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DEAR FRIENDS,

Walnut Way is dedicated to cultivating a strong and resilient community by working together with residents, local businesses, and government. We recognize that resident leadership activities and creating opportunities for economic prosperity are essential components for providing individuals with stability and security in economically isolated communities.

As we move into this new year, we will focus on empowering people living in Lindsay Heights and neighborhoods across Milwaukee by connecting them with resources that will enable economic stability, cultural enrichment, and environmental sustainability through social enterprise and collaborative problem-solving.

This includes investing in local environmental justice projects such as residential and community solar power access, broadband networks, lead remediation programs, and healthy home initiatives.

This also involves creating more opportunities for black-owned businesses to succeed while advocating for equitable infrastructure investments.

We aim to impact the quality of life of those within our community by promoting economic justice, wellness, and resilience.

The Walnut Way team is dedicated to leading these efforts but cannot do so without your help - join us on the path toward building a better future together!

Respectfully,

Antonio Butts
Executive Director

WALNUT WAY
As Walnut Way embarks on charting its future direction, the Board of Directors and staff leadership engaged Sort Sol Group (SSG) to facilitate a strategy development process to respond to the changing environment and leverage its unique strengths.

While the Board and leadership were the primary players interacting with the consultants, all staff was engaged because it is important for everyone to understand how their work impacts the success of the organization.

Mission Strategy must always begin with an understanding of the organization's core identity, seeking to leverage its core strengths and competitive advantage in producing the change it seeks to make in the world. Walnut Way began its strategy development process by confirming its identity in order to make something greater and articulate what it ultimately seeks to achieve. Walnut Way's reframed mission statement is: We inform, educate, and provide resources to Lindsay Heights residents to connect and develop leaders through civic engagement, environmental stewardship, and creating venues for prosperity.

Through this process, Walnut Way developed a tool for making ongoing strategic decisions for the organization called a “strategy screen”. In its development, Walnut Way considered its identity and desired impact to aid in driving strategic program decisions.

The plan is created to drive organizational change and transformation. To support the execution of the newly rearticulated strategy, Walnut Way’s leadership and staff will meet with Sort Sol Group (SSG) in January for a half-day workshop to help the staff to embody their work and the impact it has on the success of the organization.
RELATIONSHIPS & RESOURCES
Last spring, a group of Lindsay Heights residents decided to embark on a mission to improve their health and wellness. This challenge was centered around the idea of seeking out fun ways to become more active, both physically and socially.

Participants have come together for spirited morning walks through Johnsons Park, bicycle rides, yoga sessions, tai chi classes, strength training activities, and more. Not only has this challenge been about getting fit but it's also been about creating a sense of community among neighbors.

This initiative has resulted in countless transformation stories for its participants who now have a newfound purpose, confidence, and connection through the experience. This movement is quickly gaining traction across the neighborhood as more and more people are joining in on the fun. When people come together, they form strong relationships that leave everyone involved feeling empowered and stronger than before.

“When I first started yoga, I could not cross my legs. I have not done that in years, and when I sat down today, it happened. I don’t know if the others can come back, but I’m going to try my best. So I appreciate everyone in the group for the motivation and support,” said Mrs. Maria Beltran, community leader and participant in the 90-day Health & Wellness Challenge. Mrs. Beltran said that the exercises have really helped her, with proof in her decreased diabetes A1C numbers from 11.9 to 6.0.
90-DAY HEALTH & WELLNESS CHALLENGE
Harvest Day is a cherished time of the year when we come together to celebrate the end of the growing season and the abundance of our urban farms. It’s an opportunity for people from all walks of life to connect, build relationships, and foster a sense of unity and joy throughout our community.

Every year, Fondy Park hosts Harvest Day with a wide variety of activities to engage in, such as health screenings, local entertainment, educational talks and workshops, art displays, interactive games, food vendors, and more.

It’s a great way for us to recognize and appreciate our diverse backgrounds while also being thankful for the available resources.

The event brings out families from the nearby communities - young children playing tag in the park while their parents wander over to sample some freshly-harvested produce; teens competing against each other in cornhole tournaments; and adults making new friends as they spend time exploring different booths at the farmers’ market. It’s a unique experience where everyone can find something fun to do and have memorable conversations that last long after Harvest Day ends.

Harvest Day is more than just an ordinary celebration - it’s about coming together in shared gratitude for what nature provides us with. We hope you’ll join us next year for another awesome Harvest Day celebration!
Halloween Trunk-or-Treat was created in 2018 by a group of people called Worriers & Uplifters with the idea of bringing the community together to have fun, learn about available resources, and get essential services such as; flu shots, information about voting, community projects and more.

