

# Cities of Service

## A High Impact Service Plan

Kettering, Ohio

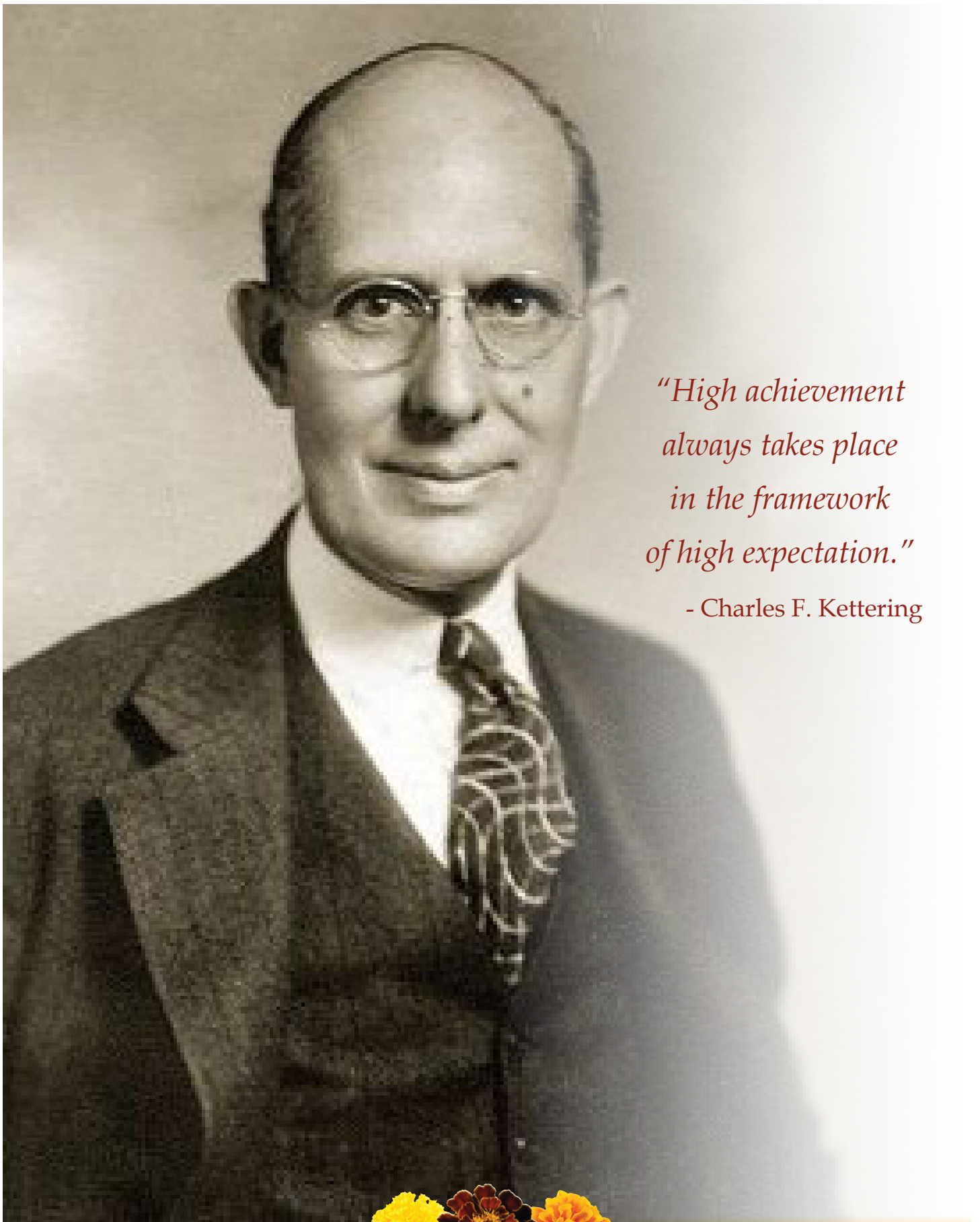
Mayor Donald E. Patterson



CITY OF KETTERING



**CITIES** OF  
**SERVICE**  
.ORG



*"High achievement  
always takes place  
in the framework  
of high expectation."*

- Charles F. Kettering



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# Message from the Mayor

October 2012

Dear Friends,

The City of Kettering is known as "The City of Volunteers" and with that legacy comes great responsibility. As Mayor, I not only believe in the amazing power of volunteers, but I have seen that power firsthand. Currently, there are over 1,000 active volunteers who give their time and talent in our City offices each day. Every City department utilizes volunteers to help with day-to-day operations. Last year, our volunteers saved the City \$800,000. We are also very fortunate to have service clubs and churches in Kettering that believe in giving back to their community.



