

## Sustaining the Neighborhood Sociable.

### NEIGHBORHOOD SOCIABILITY AND CIVILITY.

Intent and purpose are the key factors in establishing the lifestyle of a neighborhood. People must want to be friendly. Given the proper intent and purpose, sociability almost emerges by itself, unaided by programmed activities, enabling facilities or community services.

However, designing places and spaces that accommodate and encourage people to engage with one another is helpful. People move in and out of neighborhoods and benefit from a warm welcome in schools, parks and shops, or on the sidewalk. In new neighborhoods, people are just getting to know one another and the presence of social places helps people find other people to meet.

### LEVERAGE PHYSICAL ASSETS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINED SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.

Physical assets last. Once a walkable sidewalk, a park or a school is built, it usually lasts for a long while. Sustained social engagement of neighbors can use these assets for years, if not decades, to meet and commune with neighbors. The investment pays dividends for a long time.

### LEVERAGE PROGRAMMATIC SYSTEMS TO PROMOTE SUSTAINED SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT.

The neighborhood picnic, the garden clubs and the normalcy of people volunteering at schools and parks establishes an expectation that infects new families and people as they move in to the neighborhood.

Apartments and condominiums are harder to socialize, but the trend to smaller living units and bigger social gathering places reverses the historic trend. Management usually provides the leadership, but resident participation is important to foster. Perpetually offering these social activities, modernized from time to time, keeps multi-family communities vibrant.

### ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY.

The business models for single family and multi-family communities are critical to ensure that facilities and activities provided when the community is established endure. Changing economic and employment conditions alter the fundamentals of many neighborhoods over time.

Retaining the viability of neighborhoods over time requires two systems to prosper. First, the internal financial strength of the neighborhood organization needs to be maintained so the expected level of quality maintenance can continue.

Second, at a macro level, residents must continue to have the financial resources necessary to maintain their lifestyle. Economic development, employment training programs and transportation systems that connect residents with jobs are all important neighborhood issues.

### PERPETUITY IS A LONG TIME.

Sustaining viable neighborhoods requires constant and purposeful attention on many levels. Leadership and participation matter.