Our goal is to transform the city Omaha," said Willie Barney, who works in Omaha as a private consultant and convenes the network of volunteers more than seven months ago.

The resulting plan dovetails with the community's demand for action on issues such as education, housing, and job creation. The coalition plans to focus on the heart of north Omaha, help dispel the myths, get some garbage bags and then, most importantly, draw people together," she said.

Dick Davis, an insurance executive, is seeking matching funds for the project. "We can walk down 24th Street... (and) draw people together."
Empowerment Plan
Holistic and Comprehensive

1. Employment & Entrepreneurship
2. Education and Youth Development
3. Housing and Neighborhood Development
4. Faith and Hope
5. Violence Prevention and Intervention
6. Financially Sound and Healthy Families
7. Arts, Culture, Media and Communications
Thriving Communities Index
Pew Research, Empowerment Network and WDB

1. Improve Graduation Rates
2. Reduce Violent Crime (Gun Violence)
3. Decrease Unemployment
4. Create a Robust Arts and Culture Sector
5. Increase Access to Credit and Capital
6. Develop Regional Transportation Links
7. Reduce Sales Taxes

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8. Increase Home Ownership
9. Create Mixed-Income Housing & Neighborhoods
10. Improve Access to Healthcare, Health Insurance and Healthy Foods
Where are we now?
2019 UPDATE
1. Increase High School Grad Rate 62% to 81% for African-Americans

OPS Graduation Rates by Race and Ethnicity

- All
- African-American
- Hispanic
- White (Not Hisp)

Source: Omaha Public Schools and State Dept. of Education
1. Increase College Grad Rates

% of African-Americans with a Bachelor’s Degree

% of African-Americans with Bachelor's Degree
Source: ACS, Census 5 Year Avgs

16.0 16.5 16.3
17.2
18.2
19.8
21.5
22.5
17.2 17.7 18.0 18.3 18.6 19.0 19.5 20.0
10.0
12.0
14.0
16.0
18.0
20.0
22.0
24.0


Omaha Metro
U.S.

Data Source: American Community Survey, U.S Census Bureau 5 Year Report 2012-2016
North Omaha Cradle to Career Village Focus/Reach Strategy

3rd-6th Reading: Percent Proficient
Data Source: OPS/NE Dept of Education NeSA

[Bar chart showing the percent proficient in 3rd-6th reading for various schools in North Omaha.]
Cradle to Career Collaboration Education Summit
2. Decrease Violent Crime
Northeast Omaha Gun Violence

Northeast Precinct: Homicides & Gun Assault Victims
Source: OPD Preliminary 2006-2017

- Homicides
- Gun Assault Victims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Homicides</th>
<th>Gun Assault Victims</th>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>125</td>
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<tr>
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<td>73</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
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2. Reduce Gun Violence in North Omaha: 80% Reduction during Summer Months

June-July Gun Assault Incidents: Northwest Precinct
Source: OPD, Preliminary Report
2. Decrease Violent Crime
Community Engagement & Collaboration
2. Decrease Violent Crime
Community Engagement & Collaboration
3. Reduce Unemployment
African-American Unemployment Rate Omaha MSA

African-American Unemployment Rate: Omaha MSA
Source: ACS, Census 5 Year Avgs.

16.7 16.0 17.2 15.8 15.2 14.4 10.8 8.9

Source: American Community Survey, U.S Census Bureau 5 Year Report 2012-2016
African-American Unemployment
Omaha MSA vs. US

% of African-Americans Unemployed
Source: ACS, Census 5 Year Avgs


Omaha Metro U.S.

Data Source: American Community Survey, 5 Year Reports 2005-2009 to 2012-2016
Growth of Step-Up Omaha! Positions Created

Source: Empowerment Network and City of Omaha
3. Reduce Unemployment

Building the Workforce of the Future and Closing the Employment Gap by Investing in Today's Youth

Exploration
Life Skills & Intro to Careers

Employment
On-the-Job Work Experience

Enrichment
Career Experiences & Entrepreneurship

Education
Academic Recovery and Targeted Work Certification

Photos from Step-Up Omaha!

Major sponsors include:
Measurable Improvements

- 45% Reduction in Youth Unemployment
- From 82\textsuperscript{nd} to Number 2 in the country
4. Create a Robust Arts & Culture Sector

History: Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Nat King Cole...
4. Create a Robust Arts & Culture Sector
Christmas in the Village at 24th and Lake
5,000+
4. Create a Robust Arts & Culture Sector
24th and Lake
5. Increase Access to Credit and Capital
African-American Business Ownership in Omaha MSA

African-American Owned-Businesses in Omaha
Source: Economic Census - Survey of Business Owners

- 2007: 1761
- 2012: 3349

Source: U.S. Census Bureau   Economic Census
Compiled and Prepared by: Empowerment Network
Increase Business Ownership
Collaboration: Revive!, OSBN, MPSDC, NEF, OEDC
6. Develop a Regional Transportation Plan

Heartland 2050 Plan

Steering Committee, Executive Committee and Equity Chair

The Vision Goals

Using the Values and Guiding Principles as a framework, the Visioning Committee established six Vision goals to improve our quality of life and create a long-term, regional vision in harmony with our people, places and resources.

1. Economic Development
Together, our region will strengthen its robust economy to encourage business expansion, job training and growth, and become a national magnet for a young and highly skilled workforce.

2. Education
Together, our region will have the highest quality education system that educates the workforce of the future.

3. Health and Safety
Together, our region will be noted for its healthy living, safe neighborhoods, preservation of arts and culture, and exceptional healthcare providers.

4. Housing and Development
Together, our region will be known for welcoming, connected and lively communities that offer residents a range of housing choices and locations.