It is because of our volunteer tradition, and the fact that our volunteers always help when asked, that I didn't hesitate to pledge to find creative ways to utilize the time and talent of volunteers to address our City's greatest need, neighborhood revitalization. I was excited to join my fellow mayors from around our nation to become an active member of the **Cities of Service** initiative.

Our first event was held on our annual **Make A Difference Day**, October 27, 2012. The City has participated in this annual day of giving for 20 years. Typically, we have hundreds of volunteers completing multiple projects to make a difference in our community, so it only made sense to kick off our **Cities of Service** project on this day. Our goal was to use service to connect, assist and clean up our neighborhoods.

For our first effort, we received a national award from **USA WEEKEND Magazine**, Points of Light and Newman's Own. I was so very proud to accept this award, but then I know we have the greatest residents in the country! Our program was, and will continue to be, comprised of projects that will revitalize our neighborhoods through the energy and expertise of volunteers to make positive changes in our city. We will continue to use service to make Kettering the best place to Live, Work, Play and Volunteer ... one neighborhood at a time!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Donald E. Patterson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Donald E. Patterson, Mayor



# Executive Summary

In July 2012, the City of Kettering officially joined the national **Cities of Service** coalition, thereby making a strong commitment to engage and empower volunteers to address the urgent needs of Kettering neighborhoods.

For years, the City of Kettering has participated in **USA WEEKEND Magazine** and Points of Light national **Make A Difference Day**. **Cities of Service** allows Kettering to extend its annual **Make A Difference Day** tradition into a yearlong initiative to tackle our City's most pressing need, neighborhood revitalization.

As the "**City of Volunteers**," Kettering thrives on service. Many have worked endless hours to impact our aging community. It is important that we continue to grow and expand our initiative to invigorate, further sustain and improve our community.

## Our initiative will focus on this specific challenge:

### Neighborhood Revitalization

- ▶ Volunteers need to be used strategically to address the City's most pressing need within neighborhoods.
- ▶ Neighbors and residents need to positively interact with each other resulting in community cohesion and sustainability.

This initiative invites residents to convene and connect with their neighbors, service participants and City staff to create a more united, vibrant Kettering.

## Our initiative has two important goals:

- ▶ Assist residents to take ownership of their neighborhoods and build a sense of pride in their surroundings through neighborhood revitalization projects.
- ▶ Create and elevate volunteer opportunities to increase resident interaction.



This document serves as a comprehensive service plan and coordinated strategy focused on matching volunteers and established community partners to the area of greatest need, neighborhood revitalization.

Kettering, Ohio is proud to be one of the cities in the nation that is a **Cities of Service** coalition member.

*"The City of Kettering is home to one of the first local government programs in the nation. Since 1979, we have leveraged volunteers to improve our city in a multitude of ways. **Cities of Service** gives us the tools to take service to a new level."*

*Mary Lou Randolph, Volunteer Administrator*



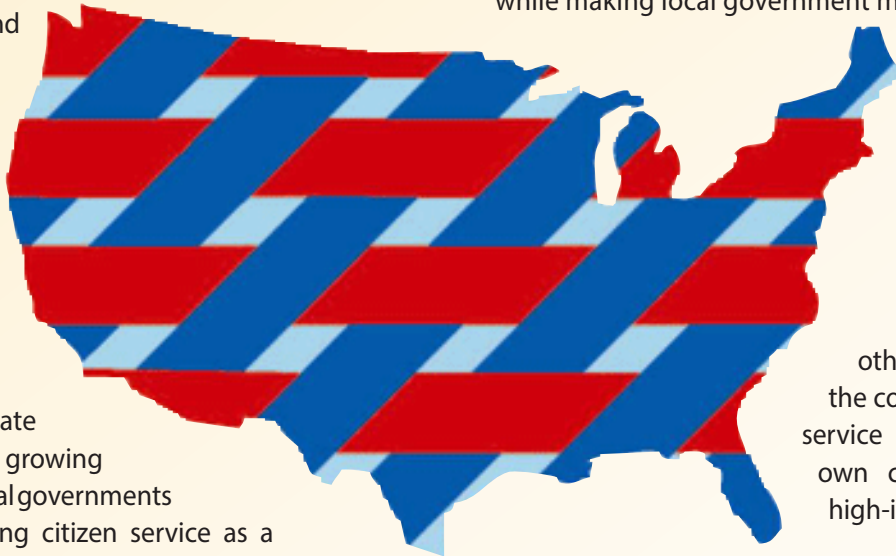
# Cities of Service

*Cities of Service* is a bipartisan coalition of mayors committed to working together to find new and innovative ways to harness the power of volunteers and address critical city needs.

