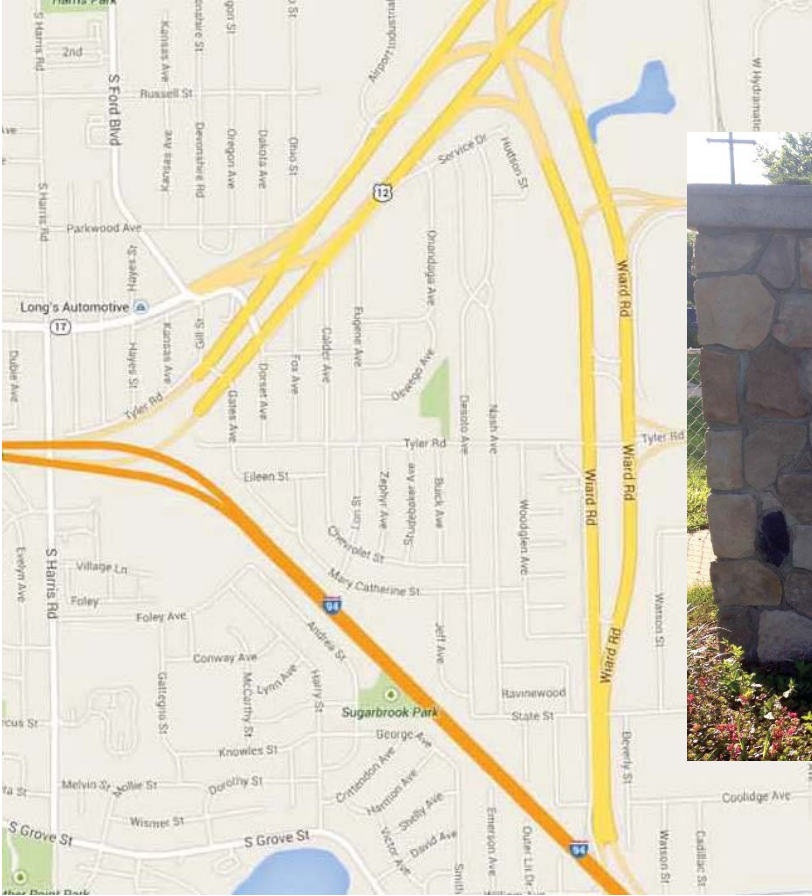


# West Willow Neighborhood Revitalization Plan Ypsilanti, MI June 2015



OFFICE OF COMMUNITY &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## **Overview of West Willow**

West Willow is a neighborhood located in the municipality of Ypsilanti Township, Michigan. The neighborhood was in its prime during the 1940's when the Ford Bomber Plant was producing B-24's during World War II at the rate of one airplane per hour! In 1953 the plant began producing automobile parts until it closed in 2010. The loss of jobs in the area contributed significantly to the change in the West Willow neighborhood. West Willow is home to 1163 residential homes, most of which were built in the mid-1960s. Although there are no multi-family residential structures in the neighborhood, it has a rental rate of 31%, which is high when compared to the other primarily residential neighborhoods in Ypsilanti Township. There is one park in the neighborhood, six churches, and no retail establishments. The one school that was located in West Willow is now closed and is being used as a church. The New West Willow Neighborhood Association is very active, and is one of the oldest continually operating neighborhood associations in Ypsilanti Township. On average, 30 people attend the monthly association meetings, which are held in the local Community Resource Center. See Appendix for West Willow Neighborhood demographics.

## **Overview of Habitat's Involvement in West Willow**

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley's (Habitat) mission is to enrich our community through a legacy of affordable homeownership. Since starting in 1989, Habitat's core activity has been building or renovating homes and selling them with a zero-percent interest loan to low-income families in Washtenaw County, Michigan. In 2006, Habitat's Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers embarked on a strategic planning process to increase our capacity, with a goal of increasing the number of affordable homeownership units we provide annually to 20 per year by the year 2020. As part of our plan for growth, we began renovating foreclosed properties instead of building new homes, and since 2009 we have exclusively been renovating homes. In 2011 Habitat joined Habitat for Humanity International's Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative with the goal of serving more families by responding to community aspirations with an expanded array of products, services, and partnerships, with the mission of empowering residents to revive their neighborhoods and enhance the quality of life.

In November 2013, the board of the New West Willow Neighborhood Association (NWWNA) approached Habitat to discuss how we could partner in their community. The NWWNA is a 501(c)(3) with elected officers. Their board meets monthly, and they report on activities during the monthly neighborhood watch meeting. Habitat and the NWWNA agreed to partner on neighborhood revitalization activities in West Willow.

## **Resident Engagement & Community Planning Process**

Habitat hired a full-time West Willow Community Development Coordinator, and in March 2014 she and other Habitat staff began meeting regularly with the New West Willow Neighborhood Association, the Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development, and students from the University of Michigan who were participating in an interdisciplinary project called Michigan Engaging Community through the Classroom. This team began by developing a newsletter that was mailed to all West Willow residents in May 2014 introducing the NWWNA board to the community and outlining activities and programs that residents could participate in. This team strengthened existing partnerships and formed new relationships with many agencies, including those listed here.

## West Willow Neighborhood Revitalization Partners

West Willow Residents

New West Willow Neighborhood Association Board

Current Board Members: Linda Mealing, President & West Willow Resident; Joann McCollum, Vice President & West Willow Resident; Aaron Shemwell, Financial Secretary & West Willow Resident, Salieta Jenkins, Advisor & West Willow Resident, Dave Ostrowski, Advisor

Previous Board Members (all West Willow Residents): Deborah Hawkins, MaryJo Midurawhite, Lula Jackson, Ceola Robinson

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley

Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development

Charter Township of Ypsilanti

Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office

Paint Ypsi

Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Department

University of Michigan, Michigan Engaging Community Through the Classroom

University of Michigan School of Public Health

United Way of Washtenaw County

Growing Hope

Lowe's Carpenter Road Store

New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church

Greater Faith Transitional Church

Whitehead Memorial Church of God in Christ

Spiritual Israel Church

University of Michigan Executive MBA Program

In June 2014 Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley was selected by Habitat for Humanity International and Lowe's Companies to receive a Lowe's 2014 NRI Quick Win Project Grant to partner with West Willow residents in community building activities. The grant provided funding and support for the following activities. Information was shared at monthly neighborhood watch meetings, at bus stops in the neighborhood, at local churches, on neighborhood social media sites, and door-to-door.

### Upcoming Activities in West Willow

**Door-to-Door Surveys**  
When October - Survey tables and forms available. Help needed to drop off pickup surveys. A site time orientation is required. Earn a gift card for helping out!  
Complete the survey online! Send your e-mail address to [shataura@mh.org](mailto:shataura@mh.org) and you will be sent a unique link to complete the survey online.

