



Building Community Leaders with Training + Fun, Targeted Programs

BEST Neighborhoods Division
City of Plano, TX



The Neighborhood Leadership Academy is a year-long educational initiative hosted by the City of Plano, Texas that provides free support and training to neighborhood groups wanting to grow and create positive impact in their communities. Each year, four or five groups – including homeowner’s associations, neighborhood associations, and crime watch groups – apply to participate in the Academy to set goals, outline visions, create mission statements, and plan specific neighborhood building activities. The Academy helps groups identify assets and gaps, create marketing plans, build organizing strategies, and roll out engagement activities. Through

the Academy, participating groups make plans to take action and develop new ways to create connections.

Plano’s BEST Neighborhoods Division

The Neighborhood Leadership Academy is part of Plano’s [BEST Neighborhoods Division](#), which identifies neighborhoods that want to be BEST: Beautiful, Engaged, Safe and Thriving. For additional activities provided through Plano’s BEST Neighborhoods Division [READ ON](#).



Upcoming Free Webinar Topics



How the Main Street America™ Approach Can Help You Reposition Middle Neighborhood Business Districts for Success

Thursday, June 10 | 11:30am-1:00pm Eastern [REGISTER HERE](#)

If you have been in the community development field for long, you've probably heard of Main Street America. Main Street is an independent nonprofit subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It was founded forty years ago to preserve the historic buildings in neighborhood or downtown business districts, and evolved into a multifaceted network of more than 2000 local members in 46 states and Puerto Rico.

Main Street teaches and provides technical assistance around a four-point approach that local leaders customize and implement to preserve existing businesses and attract new ones, attend to the physical design of the district, promote and manage an overall district image, and maintain a healthy organizational structure to keep it all going.

If you are curious about how Main Street works and how you can connect to the network, please join us for this webinar featuring speakers from the national, state and local level of the Main Street America network.

JUNE TBA: Roles for Real Estate Sales Professionals in Middle Neighborhoods

Welcome New Steering Committee Members!

The National Middle Neighborhoods Steering Committee is very happy to announce three new members, all highly accomplished practitioners with national reputations for creative and effective work in middle neighborhoods. We are very grateful for their service and excited to work more closely with each of them.

[Kamla Lewis](#) is Director, Neighborhood Revitalization for the City of Shaker Heights, Ohio. You may remember her from our case study on her work in the Moreland neighborhood, as well as her participation in a webinar on strategies for Black middle neighborhoods with

Alan Mallach and Johnette Richardson.

[Deborah Moore](#) is Director of Neighborhood Strategy and Planning for Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Chicago. She develops NHS' strategy for working with urban neighborhoods in Chicago as well as south suburban municipalities.

[Johnette Richardson](#) is Deputy Director of Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of Baltimore, and former Executive Director of Belair-Edison Neighborhoods Inc.. She has contributed her creative ideas and leadership to the middle neighborhoods movement from both organizations. She has also been named Vice President of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners.

New Research on Middle Neighborhoods

Dr. Roland V. Anglin, Dean and Professor at the Levin College, and a team of researchers in Levin's Center for Economic Development (CED), including [Molly Schnoke](#), Project Manager, and [Dr. Iryna V. Lendel](#), Director of the CED, have been awarded a two-year, \$250,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) as a part of RWJF's "Policies for Action: Research on Housing Policies That Promote Equity" program. Levin partner [Cleveland Neighborhood Progress](#) is also part of the research team. The project is titled "Investing in the Middle: A New Approach to Deliver on the Promise of Equitable Neighborhood Development," and the team will work to address equity and health in middle neighborhoods.

Middle neighborhoods are opportunity-rich with place-based resources, but risk falling into a distressed state because of lack of investment. Dr. Anglin and his team will perform actionable research in the areas of strategic investments and policy innovations that have the potential to increase housing affordability and neighborhood stability. Their research and learning will inform the work of policymakers, funders, and community development practitioners across America's industrial heartland. CoP member Jason Powers, Director of Middle Neighborhoods for the City of Cleveland, is a partner in the project.

Seeking Practitioner Panelists for Upcoming Webinars

Do you work with any of these upcoming webinar topics in your middle neighborhood? Interested in sharing your insights and lessons learned? We would love to have you as a webinar panelist. Just contact [Ann DiPetta](#) to discuss. Here are some of our upcoming topics:

- Engaging and Supporting Effective [Neighborhood Associations](#) in Middle Neighborhoods
- Cultivating a [Home Improvement Culture](#) in Middle Neighborhoods
- Assessing [Gentrification Risk](#) in Middle Neighborhoods
- [Branding Strategies for Middle Neighborhoods](#)



And we welcome your suggestions for other webinar topics!

Recent Webinar Recordings

[Resolving Heirs' Property Issues to Protect Middle Neighborhood Stability and Intergenerational Wealth](#), Thursday, April 29, 2021 with [Shakisha A. Morgan](#), The Griffin Firm, PLLC, [Jennifer Connell](#), Legal Aid of Northwest Texas and [John Kern](#), Maryland Volunteer Lawyers Service

[Saving Commercial Districts – Strategies for Supporting Small-Scale Manufacturing to Create Jobs and Revitalize Small Business Centers](#), February 23, 2021 with Ilana Preuss of Recast City.