Mayor Bloomberg of New York City and 17 mayors from cities across the nation founded the coalition in September 2009. Since its inception, the coalition has rapidly grown.

It aims to create a vibrant and growing network of municipal governments effectively leveraging citizen service as a reliable, viable tool to achieve measurable impact on pressing local challenges.

By accelerating the service movement at the most local level—connecting local needs to the supply of willing volunteers in innovative and impactful new ways—*Cities of Service* aspires to create a new chapter in America's long-standing history of service while making local government more effective.



Like the founding mayors, each coalition member has made a commitment to work with other mayors around the country and advance service strategies in their own city by crafting a high-impact service plan.

To learn more or to see if your city is a *City of Service*, go to:

[citiesofservice.org](http://citiesofservice.org)





# Kettering: A Tradition of Service

## Make a Difference Day 2012



Volunteers worked hard on this day, and their effort helped Kettering win the award!



Mayor Don Patterson accepted the City Award from USA Today Weekend Magazine

The City of Kettering, Ohio (named after Charles F. Kettering) has always been on the forefront of volunteerism, and is known as the “*City of Volunteers*”. In fact, the City’s flower is the **marigold**. Why? The marigold is a flower that comes up “voluntarily” year after year.

Thirty-eight years ago, Kettering started a city government volunteer program, becoming one of the first cities in the nation to do so. Since then, it has strived to set the standard in local government volunteer programs.

Currently, there are over 1,000 active volunteers who give their time in the City offices each day. Every City department utilizes volunteers to help with day-to-day operations. Volunteers are also essential in helping with special projects and events sponsored by the City. We are also very fortunate to partner with service clubs, schools, universities and churches who believe in giving back to their community.

The City of Kettering has been participating in the national *Make A Difference Day* for over 20 years, and it is a staple in our community. When *Make A Difference Day 2012* rolled around, Kettering timed it so the event kicked off our *Cities of Service* initiative.

We believe that this pairing is what helped us win the *City Award* from *USA WEEKEND Magazine*, Points of Light and Newman’s Own on April 25 in Washington, D.C. for *Make a Difference Day 2012*. With the award came a \$10,000 grant provided by Newman’s Own, which will be used for future *Make A Difference Day* activities.

When staff attended a *Cities of Service* session at the 2012 Points of Light National Volunteer Conference, it seemed like joining *Cities of Service* was the natural thing to do. Addressing the city’s most critical needs with service ... we can do that! It is what our community lives for!



# Methodology

All **Cities of Service** coalition members receive technical assistance and support from **Cities of Service** to develop high-impact service plans. Much of this support follows a methodology outlined in the **Cities of Service Playbook**.

For Kettering, the Volunteer Office and Planning and Development Department act as the driving forces of the **Cities of Service** initiative. They met with the Mayor and City Council, City Manager and each Department Director to discuss specific challenges throughout the city that could be addressed through service. It was unanimously agreed upon that neighborhood revitalization should be our service initiative.

In 2012, the Planning and Development Department met internally to find the top ten neighborhoods most in need of revitalization using a neighborhood evaluation model. This model includes analyzing the number of property maintenance violations, frequency of violations, trends in housing values and vacancies. They also met with the Police Department to gather crime statistics.

Many types of analysis were conducted with community organizations to identify both the challenges the City would address through our initiative and the resources available to support the effort.

## The analysis included:

- ▶ Focus groups of key stakeholders. (These included representatives from nonprofit organizations, colleges/universities, local businesses, service organizations, K-12 schools and churches.)

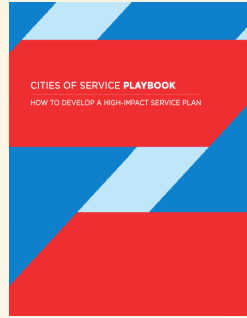
- ▶ Interviews with local and national leaders, including volunteer managers who were members of **Cities of Service**.
- ▶ National level **Cities of Service** staff.
- ▶ Completed surveys by K-12 school personnel and City residents.