**Fence Repair/Replace**  
On a portion of the properties that back up to the bike walking path along McCarty.  
Friday October 17: Volunteers needed to help clear away brush from the fence line.  
Saturday October 18: Volunteers needed to help install new fence panels.

**Rehab a Habitat Home 1210 Desoto**  
Thursday October 16 - Everyone invited to the ground-breaking from 5:30 - 9:30 am  
Saturday November 1, 9:00 - 4:00: Volunteers needed to help with the construction of the home. No construction skills required.

**Pavilion at the Community Center**  
Friday October 24: Volunteers needed to help with the construction of the pavilion. No construction skills required.  
Saturday October 25: Volunteers needed to help with the construction of the pavilion. No construction skills required.  
Sunday October 26: Dedication & Ribbon Cutting Celebration - Everyone is welcome!




**Neighborhood Clean-Up Day**  
Saturday November 8  
Sign up to be a block leader and organize people on your block! Everyone is welcome to participate, even if you don't want to lead a team!

**Community Meeting**  
Join your neighbors again in November to talk about information gathered from the surveys and the community listening meeting. Hear what is important to the neighborhood.  
Tuesday November 18 6:00 - 8:30 Food 8:30 - 7:30 Meeting  
New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church, 2340 Tyler Road. Watch for a postcard mailing with more information.

**For More Information & To Help!**  
Contact Shataura Clayborne  
West Willow Community Development Coordinator  
Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley  
E-mail: [shataura@mh.org](mailto:shataura@mh.org)  
Phone: 734-478-6331

**Lowe's Helps West Willow**  
Thank you to Lowe's for providing funding for these projects!



**We Would Love to Hear From You!**  
Please complete the West Willow Resident Satisfaction Survey!

Complete the survey online! E-mail Shataura at [shataura@mh.org](mailto:shataura@mh.org), and you will be sent a unique link to complete the survey online.  
Or, contact Shataura to request a paper copy at [shataura@mh.org](mailto:shataura@mh.org) or 734-478-6331.

**Interested in Owning a Habitat for Humanity Home?**  
Check out our website at [www.habitatww.org](http://www.habitatww.org) for more information and to start the process by completing an intake form.  
Or contact Shataura at 734-478-6331 or [shataura@mh.org](mailto:shataura@mh.org) to have an intake form mailed to you.



Habitat Crew Leader in West Willow Park, ready to kick off work on a laborer home improvement project.

### Stay Connected!



**NWWNA.org**  
Check out the neighborhood blog to stay up to date on happenings in the Willow!

**New West Willow Neighborhood Association meeting** held every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 7pm at Community Resource Center at 2057 Tyler Rd.

**West Willow Women in Action meeting** held every 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month at 7pm in the Community Resource Center.

**NextDoor.com**  
You're invited!  
Our neighborhood is using a private online network called NextDoor West Willow, and we think you'll benefit from joining us. On our NextDoor site, neighbors share community events, recommendations, alerts for safety, other nearby concerns, ideas about how to make our neighborhood better, and more. Please join us to build a better neighborhood!  
Get to know your neighbors! Keep the neighborhood safe! Stay informed!  
Use NextDoor on your iPhone or Android device! Invite neighbors by email, Facebook, or postcard. Copy the link to join!  
Shataura Clayborne  
West Willow Community Development Coordinator  
Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley  
170 April Dr., Suite A  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
P 734-478-6331  
F 734-677-1672  
E [shataura@mh.org](mailto:shataura@mh.org)  
[www.mh.org](http://www.mh.org)



**Facebook.com/NWWNA**  
Link up on the NWWNA fan page! "Like" us and post what you love about West Willow!  
What would you like to see in your community? How do you want to participate to make it a better place?

**Twitter.com/NWWNA**  
Do you tweet? Follow the neighborhood association on Twitter!

### 3 Neighborhood-wide Community Meetings

Dates: August 26, 2014, September 30, 2014, November 17, 2014

Location: New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church

- We held a Kick-Off Meeting in on Thursday August 26, 2014 to announce the award of the grant with the entire neighborhood and other partners. At this meeting we outlined the activities that are planned to take place through the grant. # of People Engaged: 97

#### Join Your Neighbors in Partnership to Better Our Community!

You're invited to the kick-off of exciting improvement activities in West Willow!  
Lowe's Home Improvement is generously providing funds for initiatives in our neighborhood.  
Come hear how you can get involved and be part of this exciting movement!

Tuesday August 26, 2014  
6:00 - 7:30 pm


Food will be served from 6:00 - 6:30  
Meeting will be held from 6:30 - 7:30  
Door prizes will be drawn at 7:30

Where: New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church  
2345 Tyler Road

Please RSVP to Shataura at Habitat so that we can make sure enough food is provided: [sclayborne@hh.org](mailto:sclayborne@hh.org) or 734-478-6331.  
We hope to see you there! Tell a neighbor, too!



- We held a Community Visioning Meeting on Tuesday September 30, 2014 to engage the residents in asset-based community development exercise to identify the assets in their neighborhood and a vision for what they would like to see in their community. # of People Engaged: 90




West Willow  
Community Conversation

Come share your ideas about what makes our neighborhood great and what things we can do together to make it even better!

Habitat for Humanity is hosting a Community Conversation where West Willow residents can voice their opinions about the strengths and needs in our community. Please join in on Tuesday, September 30 at the New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church for this exciting meeting. Food will be served from 6:00 - 6:30pm. If you plan to attend let Shataura Clayborne know so we're sure we have enough food!

September 30, 2014, 6 pm - 7:30 pm  
Food served 6 pm - 6:30 pm  
Meeting 6:30 pm - 7:30 pm

2345 Tyler Rd. New Covenant  
Missionary Baptist Church  
RSVP to [sclayborne@hh.org](mailto:sclayborne@hh.org)  
734-478-6331



**We do have opinions and voice so let's make them known. SPEAK UP and EXPECT change! We need you to help make change.** -Linda Mailing, AWWNA Board President



- We held a Community Meeting on Monday November 17, 2014 where we shared the preliminary results of the first 130 surveys that had been collected. Participants identified the neighborhood issues that were most important to them and then broke out into small groups to start discussing the issues. # of People Engaged: 60.