5. Infrastructure
Together, our region’s investments will develop efficient infrastructure that supports economic development, provides more transportation choices, and reduces energy consumption.

6. Natural Resources
Together, our region values, protects and utilizes our natural features and systems to provide access to open space and resiliency from natural disasters.

Places

- Low Density
  New neighborhoods of single-family homes on larger lots; found in smaller cities and towns.

- Existing Park
  Nature and recreation areas.

- Medium Density
  A mix of new investment in existing neighborhoods and development of new walkable neighborhoods, with single-family homes on smaller lots, townhomes, open streets and sidewalks.

- Potential Park
  Opportunities areas to expand existing parks and create new ones.

- High Density
  A mix of small-to-large single-family homes, townhomes, apartments, ranches and condominiums.

- Employment Area
  New offices, retail and industrial job growth.

- Farmland
  Current land utilized for agricultural use.

- Prime Farmland
  Federally designated acreage

Resources

Conservation Area
Designated by University of Nebraska

Pop Analysis, Iowa Department of Natural Resource, USDA and FIVAS

County Boundary

Urbanized Area
Omaha Rapid Bus Transit

Coming Soon! Fall 2019
Brainstorming Transportation Solutions - 2018
8. Increase Home Ownership
African-American Home Ownership in Omaha

African-American Home Ownership Rate: Omaha MSA
Source: ACS, Census 5 Year Avgs.
9. Create Thriving Mixed-Income Neighborhoods

The North Omaha Village Zone...
North Omaha Village Revitalization Plan

THE PLAN

• Mixed Income Housing
  – Single Family
  – Multi-Family
  – Mixed-Used

• Civic & Recreation
  – Music Venues & Attractions
  – Arts, Culture, and History
  – Major Events, Celebrations, etc.

• Commercial
  – Business and Employment Centers
  – Neighborhood Services
  – Grocery & Retail
Nodes of Focus
North Omaha Development Plan and North Omaha Village Revitalization Plan

A. Create a new front door to North Omaha at Cumming Street.
B. Embrace the North Freeway corridor as new entrance to North Omaha.
C. Develop 16th Street as new green edge and open space amenity.
D. Create a new heart for North Omaha at 24/Lake Street
E. Celebrate the Malcolm X Memorial Birthplace and International Center as a nationally-significant destination.
F. Celebrate Adams Park as major neighborhood amenity.
G. Create a new cultural spine along Lake Street and 24th Street.
H. Enhancing existing bridge connections between East and West Village.
I. Connect north to 30/Ames-Metro South commercial district, Fort Omaha, and Prospect Hill Cemetery.
J. Build new affordable and market rate infill housing with a diversity of housing types.
Progress is Possible!
North Omaha Development Plan and North Omaha Village Revitalization Plan

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OEDC – Michael Maroney
Vision 2011

OEDC Development

Reality
Rebuild the Village: 40+ Businesses
24th and Lake Business District
HIGHLANDER
SEVENTY FIVE NORTH REVITALIZATION CORP.
MIXED-INCOME HOUSING
Three new buildings focused on preparing students for the workforce of today and tomorrow.
30 Metro Place
10. Improve access to health care, healthy foods and insurance

- Healthy Relationships, Marriages & Parenting (and Reduce Teen Pregnancy)
- Access to Insurance and Health Care (Physical, Dental and Mental)
- Address mental and behavioral health (inc. trauma)
- Access to Healthy Foods
- Reducing Disparities (Obesity – priority)
Deepen Your Engagement… Leading Change through Empowerment

1. Engage Community Early in the Process & On-going
5. Be Ready for Bold & Difficult Conversations. Tension.
6. Takes Longer, but Definitely Worth IT. Collaborate & Align.
7. Invest in Capacity, Leadership Development & Culture
Transforming Communities
“We Are In This Together…”
Bottom-Up & Top-Down: Community Engagement Works!
CONNECT THE DOTS:
Residents and Leaders

- Residents
- Community-based Organizations
- Leaders
- Elected Officials
- Neighborhood Leaders
- Pastors and Faith Leaders
- Educators
- Law Enforcement
- Entrepreneurs
- Business Executives
- Health Professionals
- Philanthropists
CONNECT THE DOTS: Network Leadership & Advisors

- Faith Leaders – Pastors
- NAACP - President
- 100 Black Men - President
- Non-profit Agencies and Developers
- Educators – Board Members
- Community Health - CEO
- Elected Officials
- Neighborhood Associations – Chair and Exe. Dir.
- Governmental Agencies
- Business Leaders/Executives
Advocacy:
30+ Policies & Pieces of Legislation & Funding...

- Small and Emerging Business Ordinance
- Focus Schools: Extended Day, Extended Year
- Family and Community Engagement
- Early Childhood Investment/Expansion
- Lead Testing
- Summer Employment
- Job Training – HWS
- Juvenile Justice Reform
- State Office of Violence Prevention
- Funding Based on Poverty Census Tracts
- Funding for Cultural Developments
Engaged Leadership

City Council President

County Board Chair

School Board President
National Partnerships and Leading Strategists
Redefine the Game Institute with Dr. Randal Pinkett

- 12 Month Program
- 4 In-Person ½ Day Workshops
- Monthly Webinars
- Coaches & Mentors
- Certification
- Advancement & Wages
Redefine the Game
Legacy Wealth Building Initiative with Dr. Pamela Jolly

- 12 Month Program
- Based on “NarrowRoad” Book
- 4 In-Person Full Day Workshops
- Monthly Webinars
- Coaches & Mentors
- Individual and Collective Wealth-Building Plan
Contact

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- wbarney@empoweromaha.com
- Facebook
  - Empowerment Network
  - Revive! Omaha Magazine