



Fall  
Creek  
Consultants

positioning neighborhoods  
and cities to succeed

# Marketing Plan for the Baring Cross Neighborhood and NSP Home Sales

Marcia Nedland, Fall Creek Consultants

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Baring Cross Neighborhood .....</b>	<b>4</b>
History and Boundaries.....	4
Key Issues .....	6
The Stabilization and Market Rebuilding Challenge.....	7
Possible Stabilization Strategies for Baring Cross and Outcomes Match .....	9
<b>Marketing Plans.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Marketing Goals .....	11
Target Markets .....	12
Marketing Messages.....	13
Marketing Strategies.....	15
Evaluation Strategies.....	19
AT-A-GLANCE: STRENGTHENING THE IMAGE OF BARING CROSS.....	20
AT-A-GLANCE: MARKETING NSP HOMES.....	21
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>23</b>
Sample Neighborhood Photo Shot List for Use in Marketing Materials.....	24
Neighborhood Identity: Creating Core Messages and Reinforcing Them With Activities and Communication.....	25

## Introduction

This marketing plan was drafted by Fall Creek Consultants for Argenta CDC as part of the organization's participation in a national NeighborWorks Neighborhood Marketing Pilot Program. In this Pilot, NeighborWorks is providing marketing planning consultation and a small grant for implementation in order to test and document a variety of neighborhood marketing strategies that can be shared with other nonprofits and neighborhood groups around the nation.

In order to gather information for the marketing plan, Marcia Nedland of Fall Creek Consultants visited North Little Rock for tours of the Baring Cross neighborhood, as well as meetings with neighbors, real estate professionals, CDC and City staff, and other stakeholders and key informants during the week of July 25, 2011.

Argenta CDC is part of a HUD Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) - funded collaborative with Habitat for Humanity and the North Little Rock Housing Authority, which will build or rehabilitate about 100 new homes in the Baring Cross neighborhood. This investment in the neighborhood will ultimately represent around \$10 million of federal subsidy and buyer mortgages. Because of its focus on one neighborhood, it represents a real opportunity to shape the future of the neighborhood with improvement in physical conditions and market values, a large group of new neighbors who could join existing neighbors in maintaining and improving quality of life, and enormous spin-off investment generated by increased confidence in the future of the neighborhood.

Argenta CDC is committed to working with neighbors in Baring Cross in additional ways to leverage the NSP investment. The organization recently created and filled a new staff position to recruit and coordinate delivery of a variety of services to the neighborhood, and to work with neighborhood leadership on other goals. This staff person will also manage a significant data collection effort this fall as part of the national Success Measures outcomes evaluation program. The rigorous data collection will both establish a baseline against which progress can be measured in the future, and guide strategy development and priorities for the next few years.

While implementation of the NSP initiative (with its serious deadlines) will understandably be the main focus of Argenta CDC's efforts for the next 18 months, it is expected that their commitment to the neighborhood will continue in a variety of ways in order to further neighborhood stabilization and revitalization.

The urgency associated with implementing the NSP initiative provided the rationale for developing a marketing plan that will help sell the houses being developed to strong homebuyers, even in the midst of a weak national and local market driven by the recession and a significant tightening of the credit market. The focus of this marketing plan is on building a strong positive image for the Baring Cross neighborhood with a variety of audiences, but especially with potential homebuyers, and on selling the properties Argenta will be building and rehabilitating through the NSP program.

## The Baring Cross Neighborhood

### History and Boundaries

According to the North Little Rock History website, the Baring Cross community took shape in the 1870s and 1880s as home to railroad workers, churches, schools, cafes, hotels, sawmills and stores. The Baring Cross bridge was the first permanent span of the Arkansas River, opened for trains in December 1873, and then for wagon and foot traffic in 1877. “Baring Cross” most likely derives from combining the names of London’s Baring Brothers, who financed construction of the bridge, and Judge John Cross, who owned property at the bridge’s south approach. Named for the bridge, the Baring Cross community was situated across the pike from the Iron Mountain railroad shops and a large swamp north of the rail yards. Fertile farmland and Big Rock Mountain’s rolling foothills had attracted settlers to the area since the 1820s.

In the 1880s, residential development from the river shore up to 15th Street centered on land that Josiah Giles and J.W. Vestal subdivided. These lots bordered Vestal’s commercial nurseries and greenhouses, which produced some of the finest flowers and shrubs in the nation. Vestal also sold an area north of 11th Street in 1884 to the Arkansas Industrial Company, which operated the “brick



yard.” Mord Roberts, a master mechanic for the Iron Mountain line who got into real estate in the 1890s, developed some 30 houses west of Pike from Seventh to 11th streets in the Giles Addition.