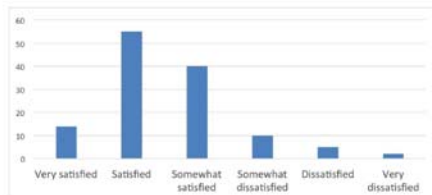
Presented by:  

## West Willow Community Resident Survey Preliminary Update

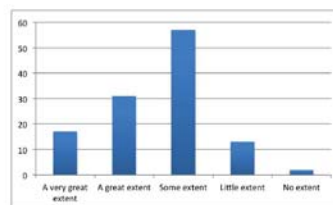
November 17, 2014

Habitat for Humanity, the New West Willow Neighborhood Association, and resident volunteers began distributing the Community Resident Survey at the beginning of October. Thus far 130 surveys have been collected, meaning we are 45% of the way to our goal of 289 surveys. The information below represents some of the most important data collected in the surveys collected thus far as well as feedback received during the two previous community planning meetings. While the results are preliminary, they seem to be consistent enough to begin talking about.

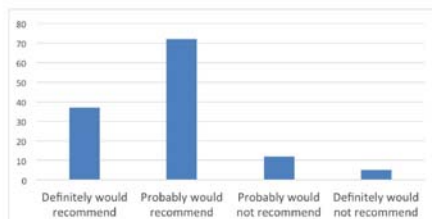
### How satisfied are you living in West Willow?



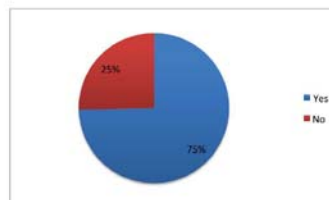
### To what extent do you feel a part of the West Willow community?



### How likely are you to recommend this neighborhood as a good place to live?



### Are you aware of the West Willow Community Garden?



### Next Steps:

Surveying is not complete! Help us reach our goal: sign up to be a surveyor or deliver a blank survey to a neighbor. Contact Shataura at [sclayborne@h4h.org](mailto:sclayborne@h4h.org) or (734)478-6331 for more information.



## Exterior Home Improvement Projects

Dates: August 20, 2014 and September 11, 2014

- On Wednesday August 20, 2014, we completed Exterior Home Improvement projects at 17 owner-occupied homes on streets in the northwest section of the neighborhood. Selected participants were homeowners earning less than 80% of the Area Median Income who were current with their mortgage, property tax, and homeowner's insurance payments. Repairs included improving grading, installing downspout extensions and splash blocks, cleaning gutters & installing gutter guards, painting, landscaping, and other minor repairs. The University of Michigan's Executive MBA Program provided 105 student volunteers for the Exterior Home Improvement Projects as their Citizenship Day project. Homeowners also helped out with the work on their homes. # of People Engaged: 150
- On Thursday September 11, 2014 we completed three Exterior Home Improvement projects. Ford Volunteer Corps provided the volunteers for this day. # of People Engaged: 35

## **Great Things are Happening at New West Willow!**



## Success Measures Resident Satisfaction Surveys

Dates: October 1 – December 31, 2014

- We worked with community residents and other volunteer groups from the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office Outreach Team, and U of M School of Public Health to conduct door-to-door surveys using the Success Measures Resident Satisfaction Survey. We used the base Resident Satisfaction Survey provided by Success Measures and added questions around community gardening, health, and social interactions as suggested by the NWWNA board, University of Michigan School of Public Health, Washtenaw County Public Health, and Washtenaw County Office of Community and Economic Development.
- This was first-round data collection, and the results were entered into the Success Measures database. With a neighborhood of 1163 households, to have a margin of error of 5%, and a confidence level of 95%, we needed to collect 289 surveys. We administered surveys over 25 days, and collected 212 surveys, which is a 6.09% margin of error. Although the recommended sample size was not obtained, the results are still meaningful and support what was heard at the planning meetings.

- Groups helping: Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office Outreach Team, West Willow Association Board, U of M School of Public Health, Neighborhood Residents. # of People Engaged: 106 survey collectors, 181 surveys
- Select survey responses are included in Appendix A, and the full results were shared with the NWWNA board.



## RECEIVE A \$50 GIFT CARD



### Volunteer to be a surveyor in West Willow!! Give a gift to your neighborhood!

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley wants to hear from West Willow residents in our Resident Satisfaction Surveys. Information from these surveys will be put into action to better the community!

Receive a \$50 gift card (up to 3) for your time.

Cards from Citgo, BP Gasoline, Amazon, Lowe's, Bed Bath & Beyond, Starbucks, & more.

Anyone 16 years or older can participate.

*Volunteer your time in your community today!*

### Replace Fence along Bike Path/McCartney Street

Dates: October 17, October 18, October 25, November 8, 2014

- We replaced approximately 435 feet of privacy fence in the rear yards of seven properties near the walking/bike path that runs along McCartney Street. Several of the fence sections were covered with overgrowth which was cleared, revealing lots of trash that was hauled away. We removed the existing fence panels and rotted posts and then installed new 6 foot high spruce fence panels.
- Volunteers from Lowe's, Beta Alpha Psi at Eastern Michigan University, Domino's, Arbor Research, and the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, along with neighborhood residents volunteered on the project. # of People Engaged: 72.



Before



After

### Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley Rehab at 1210 Desoto Avenue

Dates: October 16 – 17, October 25, and November 1, 2014

- We kicked-off the rehab of our first home in West Willow on Thursday October 16, 2014 with a morning program which included speakers from Habitat, Lowe's, and Kim Montgomery, a West Willow partner family. Over 30 people attended the kick-off, including staff from State Senator Rebekah Warren's office and officials from Ypsilanti Township, and the ceremony which ended with a ground-breaking activity with the jackhammer!
- Volunteers groups from Lowe's, DTE, Phi Sigma Phi at Eastern Michigan University and neighborhood residents worked over four days on the renovation work which included breaking up and removing a 12 ft x 12 ft concrete patio; removing all debris from inside the home; removing the trim, interior doors, and storm doors; removing the closet doors and shelving; removing the interior light fixtures and switch plates; removing English ivy that was climbing up the outside walls and throughout the lawn; and removing the kitchen appliances and cabinets. # of People Engaged: 80
- This included 8 Lowe's Heroes who contributed 56 volunteer hours.

### Neighborhood Clean-Up & Beautification Day

Date: Saturday November 8, 2014

- On November 8, 2014 we held a Neighborhood clean-up and beautification day which included raking leaves at several neighborhood homes, planting flower bulbs, cleaning up around the Community Resource Center and the entrance signs to the neighborhood, and picking up debris and litter around the neighborhood. # of People Engaged: 16.

