

A neighbor is a person who can get to your house in less than a minute and takes two hours to go back home



## Registered Neighborhoods:

### Neighborhoods that have registered with Owasso's Strong Neighborhood Initiative:

- Bailey Ranch Homeowners Association
- Barrington Point HOA
- Cambridge Park HOA
- Cedar Crest Apartments
- Central Park HOA
- Coffee Creek Property Owners
- El Rio Vista Neighborhood Network
- Elm Creek Estates - Homeowners Affiliation
- Falls at Garrett Creek HOA
- Greens-Phase III Apartments
- Hale Acres Neighborhood Association
- Meadowcrest Homeowners Association
- Metro Heights I Association
- Nottingham Estates Association
- Preston Lakes HOA
- Remington Place HOA
- Silver Creek Homeowners Association
- Three Lakes cul-de-sac Neighborhood Network
- Three Lakes Property Owners Association
- Three Lakes II Renovation
- Wilawood - East 3rd Street Neighborhood Association



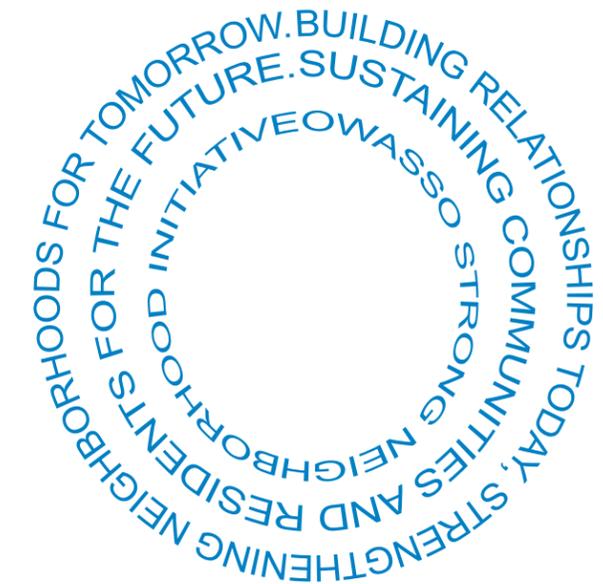
<http://www.cityofowasso.com/OSNI/index.html>

## Owasso Strong Neighborhood Initiative

# 2011 Annual Report

## MISSION STATEMENT

Partner with neighborhood stakeholders and provide a means for residents to identify opportunities to maintain and grow the quality of life in our community, so that Owasso is as attractive tomorrow as it is today.



## BACKGROUND

August 26, 2008, citizens voted to approve an increase of the Hotel Tax from 3% to 5% to fund the Strong Neighborhood Initiative as a creative, proactive way to combine resources from the City, businesses, and residents and to align mutually beneficial goals which would directly support and enhance the City's economy and economic development efforts.

The Initiative's purpose was officially established through the adoption of Resolution No. 2008-05 on July 15, 2008, which established the Strong Neighborhood Initiative as "a program designed to build partnerships with neighborhoods."

5-year sunset clause in the Resolution with Annual Reports to City Council



## What we said we would do

### Commitment to protect the investments residents and businesses have made in Owasso

#### Key components

To ensure the success of this initiative, several key components were put in place

1. A staff member focused on the strategic goals of the initiative. The Neighborhood Coordinator is responsible for leveraging resources and increasing citizen participation
2. A commitment from City leaders to protect the investments residents and businesses make in our community
3. Commitment from residents to provide necessary resources for the success of their neighborhoods by investing time, money and sweat equity
4. Matching assistance from the City for projects that improve public right of ways, such as neighborhood entrances, streets, sidewalks, and signage
5. Formation of Neighborhood Associations in areas where no Homeowner's Association exists

#### Neighborhoods:

- The key component for the success of the Strong Neighborhood Initiative is building relationships between residents and city government to create a partnership
- Building relationships with residents in neighborhoods and across neighborhood lines has been the main focus over these first couple of years.

Owasso resident and neighborhood leader for Elm Creek Estates, Tim Sinkhorn, notes, "The Strong Neighborhood Initiative is building a network of proactive citizens that are invested in the community and are all about making positive change to better our community for the future. It helps maintain a culture of respect of neighbors in Owasso and created an opportunity for leadership to emerge in neighborhoods."

## How the Strong Neighborhood Initiative Helps

- Build partnerships with neighborhood groups & encourage citizen input to develop open lines of communication
- Participate with neighborhood groups to establish Neighborhood Associations
- Work with neighborhood groups to develop plans for their neighborhood and community; then work on implementation of strategies to accomplish agreed upon plans
- Assist individuals and neighborhood groups to resolve issues by providing information and recommendations
- Serve as the point of contact between citizens and city departments
- Coordinate events such as block parties, volunteering for community service, etc.