After completing the analysis, the City of Kettering developed an initiative to address the challenges. Next, the City developed metrics to gauge the progress of the milestones and operations plans for implementation.

After all of the above analysis was completed, a neighborhood was chosen based on the greatest need and the greatest potential for impact. After the neighborhood was selected, potential community service projects were identified and residents were invited to participate.

Residents of the neighborhood had an opportunity to share concerns and assist in developing strategies to socially reinvigorate the neighborhood. It is at this time we reached out to the community and City staff to form our service, educational and technical teams.

The initiative began on **Make A Difference Day** in our first neighborhood and continued until summer. We wrapped up the initiative for that neighborhood, the analysis begins again and a new neighborhood will be chosen!





# Cities of Service Team

**City team members include staff from the following departments:**

Administrative Systems  
City Manager's Office  
Economic Development  
Fire  
Mayor/City Council Office  
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Arts  
Planning and Development  
Police  
Senior Services  
Volunteer Office

## **Community Partners**

Kettering College of Medical Arts  
Kettering Leadership Academy  
University of Dayton  
Sinclair Community College  
Alter High School  
Dayton Regional STEM School  
Fairmont High School  
Fairhaven Church  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints  
Little Miami Watershed Network  
Kettering-Centerville Kiwanis Club  
Dor-Wood Optimist Club  
SIGNS Group  
Partners for Healthy Youth  
Kettering Noon Optimists  
Red Cross  
Town & Country Shopping Center  
Day-Air Credit Union  
Highfield Door Sales  
Panera Bread  
WilmerHale  
Miami Valley Communications Council  
Christ United Methodist Church

*"Small acts of everyday heroes bring communities together and help individuals through difficult times. If Americans, and especially our young people, do their part and answer the call to service, cities across this country will support their efforts and help them contribute to the greater good."*

– Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Los Angeles, CA



# Our Initiative: An Overview

Over twenty years ago, the City of Kettering began participating in the national *Make a Difference Day*; as many as 350 volunteers have participated in many different projects to benefit the community.

The *Cities of Service* program allows us to take this single day of service and develop an ongoing initiative. It will use service as a strategy to tackle our most pressing need — neighborhood revitalization and sustainability.

Our initiative loosely follows the *Cities of Service* “*Love your Block*” and “*Sustainable Home Makeover*” blueprints. The Mayor’s Office engages community members in revitalizing their neighborhoods one block at a time and helps homeowners perform simple renovations to improve their homes.

We hope to encourage community pride in struggling neighborhoods by assisting residents to improve their community through general cleanup, home repair, landscaping, energy conservation, weatherization, education and participation. The City will assist in organizing and encouraging community groups to create a community spirit that will lead to an engaged community. By using community resources, providing grants and coordinating City services, we can achieve measurable impact and strengthen our community at little cost.



*“The world hates change, yet it is the only thing that has brought progress.”*

— Charles F. Kettering



## Specific Challenges

Our initiative will address neighborhood revitalization. Kettering is an aging community, both our residents and housing stock. The majority of our city was built in the 1950's. Young parents came to Kettering to buy their first home and raise their families. Our community was once a booming, affluent suburb; we can't make that statement today.

Our housing stock is at least 50 years old and is in need of upkeep and repair. Those young parents have aged and still remain in their homes. Many are not able to maintain their residences. Our region relied on manufacturing jobs to maintain its tax base and thousands of those jobs have been lost. Combine the loss of income with the aging population, and you have neighborhoods decaying and teetering on disrepair.

Our first neighborhood represented the very kind of neighborhood we wanted to revitalize. We chose Richman Heights for our first initiative because it is a low-income neighborhood, with 319 single-family properties. The neighborhood has vacant properties, property maintenance violations, a city-owned lot that was contaminated, did not have a neighborhood watch program, and has not won a Neighborhood Pride award in years. The neighborhood borders the largest city in our county and the residents feel a slight disconnect from Kettering. Most of the residents that received help were low-income or seniors. This neighborhood also lies in the zip code with the most under-utilized help for county public assistance. One of our challenges will be building the community involvement we need to make this initiative successful.

## Possible Risks

We believe there are a few large risks involved with this initiative. The first is the risk of liability. We have processes in place to help with this risk in our regular volunteer program, but we realize it will be much different when volunteers are coming to help for a few hours. We will need to assure each volunteer signs a Release and Waiver of Liability form.