**West Willow  
Neighborhood-Wide  
Clean Up Day**

Come out to help keep our community clean and beautiful!  
Wear warm, comfy clothes for getting dirty! Lunch is provided  
to volunteers!  
Saturday November 8, 2014  
West Willow Community Resource Center  
2057 Tyler Rd.  
10:30am-4:00pm

Contact Shataura to volunteer  
sclayborne@h4h.org  
734-478-6331



## Neighborhood Priorities

Input from the door-to-door Resident Satisfaction Surveys and Community Meetings resulted in priority areas that residents wish to address, and action teams have been formed to work on these initiatives. Below is a summary prepared after the November 17 Community Planning Meeting outlining those priorities.

# West Willow Community Planning Meeting Update

Meeting Held November 17, 2014  
at New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church

## Meeting Summary

Monday evening, November 17, the NWWNA and Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley hosted a great Community Planning Meeting at the New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church. Over 50 residents came out to hear preliminary results of the Community Resident Survey and develop ideas for how to move forward on some of the issues most important to residents. To develop these ideas, residents broke out into action teams based on areas of concern. Below are brief summaries of each group's meeting report.

## Resident Action Team Reports

### Drug Activity

This group suggested sitting down with police to talk, get advice, and a plan for what residents can do to help rid the neighborhood of drugs. Residents also suggested a neighborhood watch block captain and doing research into how other communities have been successful at getting rid of drugs.

If this was no longer in our neighborhood we would see people outside more, which makes West Willow an overall more inviting place.

### Poor Street Maintenance & Lighting and Litter, Trash, and Debris

These two groups combined. They suggested more people leave outside lights on at night to make the neighborhood more well-lit. From the township, the group wants a street cleaner schedule to make sure it comes through the neighborhood regularly and fines for not keeping clean yards.

Resolving these issues means a neighborhood with clean street drains and yards; a neighborhood that people feel more safe in.

### Access to Amenities

This group suggested further development of vacant sites near West Willow. Of particular importance are Gault Village and Liberty Square. These residents want to get in touch with officials at the township and county, as well as the property owners, to talk about potential tenants.

If development moved forward, this group imagines things like a grocery store, hardware store, or laundromat more nearby to West Willow.

### Youth

This group focused on neighborhood churches providing resources to better the youth experience. New Covenant's tutoring program is one such example, but we need more. Also mentioned was reaching out to scouts, fraternal organizations, the American Legion, etc. who may have formal youth programming.

With success of these programs, this group envisions that West Willow would "get our youth back" from the poor influences that can distract them.

### Vandalism/Break-Ins

This group focused on the youth element of this issue, looking to get parents and kids more engaged in the neighborhood through family-friendly activities. Youth also need to both be shown tough love when they make mistakes and rewarded for making good decisions.

If vandalism and break-ins were no longer a problem, this group envisions the Sheriff's monthly NWWNA meeting report to have "nothing to report."

### Neighbor Relationships

This group wants to see more community activities such as block parties and yard sales put together for people to talk to one another. Specifically, this group suggested that Christmas Caroling would be a fun winter activity. The strategy of "each 1 needs to reach 1," bringing another resident to an event was also highlighted.

If these strategies worked, the neighborhood would see better relationships, more peace and contentment, and less crime in West Willow.

## Want to join an Action Team?

Please do! Teams will be setting up times and dates to continue meeting. To join a group, email Shataura at [sclayborne@h4h.org](mailto:sclayborne@h4h.org) or call her at (734)478-6331



# West Willow Community Action Teams

We need you to get involved and stay involved to continue to better this community! Attend an action team meetings to do your part in making this neighborhood a great place to live. Just show up @ CRC!

<b>Access to Amenities</b>	<b>Tuesday April 14th, 6pm</b>
<b>Vandalism/Break-Ins</b>	<b>Friday March 27th, 6pm</b>
<b>Neighbor Relations</b>	<b>Friday April 3rd, 6pm</b>
<b>Youth Activities</b>	<b>Saturday April 4th, 12pm</b>
<b>Litter/Trash/Debris</b>	<b>Friday April 10th, 4pm</b>
<b>Drug Activity</b>	<b>Saturday April 18th, 5pm</b>

## United Way Financial Empowerment Community Conversation

United Way is looking to hold a focus group on financial stability in order to determine whether they should do more in their goal of increasing the financial stability of individuals & families. This means more programs!

Thursday March 26, 6:30pm  
Location TBD

RSVP to Shataura Clayborne to attend  
sclayborne@h4h.org 734-478-6331

## Action Team Initiatives

### Vandalism & Break-Ins

- Expand partnerships with Washtenaw County Sheriff
- Engage youth in neighborhood activities
- Implement campaign to enroll residents in Nixle communications
- Re-energize Citizens Patrol including magnets for patrol cars
- Provide door hangers for all residents with safety tips

### Access to Amenities

- Explore development of vacant sites for business opportunities
- Hold Economic Roundtable
- Hold Financial Wellness event

### Litter/Trash/Debris

- Hold neighborhood clean-up days
- Improve lighting in neighborhood
- Increase enforcement of ordinances
- Install trash cans at strategic areas in neighborhood
- Replace additional fence sections along walking path
- Install public art in neighborhood

### Neighbor Relationships

- Build and install Little Free Libraries
- Form neighborhood social groups & events (block party, yard sales, caroling, walking club, book club, cooking group, cardio drumming, computer classes)
- Increase participation on NextDoor.com
- Increase participation at annual picnic and annual potluck
- Build pavilion at Community Resource Center to increase meeting participation
- Improve signage for advertisement of neighborhood events
- Install benches and bike racks at neighborhood common areas

### Drug Activity

- Develop partnerships with Washtenaw County Sheriff and Ypsilanti Community Schools
- Form neighborhood block captains system
- Provide anti-drug pamphlets for residents and T-shirts for committee members

### Youth Relationships

- Provide social activities for youth and families (laser tag, trunk-or-treat, game nights, arts and crafts, family movie night, career day)
- Promote and develop youth resources in neighborhood (tutoring, scout groups)
- Develop partnerships with Corner Health Youth Council

# Spring into Action!

with the West Willow Community Action Teams

## **Who:**

You! All are welcome, with youth activities planned.

## **When:**

The evening of May 12th

6:00 - Food service begins

6:30 - Presentations begin

6:30 - Youth art activities

7:00 - Fellowship & social time continues!

## **Where:**

New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church  
2345 Tyler Rd. Ypsilanti

## **What?**

Join members of your neighborhood's Action Teams for a potluck where you can hear updates and learn how to get involved. Action Teams are listed on the reverse.

Please, bring a dish to pass. Chicken from French Quarter and drinks will be provided. Sides, desserts, and other dishes are welcomed.

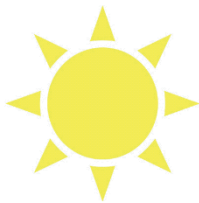
Please RSVP to Shataura Clayborne to accommodate for food and set up.

