



CITY OF APPLETON

MEMORANDUM

Date: January 8, 2025
To: Community Development Committee
From: Olivia Galyon, Community Development Specialist
Subject: Neighbors in Action Workshop Update

The City of Appleton received \$14,891,841 in funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), passed in March 2021, for projects related to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Appleton's Common Council set aside \$1,000,000 for Social Infrastructure, Belonging, and Neighborhood Resiliency. Based on community feedback, City staff identified a neighborhood engagement project that would provide residents with an opportunity to learn best practices for running a neighborhood organization, how to best engage other neighbors, and practice Asset Based Community Development (ABCD).

This project was approved by Common Council on April 3, 2024, then called the Neighborhood Leadership Academy, and initially funded at \$100,000. Staff in Community Development put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a consultant organization that could develop the curriculum and deliver the programming in a series of workshops for Appleton residents. The City received a total of three responses to the RFP, and after a proposal review and interview process, staff identified NeighborWorks Green Bay (NWGB) as the top consultant for this project.

The contract with NWGB was approved at \$80,000, and the remaining \$20,000 from the initial allocation was able to be reallocated to a new project. The final project name is the Neighbors in Action Workshop. There will be two sets of workshop sessions, the first in Winter/Spring 2025 and second in Winter/Spring 2026.

City staff have been working with Julie Filapek of NWGB, who is administering the project, as well as a few sub-consultants to develop curriculum, materials, and plan for the workshop kick-off. In preparation for the first workshop session, City staff and NWGB staff are working to promote the Neighbors in Action Workshop opportunity to as many community members as possible. The first set of workshop sessions will start on February 6, 2025, and sessions will take place the first Thursday of the month through May. Some topics to be covered include:

- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)
- Building a Neighborhood Identity
- Project and Event Planning and Implementation
- Organizational Structure, Group Dynamics, Leadership Styles, and Communication
- Partnership Development and Relationships with City Staff

Please help City staff promote the Neighbors in Action Workshop opportunity to your constituents. The following language can be added to any communications with residents:

The City of Appleton is excited to offer a new training opportunity for neighborhood organizations. The Neighbors in Action Workshop series will equip residents with leadership and engagement skills, provide educational opportunities related to event planning, grant management, and neighborhood development, and help neighbors across Appleton connect and build community together.

The workshop sessions will be held the first Thursday of the month in Winter/Spring 2025, starting February 6th. This project is being facilitated by Julie Filapek of NeighborWorks Green Bay. Julie is an Appleton resident with extensive experience in neighborhood development and neighborhood organizing across northeastern Wisconsin.

The workshop sessions will cover a wide variety of topics related to neighborhood organizations and provide many opportunities for connection and collaboration with neighbors. Areas of interest for the workshop sessions include:

- Identify and leverage the strengths you have to build on in your neighborhood
- Set a vision and goals and take action to achieve them
- Build a team that works together well and gets other neighbors excited to participate
- Establish and communicate your neighborhood's unique identity
- Use traditional and creative methods for communicating with neighbors
- Build partnerships and raise funds to help you realize your goals
- Work with City of Appleton elected officials and department staff

You can learn more about the Neighbors in Action Workshop on the [City's website](#). You can [register for the Neighbors in Action Workshop here](#). Please also share this information with anyone you think may be interested in participating in the workshop opportunity.