A group of 44 residents filed a petition in December 1895 to incorporate the town of Baring Cross. During the town’s relatively brief existence, it originally incorporated up to 11th Street, but two annexations expanded the territory, the first including two blocks west of Division Street between Eighth and 11th in 1898 and the second taking in the Baring Cross Addition up to 15th Street between Pike and Division in 1903. After North Little Rock won independence in 1904, Baring Cross residents petitioned for annexation to the larger city and the town became a neighborhood of North Little Rock.

As for today’s neighborhood boundaries, there seems to be agreement that the eastern boundary is Pike Avenue, and the southern boundary is River Road. The western boundary is probably the base of the natural hill that rises up, capped by Fort Roots. The northern boundary, however, is described differently by different people, from as south as 15<sup>th</sup> Street to as north as Pershing Road. I advise that it is very important to assist neighborhood leaders in determining these boundaries for themselves, based on their experience of what feels like one neighborhood. Argenta may build houses north of where the neighborhood defines itself, but that is not sufficient reason to force an artificial northern boundary. As you’ll see later in this report, I will make the case that it’s critical for neighbors to have a sense of efficacy over the geography of their neighborhood, and to physically define the boundaries with attractive entryway signage. If (as has been suggested by some I interviewed) there is a group of streets between, for example, 15<sup>th</sup> and Pershing Road that is substantively different (no social connections to Baring Cross, different housing stock or condition, different issues, etc.), then that area may need its own stabilization strategy, its own leadership development and its own name and marketing strategy. There is nothing to be gained and a lot to lose by forcing a fledgling neighborhood association to bite off more than it can chew.

## Key Issues

The following lists of “what’s working” and “what’s not working” is based on interviews with stakeholders and observation.

What’s Working	What’s Not Working
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A growing group of concerned neighbors who enjoy many things about the neighborhood and are interested in improving the quality of life there.</li> <li>▪ Millions of dollars of forthcoming high-visibility investment via the NSP initiative.</li> <li>▪ As many as 100 new households about to join the neighborhood.</li> <li>▪ Elementary school that is neighborhood based with a long-term principal who is open to partnering with neighbors on issues that will benefit the neighborhood and her students.</li> <li>▪ Although it is not a first choice neighborhood for homebuyers, its reputation is substantially better than the area across Pike Avenue.</li> <li>▪ Lots of trees and green space.</li> <li>▪ Proximity to the River Road recreation path.</li> <li>▪ City government enthusiastic about improving the neighborhood (and this is a city government that is unusually progressive and optimistic about neighborhood change, having successfully turned around the Argenta neighborhood and the downtown commercial district.)</li> <li>▪ Police department committed to working with neighbors, with a community police officer who has already impressed neighbors.</li> <li>▪ Faith-based institutions that are neighborhood-friendly.</li> <li>▪ Nearby major employers (LIST).</li> <li>▪ Nearby community college.</li> <li>▪ Forthcoming urban farm and community garden.</li> <li>▪ Some good landlords with well-maintained property.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Existing housing stock is small and older, more often than not in need of maintenance and repairs/improvements to compete effectively for today’s homebuyer.</li> <li>▪ Crime is a real issue here, with a recent high-profile murder, and many property crimes.</li> <li>▪ A lot of vacant houses, though Argenta and other NSP partners are actively engaged in acquiring them for demolition and new construction, and even rehab in some cases.</li> <li>▪ Poor quality commercial district services. The grocery store was particularly called out by people both inside and outside the neighborhood as being of poor quality.</li> <li>▪ Green strip along Pike is likely highly preferable to what was there before, but is ripe for some improvements (landscaping) to put the neighborhood’s best face forward.</li> <li>▪ There probably has not been an active owner-occupant buyer’s market here in years. There are multiple landlords who own several properties, in varying condition.</li> <li>▪ Neighbors are feeling overwhelmed by the number of problem rental properties.</li> <li>▪ Neighbors feel that there are not enough youth activities to keep young people out of trouble.</li> </ul>