## **How:**

RSVP to Shataura Clayborne

email: [sclayborne@h4h.org](mailto:sclayborne@h4h.org)

Phone: 734-478-6331 (text message or call)



### **Habitat's Continued Role in West Willow**

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley will continue to provide housing products in West Willow for at least the next three years. Habitat will continue to provide a dedication staff liaison to West Willow and will support the efforts of the neighborhood residents in carrying out the actions that are important to the community. Habitat will continue to consult with residents, share expertise, and connect residents with other agencies and resources. Habitat will continue to attend monthly Neighborhood Watch meetings and to encourage participants in Habitat programs to get engaged in the community.

Since 2014 Habitat and its partners have made a tremendous investment in West Willow through several housing programs:

- 2 previously foreclosed homes have been renovated and sold to new Habitat families
- 3 additional previously foreclosed homes are owned by Habitat and will be renovated and sold to low income families
- 224 non-Habitat families already living in West Willow participated in a Habitat Home Improvement Program
  - 3 Weatherizations
  - 4 Critical Repairs for Veterans
  - 30 Furnaces Replaced
  - 26 Furnaces Tested and Tuned up
  - 113 Refrigerators Replaced
  - 12 Insulation Projects
  - 48 Exterior Home Improvements

## APPENDIX

### West Willow Neighborhood History & Demographics

(Unless otherwise noted, all data has been obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau)

Population by quantity: Overall population based on 2010 U.S Census for the West Willow Census Tract 412300 is 2,928. The most prevalent race is black, which represents 72.47% of total population. 21.89% of the population is white.

#### Population by gender:

Male 45.77%

Female 54.23%

#### Population by Age:

Average age is 32.90 years old

(0-34): 52.6%

(35-64): 35.76%

(65-85+): 11.64%

Education: Among residents over the age of 25 in the neighborhood 15.97% have less than a high school education, compared to 14.28% in the U.S. 29.58% are high school graduates, compared to 28.24% in U.S. 38.42% have some college or Associates Degree, compared to 29% in U.S. 12.59% have a Bachelor's degree, compared to 17.88% in U.S. 3.43% have an advanced degree, compared to 10.61% in U.S.

Income: The median household income for census tract 412300 (West Willow) is \$39,423 compared to the U.S at \$53,046.

Unemployment: For men aged 16 or older, 27% are unemployed. Females 16 or older, 7% are unemployed. Many in the West Willow population are not in the labor force, meaning they are elderly, young, homemakers or are unwilling or unable to engage in productive activities for assorted reasons.

Home Values: Current median home value in West Willow is \$101,632 with the national average being \$172, 300. Most homes were built between 1960 and 1969. 93% are single family homes with 3-4 bedrooms.

Homeownership: Owner-occupied housing units in the neighborhood comprise 68.7% of the 1,160 housing units in the neighborhood. Renter-occupied housing units comprise 31.3% and vacant housing units comprise 5.2% of the remaining units in 2010. The average homeownership trend in the area is down 4.2% over the last five years.

Ethnicity: In 2010 the ethnic makeup of the neighborhood was 72.47% African American, 21.89% White and 2.77% Hispanic.

Crime: West Willow neighborhood receives police services from the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department. Comparing West Willow to neighboring Gault Village through CrimeMapping.com: between June 13, 2013 and June 14, 2014 the Gault Village neighborhood had an occurrence of 14 crimes. Between 6/13/2013 & 6/13/2014 West Willow had an occurrence of 73 crimes. Between 6/13/2013 & 6/13/2014 Sugarbrook had an occurrence of 68 crimes. A same radius are of ½ mile was applied to each neighborhood. Most crimes happening in the WW neighborhood is breaking and entering done by juveniles.

Notable & Unique neighborhood characteristics:

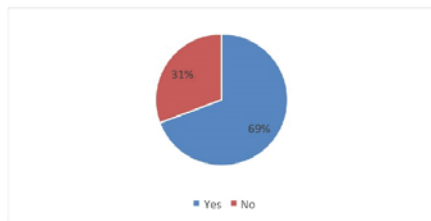
Analysis done by NeighborhoodScout revealed that the West Willow neighborhood has more single mother households than 97.4% of neighborhoods in the U.S. This is a strong indicator of social and family issues such as poverty, high rate of high school dropouts and truancy, crime and other societal problems. Many community leaders and residents state that the lack of constructive activities for juveniles has attributed to the crime levels.

## Select Survey Responses

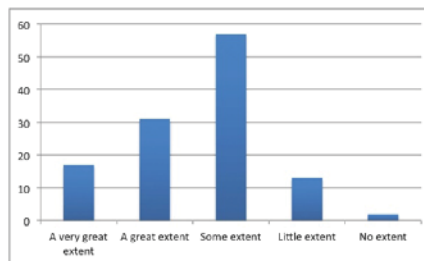
### Who is living in West Willow?

These questions cover information about who took the Community Resident Survey, how long they have been in the neighborhood, and other feelings about the neighborhood.

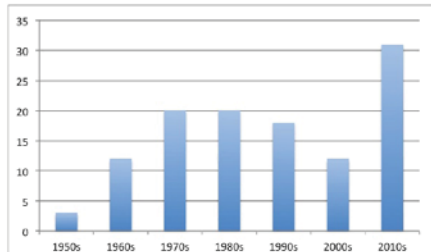
#### Do you own your home?



#### To what extent do you feel a part of the neighborhood?



#### When did you move into the neighborhood?



#### Resident comments:

*"people make the neighborhood"*

*"not a very welcoming neighborhood, but the people whom I have met are very nice"*

*"Since I moved into West Willow I met a lot of caring neighbors who look out for the neighborhood and keep their property up."*

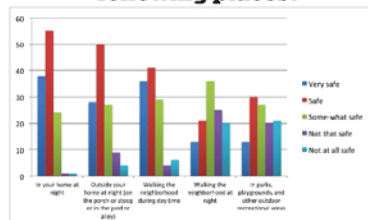


Presented: November 17, 2014

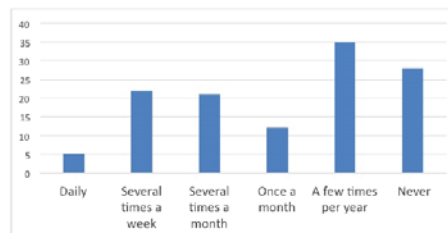
### How do residents feel about their neighbors?

These questions cover how residents feel about their neighbors, how safe neighbors feel, and gatherings of neighborhood residents.