This year’s event had 28 cars participating with decorated trunks, our involved partners distributed COVID and flu shots, voting information (how to register, finding voting pools etc), Fathers Making Progress was present with resources to help fathers in the community, Words of Encouragement gave prayers and also helped a few residents interested in locating a church. Local partner stores also proved candies, fruits, and snacks for all participating children. If you are interested in partnering up for next year’s event, contact Ms. Emonia Barnett: emoniab@yahoo.com.
On Tuesdays, Walnut Way is a place full of activity and energy. During the colder months of the year, you may see a yoga group practicing in the morning; as soon as noon arrives, the community meets up to discuss ideas, concerns, and initiatives that could be beneficial to Lindsay Heights. This meeting space is an essential part of revitalizing the neighborhood and connecting local decision-makers to the needs of those who live there.

In addition to these daytime meetings, there are potlucks in the evening for residents to spend time together and stay warm from the blustery winter weather outside. At these meetings, people brainstorm projects such as the 90-day Wellness Challenge which helps promote healthy lifestyle choices for everyone in the area. They also come up with ways for residents to have their voices heard by advocating for improvements to their neighborhood and across the city of Milwaukee.

It’s easy to get involved too - just drop in any Tuesday and meet your neighbors! You can learn more about what initiatives are underway, and lend your help in activities that require civic resources. Everyone has something valuable they can bring to this collective effort of creating positive change in Lindsay Heights! Contact Ramona Curry to learn more at: ramonacurry1127@yahoo.com.
Blue Skies Landscaping (BSL) is a full-service landscaping company based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin that specializes in green infrastructure projects designed to reduce stormwater pollution. They are also responsible for maintaining the Walnut Way campus and executing landscaping contracts to beautify various properties throughout the city. This year, BSL has been hard at work on an array of projects, such as weekly mowing, bed maintenance, pathways installation at the Green Tech Station and Victory Over Violence park, as well as completing the Unity Lutheran Church Project – moreover, Blue Skies is responsible for maintaining 33 bioswales. In 2022, a Director of Landscape and Construction was hired, the crew participated in the American Disability Act Compliance training, and provided in-kind labor for landscaping services to Lindsay Heights residents.

From granite pathways embedded with colorful stones to flower beds bursting with vibrant colors, BSL’s commitment to high-quality landscaping work shines through all their endeavors. Not only do they ensure complete customer satisfaction while delivering quality results with each project, but they also take great strides in protecting nature by reducing stormwater pollution through bioswale ecosystems. Furthermore, their continuous efforts in promoting staff members illustrate their strong commitment to developing their workforce’s skill set while giving back to local communities in need of landscaping services. In light of all this work done over the course of this year alone, there is no doubt that Blue Skies Landscaping will continue making great contributions toward creating more beautiful environments in Milwaukee!
RESIDENTS RECEIVED IN-KIND LABOR

33 BIOSWALES MAINTAINED

4 STAFF MEMBERS PROMOTED

WORK | ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP
The Wisconsin Environmental Justice and Infrastructure Initiative (EJII) is a new grassroots movement that was created in order to address environmental justice concerns in the state.

The program provides funding for projects that increase awareness and help to improve air and water quality and reduce environmental health hazards. Eligible projects include those that promote renewable energy or energy efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, or improve access to healthy food.

All over the United States, communities of color are leading climate initiatives advancing strategic actions, and informing policies and practices. However, these communities’ leaders do not always receive the resources, support, or recognition needed to foster transformative impact. The WI EJII seeks to change that narrative by bringing together diverse grassroots groups, specifically people of color, to develop an innovative statewide Environmental Justice Initiative that is community-driven and equity-centered.

If you would like to learn more, get involved, and sign up for updates, please visit the website: www.ejicwisconsin.org
Bringing together diverse groups to develop an innovative Environmental Justice initiative in WI!
Walnut Way’s yearly Growing Youth Leadership program employs teen interns who have an interest in gardening, agriculture, arts, biology, customer service, and other similar fields.

This season, the interns learned valuable gardening skills including planting, proper watering techniques, and harvest of fruits and vegetables. During their time in the gardens, the interns are collards, tomatoes, swish chard, cucumbers, kale, and beans! They also learned how to preserve the fruits that were harvested by making cherry mustard, cherry pie filling and currant jam.

Besides the urban agricultural skills acquired this season, the interns also participated in learning labs that were designed to promote career preparation, health and wellness, and financial management skills. This effort consisted of a total of nine learning labs, with a duration of 90 minutes per session. The learning labs were carefully curated to serve as an opportunity to bring knowledge and lifelong skills that the teens will be able to apply to any sector of their lives moving forward.
9 LEARNING LABS

DIFFERENT TYPES OF PRODUCE GROWN IN THE GARDENS

ATTENDED THE GREEN & HEALTHY SCHOOLS 6TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

WE GROW YOUTH LEADERS
Adopted November 3, 2022, by the Milwaukee Common Council, the Lindsay Heights Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) is now a powerful tool for community control. By utilizing the NID, we can strategically target areas in need of investment and other resources to ensure that our neighborhood develops equitably and sustainably. Through partnerships with local government, businesses, and statewide advocacy groups, Walnut Way will continue to fight for the investments and resources needed to create strong neighborhood alliances that will benefit our entire community. We look forward to continuing this work together!