## The Stabilization and Market Rebuilding Challenge

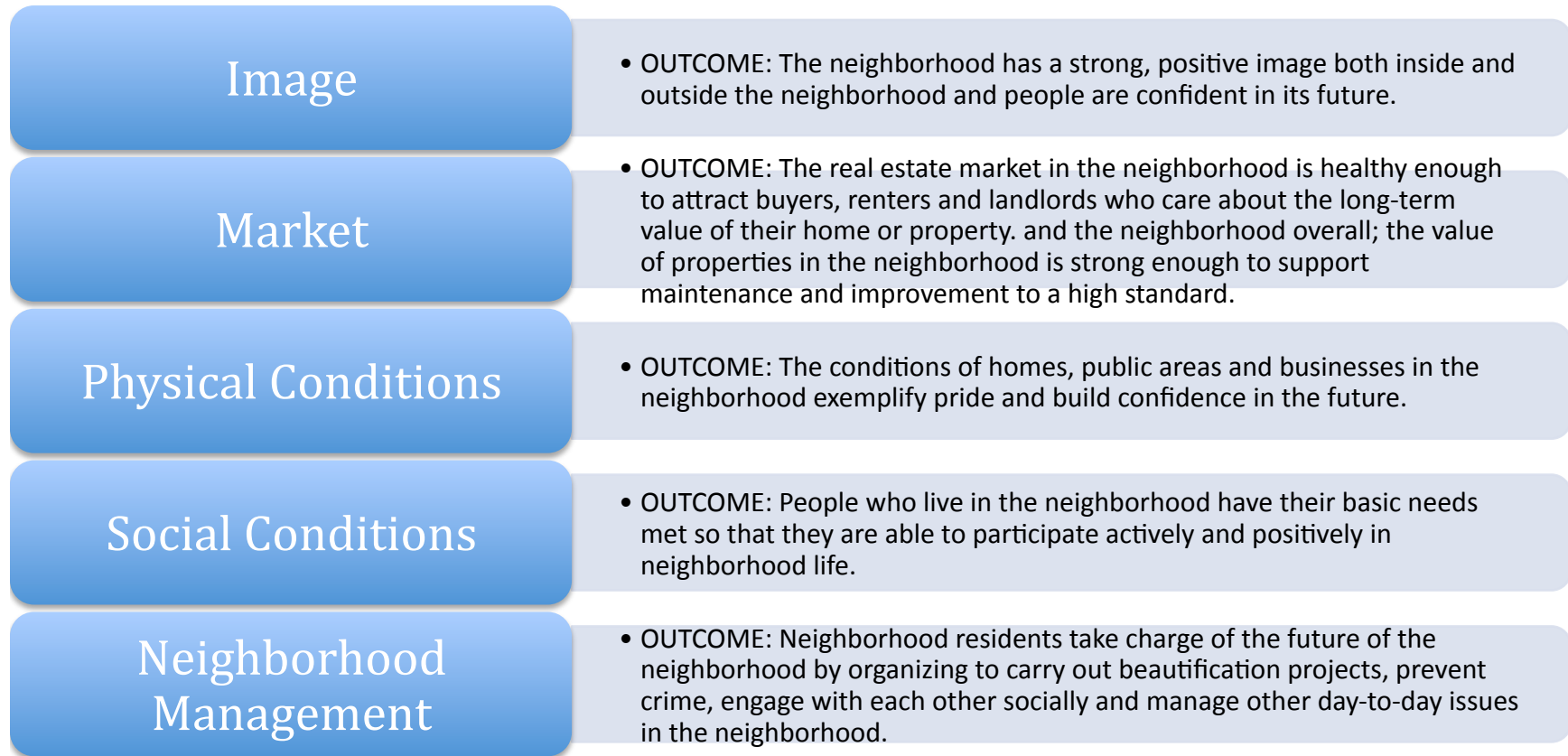
The scope of this project was to develop a plan for strengthening the image of the neighborhood and selling NSP homes, but any marketing plan should examine the products being marketed and make recommendations on ways to strengthen the match between what customers want and the benefits of the product. When someone buys a house, they buy a neighborhood, too. In this case, potential buyers of NSP homes in Baring Cross are also considering whether they are willing to buy life in the Baring Cross neighborhood. Also, existing neighbors are deciding every day whether they want to stay, to attend a neighborhood association meeting, whether it's worth it to make even a small investment of time and money in the improvement of their home. And landlords and other outside investors make choices all the time about how much to invest in their property, and whether the neighborhood is on the upswing or not.

As neighborhood strategist Charles Buki has said, "Confidence is the currency all neighborhoods trade on." While the monumental investment of the NSP initiative will have a significant impact on confidence in the future of the neighborhood, it won't work unless there are buyers or even renters willing to invest with Argenta CDC and its partners by buying a home, and there are a range of issues that need to be addressed to inspire their confidence as well as that of existing neighbors, landlords and other stakeholders.

I recommend that Argenta CDC, its partners, and Baring Cross neighbors develop a more comprehensive revitalization or market-rebuilding plan for the neighborhood soon so that other quality of life issues are being addressed in a systematic way, simultaneously with the development of NSP homes. In the meantime, I will offer the ideas I've collected in my visit to North Little Rock and interviews with neighbors, Realtors, local government, landlords and other stakeholders.

## Comprehensive Stabilization and Market-Rebuilding Strategies For Baring Cross

When I do planning for comprehensive neighborhood stabilization and market rebuilding, I think about five categories of outcomes, and develop related strategies and measures of success for those outcomes.





During my visit, I spoke with many people about the neighborhood and the broad range of issues that neighbors care about. Below is a summary of my thoughts about overall stabilization and market rebuilding in the neighborhood.