#### How safe do you feel in each of the following places?



#### How often do you gather or socialize with friends or neighborhood residents at activities in the neighborhood?



#### Resident Comments:

*"(need) landlords to make better choices for their tenants"*

*"elderly neighbors create issues for those moving in because they are mean and not working to build the neighborhood"*

*"I wish people were more intentional about community and getting to know each other."*

*"I want more people to get involved & stay involved on a regular basis."*

*"seems like people enter our neighborhood to commit crimes"*

*"it is at night that the parties start and people lose common sense"*

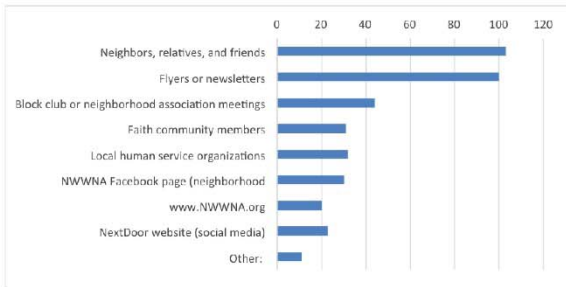


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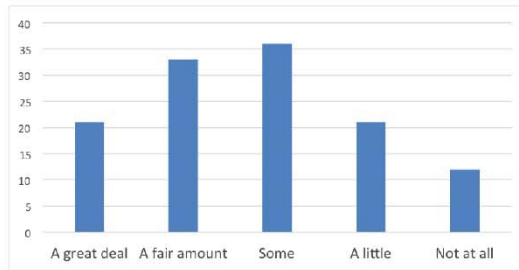
# How do residents communicate and receive information?

These questions cover how information is shared and how residents find out what is happening in the neighborhood.

## Methods residents use to get information about what is happening in the neighborhood:



## To what degree do people in this neighborhood share information about what's happening locally?



### Resident Comments:

*"neighbors are friendly enough, we know what is going on through the neighborhood meetings"*

*"We need opportunities to connect with neighbors. Block parties, something! The monthly meetings only draw a small fraction of residents."*

*"also get info from ytown.org"*

*"the landlords care about their property & I feel this is conveyed to the tenants"*



Presented: November 17, 2014

# What do residents like best and least about West Willow?

The word clouds below represent answers to the questions asking what residents like BEST and LEAST about their neighborhood. The size of the words corresponds to how frequently the answer was chosen. As you will notice, some answers were frequently chosen for both questions.

## What are the things that you like BEST about living in this neighborhood?



## What are the things that you like LEAST about living in this neighborhood?



### Resident Comments:

*"I like more privacy and more peace."*

*"quick access to the highway"*

*"People don't control their kids, they won't get out of the street"*

*"low community involvement"*

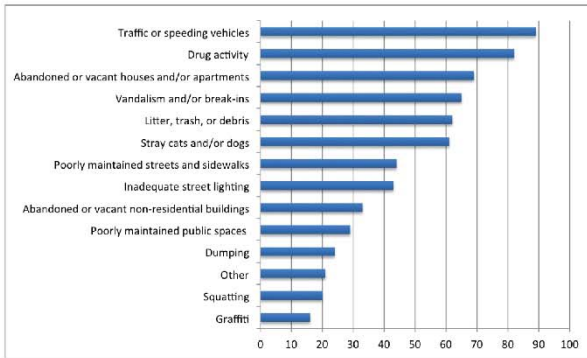


Presented: November 17, 2014

# What do residents consider problems in West Willow?

Below are graphs showing the things residents like best and least about West Willow as well as a list of things residents consider issues in the neighborhood.

## Do you see these as problems in your community?



### Resident Comments:

*"plowing - blocks the driveways when plowing the streets"*

*"My home has had 5 attempted break-ins in the past 2 years. I no longer feel safe in this community."*

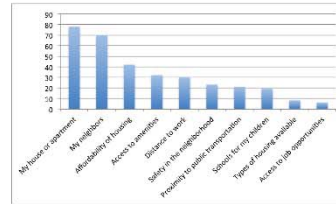
*"rental homes are numerous around my home, and many are noisy, usually disruptive with late night loud parties"*

*"the drugs make me want to leave"*

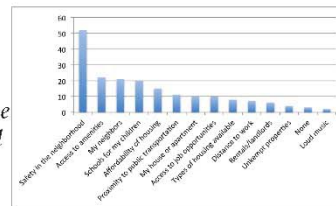
*"would like to live in a better school district"*

*"the pets are a nuisance"*

## What are the things that you like BEST about living in this neighborhood?



## What are the things that you like LEAST about living in this neighborhood?



*"we could use speed bumps to slow down the traffic"*



Presented: November 17, 2014



## West Willow Activities 2016

### January

The pavilion at the West Willow Community Center is finished, and the community is very excited about the opportunities that it will bring. The NWWNA is planning a dedication possibly at their February neighborhood association meeting.



### February

Ypsilanti Township facilities staff installed the benches and trash cans in the West Willow neighborhood. They look great!



Bench and trash can in front of the West Willow Community Resource Center.

### April

- Shataura hosted a Homeownership Orientation at the West Willow Community Center with 15 people attending
- Marci Cameron is sponsoring five raised bed gardens through Growing Hope for West Willow Habitat HIP and HOP families, and the 10 families for whom she sponsored gardens last year will continue to get support from Growing Hope this year.
- Shataura organized five Exterior Home Improvement projects in West Willow on April 30. 26 volunteers from Harvest Mission Church, neighborhood residents, and Thrivent Financial worked on the outside of five homes that are part of the Weatherization & Roof

Replacement program. Funding for this component of the project is through Thrivent Builds Repairs.



Greeting Volunteers in the Pavilion!



The crew at the Granthams' home



May

A dedication ceremony of the pavilion at the community center was held on Monday, May 16 during the Neighborhood Association's regular monthly meeting, and representatives from the Neighborhood Association board presented a plaque to Habitat as a thank you for our partnership and commitment to their community. Linda Mealing, President of the NWWNA, presented a plaque to Frank Gennaccaro, the Store Manager of the Lowe's Carpenter Road store, at the store's weekly manager's meeting on June 7<sup>th</sup>.



Pavilion Ribbon Cutting



Plaque Presentation to Habitat



Plaque Presentation to Lowe's

Shataura organized Exterior Home Improvement projects at 12 homes in West Willow, Gault Village and Sugarbrook on May 26 and June 11. 38 volunteers helped out representing Deepfield, Harvest Mission Church, Kensington Court Hotel, neighborhood residents and general volunteers. They worked alongside the homeowners to clean gutters, install gutter guards, install downspout extensions and splash blocks, caulk bricks and foundations, paint foundation blocks, trim hedges & trees, mow lawns, plant flowers, spread mulch, and complete other minor repairs. Funding from Thrivent Financial, Huntington Bank, and Altisource made

these projects possible, and local Thrivent Financial representatives attended the work days to speak to volunteers.