We realize there is the issue of background checks. We will address this by always making sure our volunteers are working in pairs and instruct them to remain on the exterior of residents' homes.

Another risk we will encounter is the risk of injury. We will provide the necessary training to avoid serious injury. We will make sure we have trained staff on site during our days of service to assist volunteers. We hope to go over the scope of work that will need to be done ahead of time and have trained captains at each site.

## A Priority of the Mayor

Mayor Patterson has been in office for a total of 19 years, eight as Council Member and eleven as Mayor. When he ran for office, his initial platform was based on property maintenance. He saw the need to revitalize our neighborhoods and housing stock. He still believes that it is the largest challenge our city faces today.

When elected, he went to work immediately on two new programs: hiring additional property maintenance inspectors and improving our property maintenance code. Making changes in the property maintenance code has made finding resolution to property maintenance violations quicker and easier for property owners. Mayor Patterson also formed a Property Maintenance Board.

He sees the *Cities of Service* initiative as another tool he can use to help achieve his goal. Mayor Patterson actively speaks on the importance of maintaining our neighborhoods so we will continue to be a vital community in our region.

He encourages block parties, neighborhood watch, neighborhood pride awards and all events that will engage our neighbors in their neighborhood.

He not only encourages those activities, he personally attends the events. In addition to his goal of improving property values, he also understands the importance of volunteerism and service. More importantly, he understands in order to have a vibrant community you need residents who are engaged in that community!





# Goals and Timelines

## Initiative Goals

The basic goals of our initiative are to improve our neighborhoods, improve our property values, and have an engaged community with citizen involvement. Kettering will offer education, grants, staff assistance and service to help homeowners reach these goals in our neighborhoods.

The home repairs will be made to correct property maintenance violations, help with general upkeep, and take conservation measures. Accessibility grants, energy audits, and bulk trash pick-up will be offered. This goal will be measured by tracking the number of homes that undergo repairs. A comparison will be made of property maintenance violations issued and compliance to previous years.

Another goal is to build community spirit. We want to encourage our residents to be a part of the community and help one another. This goal will be measured by how many residents register with the neighborhood watch program and by surveying each neighborhood by the end of the year. Engaged communities are far less likely to let their neighborhoods fall into poor conditions and can act as a powerful force in preventing crime. We will compare crime reports in the neighborhood over previous years. The City has a Senior Resource Manager who assists our elderly on difficult issues. We will gauge her responsibilities in our neighborhoods as well.

Lastly, the City conducts a Neighborhood Pride Award program each summer. For example, our first neighborhood, Richman Heights, has not won an award in years; we hope that will change in 2013!

## Our Process

After the neighborhood is chosen and all analyses are complete, our City team will plan these major events:

**Celebration Event:** The initiative is culminated with a block party celebration complete with free food, games, a raffle, children's activities, a survey, and recognition by the Mayor and City Council of the partners' efforts. Also included is a booth with information on topics such as low interest loans, free recreational activities for families, senior services, fire prevention and safety, to name a few. It is an opportunity for neighborhood families and partners to bond and celebrate the neighborhood.

**Neighborhood Garage Sale:** Our City team works with neighbors to compile a list of homes interested in holding a garage sale. We provide signs and advertising free of charge for participants. We also arrange for bulk trash pick-up immediately following the sale.



**Community Service Project:** Since *Make A Difference Day* is one of the largest days designated to service, we dedicate this day to the neighborhood. Our project includes litter cleanup, yard debris removal, alley cleanup, outdoor house repair projects, leaf raking, adhering medallions on storm drains to remind folks to keep our storm waters free of contaminants, distributing information to make arrangements for smoke detector installation and tree planting to enhance the neighborhood park. This day creates energy and enthusiasm in the neighborhood as hundreds of volunteers unite to strengthen our neighborhoods and engage neighbors!