We are dedicated to creating long-term, sustainable community wealth and prosperity for Lindsay Heights. Together, we can create real change in our community!
We’ve now gotten to see and benefit from a full year of programs and business services from the tenants of the IWC since its ribbon cutting. That’s a big milestone!

Current tenants include Milwaukee Area Health Education Center (AHEC), United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee, Marrika Rodgers MS LPC - Counselor, Bridgett Wilder - Nutritionist and Coach, Benedict Center, Designaway Apparel Printing, Taste of Lindsay Heights Cafe, Milwaukee Center for Independence, and Fondy Food Center.

The IWC connected to rooftop solar power this past fall, which offsets its carbon footprint and saves Walnut Way Conservation Corp. and tenants on energy bills and rent costs. We are very excited for this to come to fruition this year.
Launched in April 2021, Walnut Way’s custom apparel printing business became established and grew. Designaway is a grassroots social enterprise created to build leadership, influence, and community wealth.

Day-to-day operations include preparing and printing merchandise for our affiliates, custom bulk orders, new business development, onboarding, and connecting with neighborhood partners, artists, and other creatives. Designaway’s goal is to continue to grow and produce high-quality prints and exceptional customer service.

Current affiliates include Pink Umbrella Theatre Co., MESH Co-op, The Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA), ArtWorks for Milwaukee, Mercules Tees, TLAF and others. To order your own custom merchandise, or build your own storefront visit www.designaway.org.
TASTE OF LINDSAY HEIGHTS (TOLH)

TOLH officially opened its doors in October 2021 and is an initiative of Walnut Way’s Community Wealth Building campaign which identifies resident skills and assets, helping them turn these into economic opportunities.

TOLH is a local carryout café and a place for budding food entrepreneurs to take their businesses to the next level. The café increases awareness in a central location in the neighborhood in line with the health and wellness initiatives developed by residents. Popular items are freshly squeezed juices, fruit smoothies, ginger shots, customized salads, wraps, custom personal pizzas, and more.

Over the past year, the café has provided catering services to various corporate meetings and small-scale events that took place at the IWC space and other local organizations and schools.

If you would like to support our local food entrepreneurs, check out our main menu online, or LET US CATER YOUR NEXT MEETING OR EVENT!

Learn more at: www.tasteoflindsayheights.com | 414-800-4154
INDIVIDUAL DONORS

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North Division Tour Honorarium
Public Service Commission
Schwab Charitable
Social Development Commission (SCD)
Seasons Of Giving
State Of Wisconsin
Styles Hbs
The Blackbaud Giving Fund
United Way Of Greater Milwaukee
Zilber Family Foundation
USE OF FUNDS

- WELLNESS | Civic Engagement 41%
- WORK | Environmental Stewardship 33%
- WEALTH | Economic Development 25%

SOURCE OF FUNDS

- Philanthropic Support $1,704,940.04 (70%)
- Social Enterprises Earned Revenue $725,000 (30%)

2022 OPERATING BUDGET: $2.4 MILLION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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Monique Graham, Secretary
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I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A GIFT!

Name: _________________________________________________________________

Street Address: ________________________________________________________

City, St, Zip: ___________________________________________________________

Phone: ________________________________________________________________

Email: _________________________________________________________________

SUGGESTED GIVING LEVELS:

• $50  • $100  • $250
• $500  • $750  • $1,000

DESIGNATE MY DONATION FOR (CIRCLE ONE):

• Innovations of Wellness Commons
• Operating/Programming

TRANSACTION TYPE (CIRCLE ALL THAT APPLY):

• CHECK My check payable to Walnut Way Conservation Corporation is enclosed in the amount of $ __________

• CREDIT CARD Please bill my credit card $ __________
Card type (circle): Visa  MasterCard  Discover
Account Number: ________________________
Expiration Date:  (mo)/  (year)  CVS Code: ___________
Signature: ____________________________________________________________________

• RECURRING PLEDGE: Bill my credit card $ ___________ a month/year (circle) for the next _____ months/years (circle) for a total pledge of $ ___________.

GIVE A GIFT TODAY AND HELP MAKE AN IMPACT

DONATE ONLINE AT WWW.WALNUTWAY.ORG/DONATE

OR PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM & RETURN TO:

Walnut Way Conservation Corp.
2240 N. 17th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53205

Explore your company’s matching gift policies! To make a gift in honor of someone or to make a pledge, stock, mutual fund, or electronic funds transfer, contact us at 414-264-2326 or email development@walnutway.org.

Walnut Way is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.
THANK YOU!
FIND & CONTACT US

info@walnutway.org

(414) 264-2326 | (414) 265-7245 (fax)

2240 N 17th Street, Milwaukee WI

www.walnutway.org