



## Scaling Up Community Engagement Through Community Events

While community events help individuals from various places form relationships and build unity, they also support neighborhoods as a whole and help organizations and local governments achieve deeper development goals. Good strategies empower, support, and



educate both residents and stakeholders and while the main objective may be to bring people closer together, another related and longer-term goal is to help neighborhoods move forward with quality-of-life goals. The economic advantages of hosting an event can also be significant, when building connections between individuals and businesses is intentional. Event results can be used in goal setting, neighborhood planning and many aspects of reporting by practitioners, business owners, neighborhood residents and local government.

This case study highlights two approaches to events that support community development: one targeting December holidays and connecting with the business community (Detroit, MI); and the other focusing on celebrations held throughout the year as a way to build cooperation and promote neighborhood pride (Baton Rouge, LA).



"Although the Black-White middle-class gap remains high in many states, the share of Black families who are middle class is approaching parity with the White share in five states: California, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland and Texas, according to a Stateline analysis of American Community Survey [microdata](#) provided by the University of Minnesota." --Pew



## Out and About

The National Middle Neighborhoods Initiative will present a mobile workshop at the upcoming APA national conference in Philadelphia in early April. The host neighborhood will be Mt. Airy, and the **Mt. Airy CDC** will work with us to organize the workshop. The workshop is titled *Stuck in the Middle (Neighborhood) With You: Philly*, focusing on the unique characteristics of Black middle neighborhoods. Big thanks to Mt. Airy

CDC Executive Director **Phil Dawson** for taking this on!

The APA counts 40,000 planning professionals among its members, from every state and 90 countries.

Two of our National Middle Neighborhoods Steering Committee members are certified AICP planners and members of the APA, **Lori Schwarz** from the City of Plano and **Amber Lynch** from Invest DSM in Des Moines. They helped get proposals in to the APA for this mobile workshop, as well as a panel session. An announcement on approved proposals for panel sessions is expected next month. Thanks also to Steering Committee member **Rachel Meadows** for her help with local contacts.

## In the News + Resources

### Articles and Resources

1. [Investor Home Purchases](#)

and the Rising Threat to Owners and Renters, Emily Dowdall, et al, Reinvestment Fund, September 2022.

2. Locked Out: The Myth of the Black Middle Class, Fenaba Rena Addo, PhD, et al, Non Profit Quarterly, November 16, 2022.

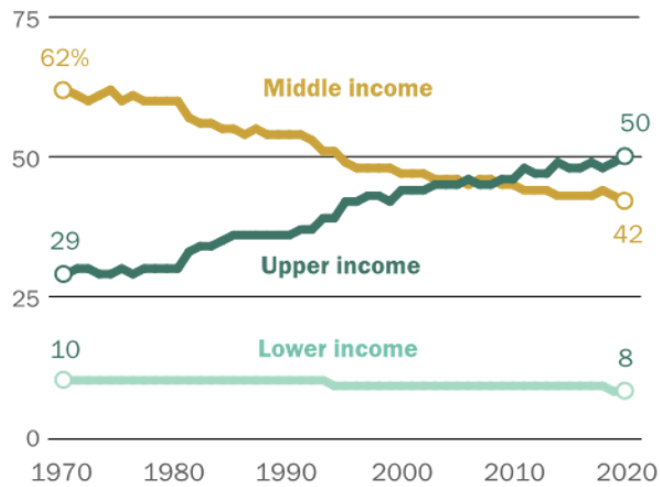
3. Migrating Professionals Grow Black Middle Class in the South and West, Tim Henderson, January 5, 2023, Pew.

4. Op-Ed: The undeniable loss of 'my Macy's', Erin Aubry Kaplan, Los Angeles Times, January 21, 2023.

5. Advancing the Promise of Shared Equity Housing Models, NeighborWorks America, January 2023.

## Share of aggregate income held by U.S. middle class has plunged since 1970

*% of U.S. aggregate household income held by lower-, middle- and upper-income households*



Note: Households are assigned to income tiers based on their size-adjusted income in the calendar year prior to the survey year. Their unadjusted incomes are then totaled to compute the share of U.S. aggregate household income held by each income tier. Shares may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement (IPUMS).

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

## Community Engagement Chats



Building Support for Neighborhood Initiatives, an Engagement Chat Update

As the conversation took its usual twists and turns, it was clear that building support for neighborhood initiatives is closely linked to neighborhood dynamics such as crime and safety, repurposing spaces, gathering public support, and funding. Here are a few takeaways and GREAT IDEAS from our January Engagement Chat:

**Connecting with Neighbors:** Participants agreed that when a neighborhood initiative begins, we have to start with residents. Best practices include canvassing the neighborhood, joining local community meetings, and conducting resident surveys to get input and buy-in. Generally speaking, if residents care about the goal, they will support the initiative.

**Connecting with Funders:** One difficult reality can be that funders do not want to support an initiative unless there is a solid neighborhood group and structure already in place. If a neighborhood group does not exist, you might have to start by offering small, low- or no-cost events to build cohesion and momentum; then focus on connecting with public and private funding sources.

**Connecting with Nonprofits:** Speaking of building cohesion, reach out to local nonprofits to see what sort of work they are currently doing in the neighborhood. Interests often overlap and opportunities to collaborate may already exist. Take that first step to make contact and identify ways to work together.