### Possible Stabilization Strategies for Baring Cross and Outcomes Match

Strategy	Image	Market	Physical Conditions	Social Conditions	Neighborhood Management
1. Marketing plan to strengthen image of neighborhood (in process).	✓	✓			
2. New construction and rehab of homes for sale (in process).	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3. Neighborhood organizing: block clubs, support to neighborhood association, crime watch, leadership training, etc.				✓	✓
4. Neighborhood pride projects (small grants and technical assistance).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
5. Coordination of social service delivery to neighborhood (health, food, job training, etc., in process).				✓	
6. Urban farming and community gardening (resource development and TA, in process).	✓			✓	✓
7. Landlord training and rehab loan program.	✓	✓	✓		
8. Problem properties intervention (coordinated research, code enforcement, sales facilitation, law enforcement, etc..)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
9. Homeowner rehab loan/grant program.	✓	✓	✓		
10. Mini-repair program for seniors and disabled.				✓	
11. Community policing (in process).	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12. Development of quality, affordable	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Strategy	Image	Market	Physical Conditions	Social Conditions	Neighborhood Management
rental housing.					
13. Development of youth programming.	✓			✓	✓
14. Cultivation of school as an anchor institution and de facto community center.	✓			✓	✓
15. Vacant lot improvement program.	✓	✓	✓		

## Marketing Plans

A marketing plan is one strategy for comprehensive stabilization and market rebuilding. I use a methodology for marketing planning that is similar to the private sector, establishing goals, target markets, marketing messages, strategies and evaluation techniques.

	<b>BARING CROSS NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<b>NSP HOMES</b>
<b>Marketing Goals</b>	Cultivate a strong, positive image for the Baring Cross neighborhood in order to increase neighborhood pride and attract strong homebuyers, renters and landlords.	<p>Sell all NSP 1 and 2 homes by December 2012.</p> <p>Note: This goal should be fleshed out in pipeline form by the homebuyer education department. For example, if 1 in 10 homebuyer education graduates buys an NSP home, you'll need to graduate approximately 500 over the next 12 months. And if 1 in 5 who come in for an appointment or some kind of initial screening are ready for and interested in homebuyer education, you'll need to get 2500 in for that initial screening, etc. These goals should be mapped out by month between now and December 2012 and tracked so that they can be adjusted according to actual experience and so that marketing efforts can be stepped up or slowed down accordingly.</p>

	BARING CROSS NEIGHBORHOOD	NSP HOMES
<p><b>Target Markets</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Residents</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Landlords</li> <li>▪ Urban Realtors</li> <li>▪ Homebuyer Education Participants</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Employers</li> <li>▪ School Parents and Staff</li> <li>▪ Local Media: TV, Newspaper, Radio, Web</li> </ul>	<p>The ideal buyer for an NSP home will have a 640 credit score and earn a household income of near 120% of area median income. They will be open to a diverse, urban neighborhood with a mix of old and new housing stock, and will overlook some imperfections for reasons such as: close to work, close to rec path, want an in-town neighborhood, believe the neighborhood is on the upswing and want to get in while affordable, already rent there and like it, love the NSP houses, love the buyer incentives. Subsets of this pool of potential buyers that this marketing plan will reach out to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Renters in general</li> <li>▪ Renters in Baring Cross</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Employers</li> <li>▪ School Parents and Staff</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Church Congregants</li> <li>▪ Nonprofit social service agencies' staff and clients.</li> </ul> <p>Normally, I would recommend an outreach strategy to Realtors and lenders; however, Argenta CDC has two strong Realtors listing their properties who persuaded me that they are the "go-to" Realtors for this part of town, and CDC staff Realtors believe that lenders already know the CDC well and refer any likely candidates to them. I encourage you to continue considering these audiences and to customize outreach to them as you find it useful.</p>

## Marketing Messages

Use these as guidelines, not necessarily verbatim.

### BARING CROSS NEIGHBORHOOD

- Baring Cross is a diverse, friendly, in-town neighborhood undergoing millions of dollars of new investment.
- Baring Cross is a place where new and exciting things are taking place, such as an urban farm, community gardens, 100 beautiful new energy-efficient homes, and social events for neighbors – and a place with a relaxed, home-town feeling.
- Baring Cross neighbors are minutes from:
  - Ballpark
  - Verizon Arena
  - Arkansas Riverfront
  - Restaurants of all kinds
  - Grocery stores
  - Shopping
  - Bus routes
  - Two thriving downtowns with entertainment districts
  - More than seven four-year, two-year and technical colleges, easily accessible by bus
  - Neighborhood public and private schools
  - Houses of worship
  - Fire and police stations
  - Hospital