# High Level Timeline

BEGINNING DATE	ACTIVITY
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A neighborhood is selected as the <i>Cities of Service</i> neighborhood based on issues such as property maintenance violations, trends in housing values and vacancies, crime statistics and concrete repair schedules.</li> </ul>
February – May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Contacts are made with area businesses and volunteers to engage them in the initiative.</li> <li>➤ Grant writing takes place to secure funding for costs associated with the initiative.</li> <li>➤ Marketing begins to energize residents of the neighborhood.</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ With the help of our City team and volunteers, the block party takes place. It includes free food, door prizes and children's activities. Information is provided on a variety of topics including fire safety, senior services, low interest loans and minor home repairs.</li> </ul>
August – September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Begin securing volunteers to help with neighborhood cleanup.</li> <li>➤ Reach out to neighbors in need of assistance.</li> <li>➤ Identify problem areas within the neighborhood and identify ways to help.</li> <li>➤ Secure necessary supplies for neighborhood cleanup.</li> </ul>
4th Saturday in October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>Make A Difference Day</i> – Neighborhood Cleanup.</li> </ul>
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Progress report to Mayor, City Council and City Manager.</li> <li>➤ Select a new neighborhood.</li> </ul>



# Matrix

Priority Areas	Impact Service Initiative	Baseline & Metric for Neighborhood	Impact Goals
General Cleanup	In October, Make a Difference Day (MADD) will focus on volunteer service groups' efforts in neighborhood.	# of MADD projects in neighborhood compared to baseline	A MADD/community service event and cleanup day will be held.
Vacant Property Cleanup	City staff and volunteers will identify, clean up exterior, and secure vacant properties and maintain as needed.	# of vacant properties cleaned	Vacant properties will be identified, secured by City staff and maintained by volunteers.
Large Trash Pickup	Volunteers will coordinate with Public Works Dept. to remove large debris.	# of past times neighborhood has had this compared to baseline	A large item and yard debris pickup date will be offered.
Minor House Repair	Volunteers will perform minor home repairs. CDBG program will perform home rehabs for income eligible homeowners.	# of volunteer projects in past addressing this compared to baseline # of CDBG projects in the last 5 years compared to baseline	160 homes will have some type of repair.
Assisting Code Violations	Volunteers will assist homeowners in correcting property maintenance violations. CDBG will assist income eligible homeowners.	# of volunteer projects performed in the past # of property maintenance violations compared to baseline	225 homes will be in compliance with the property maintenance code.
Accessibility Grants	CDBG program will administer grants for accessibility projects.	# of accessibility grants in the past 5 years compared to baseline	Two new accessibility grants by CDBG.
Energy Audits & Improvement	City Home Energy Rating System (HERS) will perform home energy audits. Volunteers will perform energy improvements. CDBG program will assist homeowners with rehab loan grants.	# of energy efficiency grants in the past 5 years compared to baseline	60 homes will have energy audits or improvements.
Energy & Water Conservation Education	City staff and various community partners will provide education on fire safety, senior services and low interest loans.	No education has been performed for this neighborhood.	160 households will receive education.
Neighborhood Watch and Neighborhood Pride	City staff and volunteers will strengthen and provide education about the Neighborhood Watch & Neighborhood Pride program.	No Neighborhood Watch Program in this neighborhood. # of Neighborhood Pride winners compared to baseline	The Neighborhood Watch program will appoint a coordinator and recruit 30 new members. The Neighborhood Pride program will receive 10 new nominations.
Awareness	City staff will maintain a Cities of Service web page to market initiative	No web page has been implemented in past.	A web page will be developed/maintained to inform on initiative.





# Acknowledgements

A special thank you to the City of Kettering **Cities of Service** Team, led by Volunteer Administrator Mary Lou Randolph and Planning & Development Director Tom Robillard. Under their leadership, this team strives for continual improvement. This initiative is driven by the passion and dedication exhibited by team members. Each and every member is valued for their individual expertise and perspective, thereby cultivating a forum for continued success.

Thank you to Christ United Methodist Church, the Kiwanis Club of Kettering-Centerville, and Kettering City Schools for their partner letters, support, and vote of confidence as Kettering applied to become a City of Service.



*Thanks to Dor-Wood Optimist Club for funding this tool trailer utilized for all neighborhood cleanups.*



*Thank you Highfield Door Sales for supplying one lucky homeowner with a new garage door and installation.*

We also wish to show our appreciation to **Cities of Service** for their support. You've provided us with information necessary not only to develop and sustain our project, but to grow our project! Thank you!

Lastly, we are more than thankful to the individual volunteers, the many volunteer groups including faith-based organizations, colleges, high schools, scout groups, sports teams as well as the businesses that have supplied us with the funding to implement this project. We thank you for joining us in our quest to strengthen and invigorate our neighborhoods. We could not succeed without you! As we continue with our **Cities of Service** initiative, our list of partners continues to grow and grow—we are so very thankful!



*We couldn't do this without the help of our amazing volunteers!*



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