[What's Worth Keeping from Fifty Years of Attempts to Revitalize Neighborhoods: An Interview](#)

[with Paul Brophy](#), January 28, 2021 with Paul Brophy and Marcia Nedland, Middle Neighborhoods Community of Practice Organizer.

[Updating Middle Neighborhood Housing Stock to Appeal to Today's Homebuyers, Part 2: Financing Strategies](#), December 15, 2020, with panelists Amber Lynch, Executive Director, Invest DSM, Jenny Hope, Director of Neighborhood Programs, Healthy Neighborhoods and Charelle Parker, Councilwoman & Majority Leader, Philadelphia City Council.

[Updating Middle Neighborhood Housing Stock to Appeal to Today's Homebuyers: Part 1](#) November 18, 2020, with panelists Kerry Quaglia, CEO, Home HeadQuarters and Jay Perlmutter, Director Single Family Development, Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership.

[Mapping Middle Neighborhoods: A National Tool and Local Perspectives](#) October 29, 2020, with panelists Amber Lynch, Executive Director, Invest DSM, Jason Powers, Middle Neighborhoods Project Director, City of Cleveland, and David Sanchez, Director of Research and Development, National Community Stabilization Trust.

[Middle Neighborhoods 101](#), June 2020, presented by Marcia Nedland for the Middle Neighborhoods Community of Practice.

Webinars are co-sponsored by the [Middle Neighborhoods Community of Practice](#), the [National Community Stabilization Trust](#), and [NeighborWorks America](#).

In the News + Resources

Please [send us](#) links to articles about your work in middle neighborhoods or topics relevant to middle neighborhoods.

[I Was Outbid On My Dream Home In This Crazy Real Estate Market And I'm Heartbroken](#), Donna Murch, nj.com, May 9, 2021.

[Why Black Neighborhoods Continue to Struggle](#), Alan Greenblatt, Governing, April 29, 2021.

[The 'New Redlining' Is Deciding Who Lives in Your Neighborhood](#), Richard D. Kahlenberg, New York Times, April 19, 2021.

[That Suburban Home Buyer Could Be a Foreign Government](#), Konrad Putzier, The Wall Street Journal, April 13, 2021.

[Housing Wealth Equity Projections: How Future Headship and Homeownership Rates Could Affect Racial Gaps](#), Webinar Recording, Urban Institute, April 26, 2021.

[Pandemic, Social Unrest, and Crime in U.S. Cities: 2020 Year-End Update](#), Richard Rosenfeld, Thomas Abt and Ernesto Lopez, Council on Criminal Justice' National Commission on Covid-19 and Criminal Justice, and Arnold Ventures, January 2021.



CoP Reports + Action Items

QUOTED: CoP Members Getting the Message Out

CoP members are popular speakers at events and often get the message out about middle neighborhoods through their networks. A few we heard about:

- **Jason Powers**, Director of Middle Neighborhoods for the City of Cleveland, delivered a workshop for Cleveland Neighborhood Progress on Cleveland middle neighborhoods, April 22. Watch the recording of "[Middle Neighborhoods: Stabilizing Communities](#)".
- **Nedra Sims Fears**, Executive Director, Greater Chatham Initiative, was a panelist for the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago's event "Creating Multi-Generational Wealth in the African American Community". Fears was also quoted in the Washington Post article, "[A Push to Save Landmarks of the 'Great Migration' — and Better Understand Today's Racial](#)

Inequities"

- **Kamla Lewis**, Director of Neighborhood Revitalization for the City of Shaker Heights, Ohio, will give the Keynote Address at the Michigan Historic Preservation Network's [41rst Annual Statewide Preservation Conference](#) on May 13. Her address is titled "Looking Back So We Can Look Forward: Connecting Communities With Their History".

[Tell us](#) about your participation in panels, conferences and news articles!

CoP Listserv: Don't forget to use our listserv, MiddleNeighborhoodsCoP@googlegroups.com to share announcements, news articles, questions and the like. If you are in the CoP, you are already a member of the listserv. If you are not a CoP member, but would like to join the listserv, email [us](#).

Actions You Can Take to Grow and Support the CoP

1. Join and participate in the Listserv, MiddleNeighborhoodsCoP@googlegroups.com. This is the most direct way for CoP members to interact with each other. Share your questions and successes.
2. Submit an article, news item, or resource idea for the newsletter to [Marcia](#).
3. Host a Middle Neighborhoods 101 webinar for people in your organization or community to help them learn about middle neighborhoods and launch a discussion on local opportunities. [We](#) will help you plan this and deliver the webinar with you.
4. Submit an idea for a webinar or case study topic to [Ann](#).
5. Convene (virtually until in-person meetings are advisable) with other CoP members in your region to discuss a particular issue, or to start creating a regional action agenda. [Marcia](#) can help you contact your peers and plan your convening.
6. We can also help you convene a group of CoP members by interest rather than geography. Past convenings have included city government representatives.
7. Represent middle neighborhoods in local policy discussions. [We'll](#) share some talking points.
8. Propose and conduct a session on middle neighborhoods for conferences and other convenings or groups you participate in. [We'll](#) help with the proposal, recruiting panelists, planning, etc.