**Marketing Messages**

**NSP HOMES**

- BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES!
- NEW spacious, beautiful, energy-efficient homes are now available with BUYER CREDITS OF UP TO \$25,000 for qualified households.
- Enjoy the best of both worlds – a new home in an established neighborhood – and the convenience of living in-town in beautiful North Little Rock.
- With more than 100 new homes being built, the friendly, green Baring Cross neighborhood will see more than \$10 million of investment in the next 18 months.
- Our buyer credits of up to \$25,000 per qualified household are here through a limited-time stimulus grant. They will not last forever – act now by registering for one of our weekly “BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES” information sessions.
- SORRY YOU MISSED THE HOMEBUYER TAX CREDIT? Take a look at OUR homebuyer credit: up to \$25,000 per qualified household, for a limited time only, to help you buy one of our gorgeous new homes in North Little Rock.
- Our homes have three bedrooms, two baths, big backyards, energy efficient appliances – and are built with green, allergy- and asthma-resistant materials.
- Our first ten closed buyers will receive a NEW WASHER AND DRYER to go with their new home! Call today to get started by attending one of our weekly BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES informational sessions.
- If you don’t qualify immediately, we will work with you to get your credit ready and make sure you are equipped to shop for the best deal in town on your financing.
- Our free SMARTBuyer™ Home Purchase Training puts you in charge of your home buying experience. As a SMARTBuyer™ graduate, you’ll be on the road to smart choices to make your home purchase last a lifetime.

<p><b>Marketing Strategies</b></p>	<p><b>BARING CROSS NEIGHBORHOOD</b></p>
	<p><b>1.</b> Establish a recognizable brand for the neighborhood through consistent use of logo, placement of neighborhood entryway signage, and other visuals, and use of marketing messages in this plan.</p> <p><i>TOOLS: Baring Cross logo, entryway signage, beautification on green strip along Pike Avenue.</i></p> <p><b>2.</b> Dilute/replace negative media content with consistent positives through monthly press releases, website updates, Facebook page updates and search engine optimization with a goal of making first page of Google results positive.</p> <p><i>TOOLS: Baring Cross Website, Baring Cross Facebook Page, Professional Digital Photographs (see shot list in Appendix), Neighborhood Newsletter, Monthly “Good News” Press Releases, Marketing Messages</i></p> <p><i>Features of website could include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Logo for neighborhood</li> <li>▪ Lots of photos</li> <li>▪ What’s Great About Baring Cross (a la Neighborhoods Inc in Baltimore website’s neighborhood pages)</li> <li>▪ Schools description</li> <li>▪ Parks and recreation</li> <li>▪ Transportation</li> <li>▪ Meet the Neighbors</li> <li>▪ Meet the Community Police Officer</li> <li>▪ Meet the Neighborhood Association</li> <li>▪ BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES Homes for Sale</li> <li>▪ Apartments for Rent (I would only list those homes and apartments that are very high quality, because that contributes to the image of the neighborhood)</li> <li>▪ Baring Cross in the News (positive Baring Cross stories from print, TV, radio, and web)</li> <li>▪ History (narrative history as well as specific historic places in the neighborhood)</li> <li>▪ Citizen’s Guide (Where to call for the usual things)</li> <li>▪ River Road recreation path</li> </ul>

3. Cultivate pride and positive word of mouth among neighborhood residents, landlords, Realtors through newsletter, website, pride projects, logo stickers/decals, entryway signage, video vignettes, etc.

*TOOLS: Neighborhood Entryway Signage, Baring Cross Newsletter, Logo Stickers/Decals, Pride Projects (see article "Neighborhood Identity: Creating Core Messages and Reinforcing Them With Activities and Communication" in Appendix), Baring Cross Website, Video Vignettes, Marketing Messages*

*Video Vignettes:* Develop a series of short videos (using a Flip video cam or clips from professional videographer) of different neighbors talking about why they love living in the neighborhood, about different great things in the neighborhood such as the rec path, a park, plans for the urban farm, etc. , also do tours of homes for sale (see Live Cleveland for example). Post these on YouTube and on the website, and promote them via email list. (See also Layton Boulevard West for examples).

4. Influence potential homebuyers' perception of neighborhood through PowerPoint presentation to key audiences (school parents and staff, nearby employers, Baring Cross renters, homebuyer education classes, etc.), neighborhood one-pager or postcard for listing packets, website, etc.

*TOOLS: Baring Cross Logo, Baring Cross Website, Baring Cross PowerPoint, Baring Cross One-Pager or Postcard, Marketing Messages*



<b>Marketing Strategies</b>	<b>NSP HOMES</b>
	<p><b>1.</b> Develop a pipeline plan for homebuyer education that recruits and graduates enough potential buyers to generate the number required for NSP 1 and 2 homes (approximately 55).</p> <p><i>TOOLS: Customer tracking system that allows for real-time analysis of pipeline ratios, bigger meeting space for homebuyer education classes, more frequent homebuyer education classes, “BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES” information/intake session module.</i></p> <p><b>2.</b> Recruit more people into homebuyer education classes in order to build pipeline by conducting BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES information/intake sessions out of the office to specific audiences as well as weekly in the office, and through radio advertising.</p> <p><i>TOOLS: “BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES” information/intake session, radio ads with rotating messages for generic home buying and buying an NSP home, marketing messages.</i></p> <p><i>Audiences for Information/Intake Sessions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Renters in General</li> <li>▪ Renters in Baring Cross</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Employers</li> <li>▪ School Parents and Staff</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Church Congregants</li> <li>▪ Nonprofit Social Service Agencies’ Staff and Clients</li> <li>▪ Alumni Fraternities/Sororities</li> <li>▪ Homebuyer Education Classes and Counseling Customers</li> </ul>

3. Build excitement about NSP homes through open houses for specific audiences, homebuyer education classes in NSP homes, marketing of Baring Cross neighborhood.