**GREAT IDEAS:** Here are a few interesting ideas that caused some eureka moments – check the links!

- **Gifted Doorbell Cameras as a Crime and Safety Strategy:**In Milwaukee, the 5 Points Neighborhood Association participated in the [Alert Neighbor Program](#) which provided surveillance cameras, lighting, and signage to help residents combat crime and increase safety. Here's a [news story](#) too.
- **Using Apps to Report Neighborhood Concerns:**Making it easy for community members to share information on zoning or code issues can prompt greater participation and subsequently increased probability that an issue will be corrected. Check out the options for reporting an issue through the [Action Center in Oklahoma City](#) (they have an app!).
- **Building Pollinator Gardens:** If you are looking for small pocket park ideas, [how about a pollinator garden?](#) Not the least on the list of benefits is that pollinator gardens can be almost any size and are easier to maintain than most types of gardens. Plus, they bring butterflies!
- **Providing a Path to Beautification, and Work:**Oklahoma City's program, [A Better Way](#), offers paid, daily work for those in need. The program achieves multiple goals: beautification and community cleanup, quick income, and connections to other programs and services for longer-term results. Click on the link to learn more.

Our next engagement chat will be Wednesday, April 19 and we invite you to bring discussion topics - please join us!

**When: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 -- Noon Eastern time**

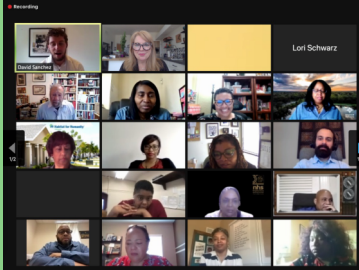
**Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81721520613>**

**UPDATE: Middle Neighborhoods Engagement Chats has moved to a quarterly schedule.**

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# Recent Webinar





# Recordings

**Is it Time for Permanently Affordable Housing Strategies in Middle Neighborhoods?**

[Watch Now](#)

[Download the Resource List](#)

**New Data and New Ways of Thinking About Maintaining the Housing Stock in Middle Neighborhoods**

[Watch Now](#)

**Holiday Celebrations: Effective (and fund!) ideas for Community Engagement**

[Watch Now](#)

**Strategies to Address Institutional Investors in Middle Neighborhoods**

[Watch Now](#)

**Equitable Place-centered Strategies for Safer Communities**

[Watch Now](#)

**Centering Black Prosperity in the Revitalization of Black Middle Neighborhoods**

[Watch Now](#)

**Mountain Town Migration: Understanding the Impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Middle Neighborhoods in the Mountain West**

[Watch Now](#)

**Appraisal Bias: Actionable Recommendations from the Philadelphia Appraisal Bias Task Force**

[Watch Now](#)

**Mortgage Refinance as a Tool for Stabilizing Middle Neighborhoods**

[Watch Now](#)

**Boosting Neighborhood Strategy: Collecting and Mapping Primary Parcel-Level Data**

[Watch Now](#)

Find all recordings of the Middle Neighborhoods' webinar series [HERE](#)

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

**Webinar Resources: Is it Time for Permanently Affordable Housing Strategies in Middle Neighborhoods?**

## NeighborWorks' Shared Equity Housing Resources

### SEH Explainer Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3-iAqGfRcM>

### Guide to SEH Models

<https://www.neighborworks.org/research/shared-equity-cooperatively-owned-housing-guide-to-navigating-models>

### Report on NW SEH Initiative to Date

<https://www.neighborworks.org/research/advancing-the-promise-of-shared-equity-housing-models>

### From Silos to Collaborations: Building a Health Partner Investment Strategy

Toolkit to help leaders build sustainable partnerships with health partners

<https://www.neighborworks.org/research/from-silos-to-collaborations-building-a-health-partner-investment-strategy>

### NeighborWorks Webinars on SEH Topics

- [AH004 Shared Equity Housing: Introduction to Stewardship - Interactive Webinar Training](#)
- [AH010 Shared Equity: More Than One Way to Own a Home](#)
- [AH238 Shared Equity Multi-Family Homeownership Models](#)
- [AH256 Shared Equity Housing: Creative Models to Preserve Affordable Homeownership](#)

## Grounded Solutions Shared Equity Housing Resources

### Model Deed Restriction and Model Ground Lease (and other resources)

<https://groundedsolutions.org/tools-for-success/resource-library>

### Fannie Mae Duty to Serve Certification

<https://groundedsolutions.org/dts-opportunity>

### General resources about SEH mortgage lending access

<https://groundedsolutions.org/tools-for-success/resource-library/mortgage-financing-options>

### Events and training on shared equity homeownership

<https://groundedsolutions.org/events>

## Program Examples

### Ithaca, NY: INHS CHT Program and side-by-side CHT vs. Rent comparison

<https://www.ithacanhs.org/communityhousingtrust>

### Pueblo, CO: NeighborWorks Southern Colorado SEH Program

<https://nwsoco.org/what-we-do/build/shared-equity.html>

### Fort Wayne, IN: History of Lafayette Place

<https://lafayetteplace.org>

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## CoP Action Items

**Custom Webinars:** We often get requests for custom webinars on middle neighborhoods, which we gladly deliver! Please let us know if you'd like one for your staff, board, network, or community.

**CoP Listserv:** Don't forget to use our listserv, [MiddleNeighborhoodsCoP@googlegroups.com](mailto: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](mailto:us).

### Actions You Can Take to Grow and Support the CoP

1. Join and participate in the listserv, [MiddleNeighborhoodsCoP@googlegroups.com](mailto: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 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.

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