June 11 Volunteers



Lots of Mulch!



Painting the Front Step



Painting Foundation Block



Foundation Caulk, Downspout Extension/Splash Block



Gutter Guards



Kensington Court Hotel Volunteers



Neighborhood Residents and Mom & Son Team



Homeowner & Linda Mealing



Deepfield Volunteers



Homeowner with Deepfield Volunteers



The Grass Was a Little Tall

### August

We helped out at the NWWNA Annual Picnic on August 13, providing some of the food for the event. Approximately 150 people attended before the heavy rains came!



Free books for kids!



Great food!



Hamburgers and Hotdogs!



New residents enjoy the picnic



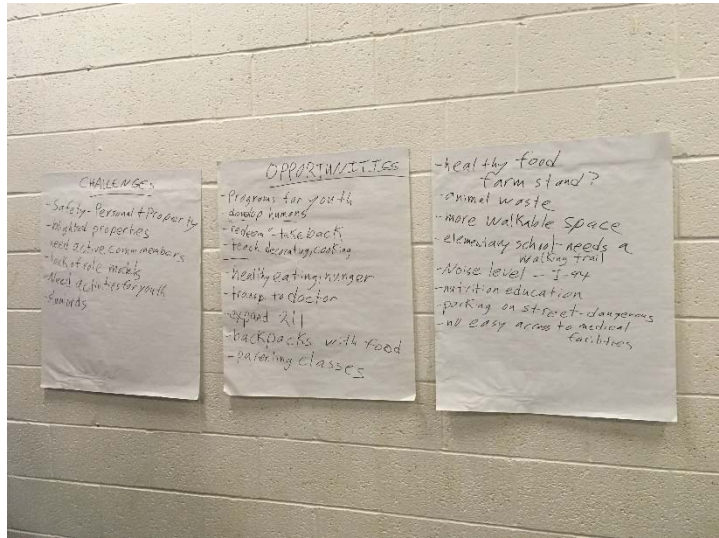
Ypsilanti Farmers Market Food Stand



WCSO sponsors Ballin' in the Willow

We partnered with NWWNA & Washtenaw Public Health Department to convene a community conversation around health and safety on August 15. About 60 people met at New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church for healthy food and discussions around health concerns and solutions.





Shataura is working with West Willow residents to secure traffic calming devices throughout the neighborhood. Resident-led petitions for a traffic study are circulating on Nash & Chevrolet.

### October

Two additional trash receptacles have been delivered to NWWNA to install with the help of Ypsilanti Township. We worked with NWWNA to help them apply for the AAABOR Placemaking Challenge Grant for improvements at West Willow Park to make it a more inviting space for families.

On October 20, 16 employees from the Lowe's store on Carpenter Road in Ypsilanti volunteered to do some work at the West Willow Community Resource Center. They provided \$2500 worth of materials and built & painted new picnic tables, built a new storage shed, assembled new tools & equipment, installed new planters with flowers and installed new lighting at the community pavilion. Thank you to Lowe's for once again making a difference in West Willow!







Shataura continues to recruit more West Willow residents to the NextDoor.com website used for communication. A total of 151 neighbors are now online.

## West Willow Activities 2017

### January

- New NWWNA Board Officers were sworn in at the January monthly meeting.



Aaron Shemwell   Robert Harrison   Jo Ann McCollum

- The NWWNA received a grant from Washtenaw County Public Health to install lighting and electrical outlets in the pavilion.

### April & May

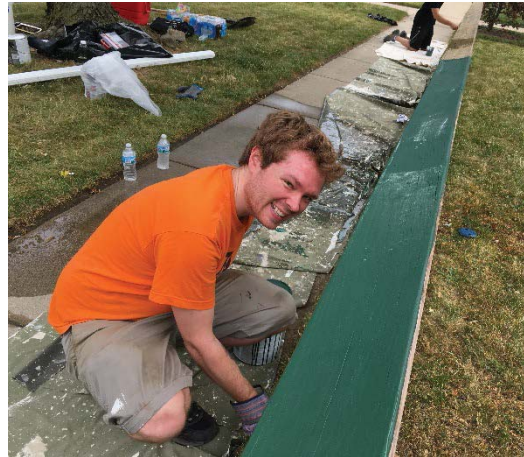
- Habitat, in partnership with NWWNA, submitted proposal for a \$40,000 Aging in Place grant with Lowe's for three projects in the West Willow community. Senior residents in West Willow who we have worked with in the past participated in the project planning process. We were selected to receive the grant!

### June

- On June 17, we held an Exterior Home Improvement Day with over 30 volunteers working on four different homes with projects including: gutter cleaning/gutter guard installation, fence painting, downspouts and extensions installation, back yard clean up, landscaping, minor repairs, and more! This day was made possible by both Washtenaw County Public Health and the Ann Arbor Area Community Foundation and of course the leadership of the new West Willow Neighborhood Association!



Volunteers under the pavilion



Volunteer Ian painting the fence



More fence painting!



Team work



## July & August

- Habitat continues to meet with both NWWNA and the Lowe's team to make plans for the Lowe's Aging in Place Grant to determine the specifics of the projects and timeline
- Received grant funding from Michigan State Housing Development Authority to complete roof replacements and exterior home improvements on eight homes in West Willow! A mailing was sent to the entire neighborhood and we have been able to track information about the need for roofs in the neighborhood. Funding will also add new signage at the Community Resource Center.
- The annual West Willow Community Picnic on August 19<sup>th</sup> was a great time!



## September

- Eight homeowners' roofs were replaced with funding from MSHDA!



- On September 23, Habitat partnered with Wells Fargo as part of the 100 Veteran's Project and worked on four veterans homes in the neighborhood. Projects included: painting a garage, staining a porch, installing gutter guards, installing handrail on ramp, yard clean-up, planting flowers & landscaping. Wells Fargo volunteers worked alongside the residents and their families on a hot summer day!





- Through meetings with the NWWNA and brainstorming sessions at monthly neighborhood meetings, the Safe Neighbors Initiative has kicked off as a similar program to the former Citizens Patrol. The goal of the group is to increase safety through canvassing efforts, distribution of home safety items including “Drive Like Your Kids Live Here” lawn signs for residents.

October & November

- A number of community volunteer days were held at the Community Resource Center in order to be clearing out the space. Volunteers included residents as well as the WCSO community work program. Volunteers also started on projects such as interior painting, installing new window treatments, and installing new furniture in the newly organized space.