*TOOLS: Invitation-only open houses for specific target markets, homebuyer education field trips to NSP homes, Baring Cross neighborhood PowerPoint, Baring Cross website with NSP listings, specialty advertising item with website address, one-pager or postcard on NSP homes, marketing messages, professional neighborhood photos.*

*Audiences for special open houses:*

- Renters in Baring Cross
- Neighborhood Employers
- School Parents and Staff
- Neighborhood Church Congregants
- Nonprofit Social Service Agencies' Staff and Clients
- Alumni Fraternities/Sororities
- Homebuyer Education Classes and Counseling Customers

4. Generate referrals of potential homebuyers by Baring Cross residents through "Pick Your Neighbor" parties.

*TOOLS: "Pick Your Neighbor" receptions/open houses in NSP homes for nearby neighbors and their friends and family, specialty advertising item with website address, one-pager or postcard on NSP homes, one-pager on individual NSP home (by Realtor).*

*See Appendix for description of Pick Your Neighbor parties.*

5. Create a sense of urgency for first buyers and lower the sense of risk for next buyers by offering a free washer and dryer (or similar incentive) to the first ten closings.

*TOOLS: Ten washer-dryer sets, marketing messages.*

	<b>BARING CROSS NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<b>NSP HOMES</b>
<b>Evaluation Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Percent of page one Google search findings that are positive, by month.</li> <li>▪ Number of positive media stories per month.</li> <li>▪ Percent home sales to owner-occupants vs. investors, by quarter.</li> <li>▪ Success Measures Resident Confidence Survey: responses to questions on confidence and neighborliness, biannual.</li> <li>▪ Success Measures block and parcel observation data: overall quality, annual.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Success at meeting pipeline goals, by month: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of participants in BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES information/intake sessions,</li> <li>○ Number of homebuyer education graduates,</li> <li>○ Number of showings of NSP homes,</li> <li>○ Number of offers on NSP homes,</li> <li>○ Number of closings on NSP homes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## AT-A-GLANCE: STRENGTHENING THE IMAGE OF BARING CROSS

Marketing Goal: Cultivate a strong, positive image for the Baring Cross neighborhood in order to increase neighborhood pride and attract strong homebuyers, renters and landlords.

Priority Strategies	Priority Tools	Priority Target Markets
<p><b>1. Establish a recognizable brand for the neighborhood through consistent use of logo, placement of neighborhood entryway signage, and other visuals, and use of marketing messages in this plan.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Logo and Tagline</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Entryway Signage</li> <li>▪ Beautification of Pike Ave. Green Strip</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Residents</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Landlords</li> <li>▪ Urban Realtors</li> <li>▪ Homebuyer Education Participants</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Employers</li> <li>▪ School Parents and Staff</li> <li>▪ Local Media: TV, Newspaper, Radio, Web</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Dilute/replace negative media content with consistent positives through monthly press releases, website updates, Facebook page updates and search engine optimization.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Website</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Facebook Page</li> <li>▪ Professional Digital Photographs</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Newsletter</li> <li>▪ Monthly “Good News” Press Releases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local Media: TV, Newspaper, Radio, Web</li> <li>▪ Realtors</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Cultivate pride and positive word of mouth among neighborhood residents and landlords through newsletter, website, pride projects, logo stickers/decals, signage, video vignettes on YouTube, etc.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Entryway Signage</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Newsletter</li> <li>▪ Logo Stickers/Decals</li> <li>▪ Pride Projects</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Website</li> <li>▪ Video Vignettes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Residents</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Landlords</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Influence potential homebuyers’ perception of neighborhood through PowerPoint presentation to key audiences, neighborhood one-pager or postcard for listing packets, website, etc.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Neighborhood Website</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood PowerPoint</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood One-Pager or Postcard</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Employees of Neighborhood Employers</li> <li>▪ School Parents and Staff</li> <li>▪ Urban Realtors</li> </ul>

## AT-A-GLANCE: MARKETING NSP HOMES

Marketing Goal: Sell all NSP 1 and 2 homes by December 2012.