## Goals

**Goal #1:** Promote benefits to strengthening Owasso's neighborhoods through the Owasso Strong Neighborhood Initiative throughout the community for purpose of establishing and signing-up Homeowners Associations or Neighborhood Associations

**Goal #2:** Create a Volunteer Network to assist with neighborhood projects as well as community projects and to provide resources to help individual residents with maintaining their homes. Coordinate partnerships between this Volunteer Network and neighborhood groups to improve the physical condition/appearance of their neighborhood.

**Goal #3:** Provide assistance and resources, through a Grant Program and the collaboration with non-profit organizations and private sector, for neighborhood initiatives that result in maintaining or increasing home values.



The foundational component of a healthy and growing economy is "strong neighborhoods."

This initiative has provided residents an opportunity to partner with the City to protect their community's economic viability and long-term prosperity

Strong Neighborhoods are the key to the continued momentum of investment by the business community and steady increase in property values for a community's residents.

The best way to ensure investment in our community is as robust 20 years from now as it is today is to keep our neighborhoods strong and attractive.

## How the Strong Neighborhood Initiative Helps



### What we did

### Defining Success

21 Homeowners Associations and Neighborhood Associations, Networks, Affiliations, or Apartment complexes have registered with SNI representing 3466 residences.

- 6-Neighborhood Associations
- 13-Homeowner Associations
- 2-Apartment complexes

**Metro Heights I:** Establishment of New Homeowners Association

*Don Stern, HOA President, said "the SNI really made this thing work for us"*

Residents formed Neighborhood Associations in

Wilawood	El Rio Vista	Three Lakes
Three Lakes II	Hale Acres	Elm Creek Estates
Cedar Crest Apts	Greens-Phase III Apts	

**Wilawood** – formed the first Neighborhood Association in the Original Town area & was the first neighborhood with Sign Toppers

**Hale Acres** – neighborhood-wide cleanup day – 8 dumpsters of debris removed

**Elm Creek Estates** – initial meeting nearly 60 residents in attendance; subsequent meetings including Alert Neighborhood, created a website to share information and Sign Toppers have been installed

*Tim Raines, neighborhood leader, "With the Strong Neighborhood Initiative, our neighborhood would never have formed as an organized group"; the Neighborhood Coordinator has given residents a single point of contact at City Hall for issues, questions and information that is been helpful for our neighborhood."*

**Cedar Crest Apts & Greens-Phase III Apts** – Established Alert Neighborhoods

**Three Lakes II** – neighborhood entrance beatification project

**Three Lakes POA** – has demonstrated renewed interest in neighborhood through clean-up and beautification projects, participation in the Sign Topper and Alert Neighborhood Programs

*Patricia Hardy, neighborhood leader, said. "Strong Neighborhood Initiative has awakened the neighborly spirit that some of the bigger cities just don't have. It's been a real boost to that small-town feeling that is so important to Owasso."*

**Coffee Creek & Preston Lakes** – SNI assisted developer in turning over HOA to residents

**El Rio Vista Neighborhood Network:** increased activity as demonstrated by participation at Alert Neighborhood meeting and successful 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade in the neighborhood.

*Sarah Risley, parade coordinator, "The parade was a bigger success than I could have ever imagined; expressed enthusiasm for more activities in the neighborhood."*



# 3500

Households represented by their HOAs or neighborhood associations that have registered with the Strong Neighborhood Initiative.

# 21

Homeowners or Neighborhood Associations, Networks and apartment complexes have registered with the Strong Neighborhood Initiative

**3178**

Dollars in Grant funding awarded to eight neighborhoods throughout the city of Owasso through the Neighborhood Grant Program, combined with neighborhood matching funding and resources for a total impact in neighborhoods of over \$10,000.



### What we did

### Neighborhood Grant Program

- Neighborhood Matching Grant Program, administered by the Owasso Community Foundation, Inc., designed to provide matching funds to recognized neighborhood organizations in the City of Owasso
- Grants have funded a range of beautification projects by providing a match to other funds including cash resources from the neighborhood group generated through fund-raising and pledges, volunteer labor, donations in the form of materials and/or services.

**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



Chris Coager, neighborhood leader for El Rio Vista Neighborhood Network, stated the "Grant Program allowed our neighborhood to be two years ahead of our beautification project plans for the neighborhood."

## How the Strong Neighborhood Initiative Helps

### Neighborhood Block Party

- Originated 14 years ago to encourage neighbors to get to know each other
- No better way to get together and meet your neighbors than to have a block party. Neighborhoods are better and safer places to live when there is a sense of caring in the area.
- 25-30 neighborhoods participated last two years; – goal is to set a record with 35-40 neighborhood block parties for 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Block Party



David Doyle – Coffee Creek "The camaraderie of the whole day was neat to see and it was great how the City gets involved." – had between 150-200 residents attend

Lori Lane – Wilawood – had block party for past nine years – "We feel a little bit safer now that we know each other so well and we enjoy our neighborhood so much more."