- On October 24, Lowe’s Centric Day took place at the Community Resource Center – Lowe’s employees worked to assemble a shed for the new tool lending library and built two new raised garden beds with seating. The seating around the edge of the garden beds will allow residents, including seniors, to be able to garden without having to be low to the ground. We are currently getting input from residents about what items to stock in the tool lending library and forming guidelines for using it. Members of the community are working with Growing Hope on planning ideas for the community garden for next year.



- Exterior Home Improvement Days (October 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>) were held at the eight homes in West Willow where the roof replacements were completed. Volunteers from Cintas and Hyundai participated to complete projects such as: replacing a fence, hauling dirt to fill an old swimming pool hole, cleaning awnings, lots of landscaping, gutters/gutter guards, and garage repair.



## December

- Through funding from MSHDA and the Lowe's AIP Grant the CRC has undergone a complete transformation! We have been working with residents and with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Work Program volunteers to: paint all interior rooms, de-clutter and completely clean out the building, make minor repairs, install new window treatments, install new carpeting in one room, install new doors, and more.
- As a part of the Safe Neighbors Initiative, we have been distributing NWWNA t-shirts and tote bags. Another project under Safe Neighbors is a resident survey for folks to select from the following list what safety items they would be interested in receiving for their home: solar LED flood light, door security bar, window/door alarm kit, wireless driveway alert kit, plug-in carbon monoxide detector, decoy security camera, 24 hour timer, fire extinguisher and flashlight.
- The tool-lending library will soon be stocked with a variety of yard/lawn care, household repair, garden, and power tools. Residents have provided input as to which tools would be most useful to have access to.



- New signs at the Community Resource Center have been designed and installed, giving the New West Willow Neighborhood Association a more prominent identity to the public.



## West Willow Activities 2018

### January

The Community Resource Center updates are complete! Thank you to Lowe's and MSHDA!



Front room with new furniture, seating, and window treatments!



NWWNA Board President Jo Ann at the new desk! The office has been completely cleared out, new carpet installed, brand new storage, new lighting fixture, and more.

### February

On February 1 the NWWNA and Habitat hosted a very fun and successful Open House at the West Willow Community Resource Center! Over 70 people attended throughout the evening, including: residents, community partner agencies, Ypsilanti Township representatives, Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office, and volunteers who worked on the CRC improvements.

Everyone shared in snacks and conversation, learned more about the CRC, the New West Willow Neighborhood Association, and different programs and activities going on in the neighborhood. We also had giveaways (t-shirts and tote bags), a raffle for residents, and opportunity for West Willow residents to sign up for free home safety items that were funded through our Lowe's Aging in Place grant.



NWWNA board member Alex Thomas delivered home security items to West Willow residents who completed a survey indicating their needs. He also distributed an info packet on West Willow and the neighborhood association, with the goal of having 'connectors' throughout the neighborhood who participate in safety efforts and community communication.



Home safety items include window/door alarm, solar flood light, CO detector, fire extinguisher, decoy security camera, door/window security bar, driveway alert kit, and 24-hour outlet timer.

### April & May

Ypsilanti Township Parks and Recreation, Washtenaw County Health Department, the New West Willow Neighborhood Association and Habitat started activities related to the grant funding to make improvements to the West Willow Park. Residents of West Willow have been asked to complete a survey about the park to find out why people do or do not use the park, how it used, and what changes residents would like to see at the park through this project. We also completed observations surveys to determine baseline usage at the park, finalized the activities to take place, and on May 19, 2018 at Ypsi Proud day we planted flowers at the park entrance as well as worked in the community garden and the grounds of the Community Resource Center and community garden.



June - August 2018

On June 16, a kick-off party was held at the Community Resource Center to attract youth and families to learn more about the Youth Council as well as share information on other resources available to community members.



Sack Races



Information Sharing



Raised beds built by Lowe's in 2017

Concentrate media posted a great story about the New West Willow Neighborhood Association Youth Council


<http://www.secondwavemedia.com/concentrate/features/youthcouncil0468.aspx>

Growing Hope, the New West Willow Neighborhood Association, Washtenaw County Health Department, Habitat, and other partners teamed up to bring Growing Hope's Mobile Farm Stand to West Willow every Friday from July through October. We also had an outreach coordinator who spread the word about the Farm Stand's presence to West Willow residents. Together we are making it easier for West Willow residents to have access to fresh fruits and veggies!



On Saturday August 4, the New West Willow Neighborhood Association held their annual picnic at the Community Resource Center. Over 150 residents came out to enjoy food, games, and time together, and we gave out home safety items provided by the Lowe's 2017 grant.



Please join your neighbors for a community picnic featuring free eats, drinks, games and community resources 



On Saturday August 25, 24 volunteers came out for Thrivent Builds Repairs Day. Despite the rain early on, we got a lot of work done at four homes including cleaning gutters and adding gutter guards, landscaping, caulking, painting, and new flower beds.







Karen's front yard before



Karen and her mom in the front yard after



Annette's front before



Annette's front after

## September 2018

Activities were completed in the Building Healthy Communities Grant through Washtenaw County Health Department. Ypsilanti Township Parks & Recreation, New West Willow Neighborhood Association and Habitat partnered up to improved facilities at West Willow Park. The grant provided funding for two new West Willow Park signs with distance noted for the walking path, three new picnic tables, six new trash cans, mulch around the play area, and staining the flower planters.



On Saturday September 15, 28 volunteers contributed 159.5 hours in the Thrivent Building on Faith Day in West Willow. We completed exterior improvements at one homeowner's home, weeded the playground area and stained planters at West Willow Park, cleaned up and planted mums at the neighborhood entrance sign sites, gave the three neighborhood Little Free Libraries a fresh paint job and a little maintenance, and painted a shed and did general clean-up around the West Willow Community Resource Center. We also had three dumpsters available at New Covenant Missionary Baptist Church where neighborhood residents could dispose of unwanted items. We scheduled pick-ups for residents who were unable to transport their items on their own. 37 truck loads and trailer loads of junk was disposed of, and the dumpsters were full by the



end of that one day. We heard from many residents how useful this was and they hoped we could do it again.



Volunteers and Staff before starting work



Stephanie, a Thrivent Financial Rep, plants mums



Painting the shed at the CRC



Weeding at West Willow Park



All three dumpsters were full by the end of the day!



Karina planted mums at the entrance sign



3 Little Free Libraries get a face lift!

November 2018

On November 29 we had a small, yet hard-working group rake leaves at three homes. We filled over 80 bags at those three houses!



We helped out with Take Back the Meds Day and Trunk or Treat at the West Willow Community Resource Center on October 27.