Priority Strategies	Priority Tools	Priority Target Markets
<p>1. <b>Develop a pipeline plan for homebuyer education that recruits and graduates enough potential buyers to generate the number required for NSP 1 and 2 homes (approximately 55).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Customer tracking system that allows for real-time analysis of pipeline ratios.</li> <li>▪ Bigger meeting space for homebuyer education classes.</li> <li>▪ More frequent homebuyer education classes.</li> <li>▪ “BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES” information/intake session module.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ N/A</li> </ul>
<p>2. <b>Recruit more people into homebuyer education classes in order to build pipeline by conducting “BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES” information/intake sessions out of the office to specific audiences, and radio advertising.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “BEAUTIFUL HOMES – BEAUTIFUL PRICES” information/intake session.</li> <li>▪ Radio ads with rotating messages for generic home buying and buying an NSP home.</li> <li>▪ Marketing messages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Renters in General</li> <li>▪ Renters in Baring Cross</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Employers</li> <li>▪ School Parents and Staff</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Church Congregants</li> <li>▪ Nonprofit Social Service Agencies’ Staff and Clients</li> <li>▪ Alumni Fraternities/Sororities</li> <li>▪ Homebuyer Education Classes and Counseling Customers</li> </ul>
<p>3. <b>Build excitement about NSP homes through open houses for specific audiences, homebuyer education classes in NSP homes, marketing of Baring Cross neighborhood.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Invitation-only open houses for specific target markets.</li> <li>▪ Homebuyer education field trips to NSP home(s).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Homebuyer education participants</li> <li>▪ Renters in Baring Cross</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Employers</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baring Cross neighborhood PowerPoint.</li> <li>▪ Baring Cross website with NSP listings.</li> <li>▪ Specialty advertising item with website address.</li> <li>▪ One-pager or postcard on NSP homes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School Parents and Staff</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood Church Congregants</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Generate referrals of potential homebuyers by Baring Cross residents through “Pick Your Neighbor” parties.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Pick Your Neighbor” receptions/open houses in NSP homes for nearby neighbors and their friends and family.</li> <li>▪ Specialty advertising item with website address.</li> <li>▪ One-pager or postcard on NSP homes.</li> <li>▪ One-pager on individual NSP home (by Realtor).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Baring Cross Neighborhood Association members.</li> <li>▪ Nearby neighbors of each NSP home.</li> </ul>
<p>5. Create a sense of urgency for first buyers and lower the sense of risk for next buyers by offering a free washer and dryer (or similar incentive) to the first ten closings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ten washer-dryer sets.</li> <li>• Marketing messages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All potential buyer audiences.</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX

## Sample Neighborhood Photo Shot List for Use in Marketing Materials

---

*A good supply of professionally done, digital photos can be used over and over for print marketing, PowerPoint shows, websites, posters, newspaper stories, newsletters, annual reports, and more.*

### Homes

- Available property for purchase, with interior and exterior shots if possible
- Photos of homes that your organization has developed or will rehab
- Close-up photos of some of the aesthetic features of homes such as a door, a doorknob, a welcome mat, a hanging basket of flowers, a front porch, a fireplace-any specific feature that says “quality” and “homey”

### Happy Neighbors

- Family walking into their home hand on door handle and/or homeowner holding key to the door as if going in
- Family playing or talking to neighbors in the front yard
- A few shots of families in front of their home (try to get families doing some activity such as gardening or working on their home, playing a game, etc.)
- A home that was recently on the market and has a sold sign in the front yard (if possible)

### Neighborhood Amenities

- Neighborhood park/playground
- Shopping center (these shots should be staged in a way that depicts the neighborhood offers safe, convenient shopping for the community)
- Neighborhood anchor institutions such as faith institutions, schools, museums, libraries, etc.
- Local business
- Community center, community gardens, neighborhood entryway signage, recreational facilities of any kind, etc.

### Your Organization

- Shots of your organization’s sign (if there is an office sign or banner)
- Shots of your staff teaching a homebuyer education class, at their desk meeting with a homebuyer, supervising the building or rehab of a home if there is a NeighborWorks logo on the wall
- For sale sign with “Sold” across the sign

**Note:** Release forms should be presented and signed by anyone who is in photo.



## Neighborhood Identity: Creating Core Messages and Reinforcing Them With Activities and Communication

By Marcia Nedland, Fall Creek Consultants

Neighborhoods that have had a poor or declining image are often pulled into a cycle of reinforcing their negative image by only talking about the problems the neighborhood has and how neighbors or nonprofits are working on fixing them or how someone else should be fixing them. If you are trying to stabilize the neighborhood and rebuild its market, you must resist the temptation to fight these battles on the proverbial front page of the newspaper. You can still fight them, but the images you project about life in the neighborhood needs to be spun more positively if you want anyone to feel good about living there, investing there, or moving there.

Think of image-building as a monthly campaign in which you are working to dilute and replace negative stories about the neighborhood with positive ones. You can do this with press releases and other news generation to the news media, through what you say on your website, e-newsletter or print newsletter, and through small and large-scale activities and programs you organize.