**875**

Phone calls, emails and in-person contacts made with Owasso residents in the areas of code enforcement, police relations and general information.

212

Volunteers have participated in two Owasso CARES events around our community and in neighborhoods.



### What we did

## Community Volunteer Opportunities

### Owasso CARES Community And Residents Encourage Service

- Program developed through the Strong Neighborhood Initiative and is led by a committee of resident volunteers with the idea of bringing residents, volunteers and city staff together in a private-public partnership to make a positive impact in our neighborhoods and community.
- **Mission:** Owasso's committed volunteers serve to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods and community.
- Fall-2010 event - 96 volunteers participated in projects around the community and neighborhoods – cleaned 3 city parks, painted pedestrian bridges at parks, planted flowers around 2 T&C statues & painted 38 fire hydrants
- Spring-2011 event – 116 volunteers – projects in the Original Town neighborhood cleaned up neighborhood streets, assisted residents in removing debris (3 dumpsters), painted 40 fire hydrants, beautification project along Main Street business district, cleaned out flower beds at City Hall, and painted railing in parking lot at Community Center
- Next event scheduled for Oct 1<sup>st</sup>

“It’s incumbent on us as citizens to get involved in our community,” Chris Coager, member of the Owasso CARES Committee, said. “We have such high expectations of the City, but the resources aren’t there to maintain the quality of life we all want to enjoy. We have to get out there and do our part.”

## How the Strong Neighborhood Initiative Helps

### City Volunteer Program

- Offers residents and volunteers the opportunity to gain a sense of pride by helping with the mission of the City to provide services that sustain a high quality of life for residents and visitors to Owasso.
- Matches qualified individuals and groups to meet needs that may otherwise be unfulfilled due to limits in revenue.
- Urban Soul Youth Group – 144 volunteers participate over 4-week period to assist with projects such as cleaning out flower beds at City Hall, Old Central, park clean up and various projects at the Community Center including the painting of lines in the parking lot – 7 ploy carts and 30 yardwaste bags of debris
- Individual, who has graphic design skills, worked on logos for Owasso CARES and t-shirt logo for 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Block Party
- Individual from Owasso Garden Club, maintains the plants on Main ST
- 125 fire hydrants have been painted through the two volunteer programs
- 6 individuals volunteered on a Saturday morning to pick up debris from City’s public fireworks show



144

Volunteers from the Urban Soul Youth group from Owasso First Assembly have assisted with projects over the summer of 2011.

# 5

Neighborhoods that have signed up for the Alert Neighborhood Program:

1. Elm Creek Estates
2. Three Lakes
3. El Rio Vista
4. Cedar Crest Apts
5. Greens-Phase III Apts

# 4

Neighborhoods that have purchased Sign Toppers for their neighborhood:

1. Wilawood
2. Three Lakes
3. Elm Creek Estates
4. El Rio Vista



## What we did

### Interdepartmental Partnerships

#### Alert Neighborhood Program

- Partnered with Owasso Police Department
- Created Custom design program and brochure for City of Owasso
- Develop neighborhood based crime prevention organizations

#### Sign Topper Program

- Partnered with Public Works Department
- Help neighborhoods be recognized for their unique character
- Increase the visibility of a neighborhood to non-residents
- Encourage a sense of belonging and neighborhood pride
- Complement other neighborhood identity efforts

## How the Strong Neighborhood Initiative Helps

### What we plan to do

#### Future Plans:

- Develop Strategic Plan for Strong Neighborhood Initiative
- Expand efforts to form more Neighborhood Associations
- Gather data for bench marks in regards to property values in Owasso
- Increase volunteer opportunities through Owasso CARES and City Volunteer Program

### Strong Neighborhood Initiative

- Given residents the ability to effectively address issues that impact public safety, code enforcement and neighborhood appearance
- Residents have become engaged in protecting their investments and in planning for the future of our city.
- Provided an opportunity for citizens to shape the future of their neighborhood and overall quality of life in their community.
- Benefits of this Initiative:
  - Built neighborhood networks
  - Increased citizen participation
  - Improved physical condition/appearance of neighborhood properties
  - Improved public safety.

Investing now allows Owasso to continue to look to the future without stopping to rebuild neighborhoods and the community's sense of pride. This Initiative provides residents the avenue to partner with the City to protect their investment, as well as the community's economic stability and long-term prosperity.

The real impact of the SNI will be realized when the momentum comes from the neighborhoods. That is when we will know that Owasso will be as attractive 20 years from now as it is today.