**The first step is to decide what you want the image of the neighborhood to be.** It isn't enough to think about what you don't want it to be. What are the first three things you want someone to think when they hear the name of your neighborhood? Make those the three core messages you communicate in every newsletter and other communication piece you do, as well as in every activity or program you do. Here are some examples of core messages and the kind of news and activities that will reinforce those messages.

Core Message	News and Activities to Reinforce That Message
A Great Place to Live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Photos and stories on parks and recreation</li> <li>▪ Amenities of any kind: restaurants, rivers, movie theaters, employers, etc.</li> <li>▪ Profile of new homebuyers and why they love the neighborhood</li> <li>▪ “Why I Love [neighborhood]” stories from existing residents</li> <li>▪ Youth activities</li> <li>▪ Positive stories about schools</li> <li>▪ Attractive entryway signage and lots of flowers</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood festivals or parades</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood banners/flags for houses</li> </ul>
Friendly Neighbors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good Neighbor Awards</li> <li>▪ Block parties and other social events or clubs</li> <li>▪ “Meet Your Neighbor” stories</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Block clubs and neighborhood associations</li> <li>▪ Youth activities led by neighbors</li> <li>▪ Artwalks or PorchFests featuring neighborhood artists or musicians</li> <li>▪ Block improvement projects</li> <li>▪ Pie-Baking Contests</li> </ul>
Beautiful Homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Photos and listings of attractive homes for sale</li> <li>▪ “Best House on the Block” contests</li> <li>▪ “Yard of the Month” contests</li> <li>▪ “Most Improved Porch” contests</li> <li>▪ Free architectural/design services for house makeovers</li> <li>▪ Rehab loans and grants with curb appeal features</li> <li>▪ Development of new high-quality homes for sale and rent</li> <li>▪ Historic or other home tours</li> <li>▪ Home improvement workshops</li> </ul>
Green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parks, recreation trails</li> <li>▪ Vacant lot improvement programs</li> <li>▪ Landscaping workshops and incentives</li> <li>▪ Energy efficiency rehab loans and grants</li> <li>▪ Energy efficiency workshops</li> <li>▪ Bicycling clubs for kids and adults</li> <li>▪ Other outdoor activities</li> <li>▪ Farmers’ Markets</li> <li>▪ Community gardens and urban farms</li> <li>▪ Public transportation stories</li> </ul>
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Feature story on community police officers</li> <li>▪ Police department youth activities</li> <li>▪ National Night Out events</li> <li>▪ All “Friendly Neighbors” news and activities</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood cleanups</li> <li>▪ Youth activities</li> <li>▪ Community dog walks</li> <li>▪ Neighborhood activities in parks and other public areas</li> </ul>

You may have to work on “reframing” some of your activities and programs to make sure they are reinforcing your core messages. You can still get the same things done, it’s just a matter of how you get them done or how you talk about them. I find it helpful to always imagine a potential homebuyer as my audience – they are the most risk-averse of any audience, so if you make sure something puts the neighborhood’s best foot forward to them, you can generally assume it will do the same for existing residents, Realtors, business owners, landlords and others.

For example, would you rather buy a house in a neighborhood that....

Just picketed a drug dealer out of the neighborhood?	-or-	Held a series of children’s events that just happened to be in front of the drug dealer’s house, driving his customers away and making him move?
Offers a basic home repair program?	-or-	Offers a Home Makeover program with free interior design landscaping consultation?
Enforces city building code?	-or-	Puts on an annual Best House on the Block contest, with an awards dinner with winners in categories including owners, landlords, businesses, and more?
Has an active crime watch program?	-or-	Puts on an annual National Night Out celebration with fun activities for everyone?
Is in the news for being a food desert?	-or-	Organized a Farmers’ Market, which is held every Saturday in the school parking lot, has a community garden, or an urban farm?
Features a “Landlord Hall of Shame” in every newsletter?	-or-	Features a “Landlord Hall of <i>Fame</i> ” in every newsletter, and offers landlord training and rental rehab loans?
Demolished 25 vacant, abandoned houses?	-or-	Offers a vacant lot acquisition and improvement program so that neighbors have bigger yards, pocket parks and community gardens?
Has houses that are really cheap for low-income people willing to jump through a bunch of hoops?	-or-	Has beautiful homes with buyer credits of up to \$25,000 for qualified households – limited time only! And a free washer and dryer to our first ten closings!
Has old houses that need lots of repair and maintenance?	-or-	Has an annual historic home tour, and special financing for reimagining the classic bungalow home for today’s lifestyle?

You get the idea. When we talk about our neighborhoods and our work, we are making an impression. It is very important to be intentional about that impression and to shape it to the image we want.

*Marcia Nedland is a consultant specializing in neighborhood stabilization, neighborhood marketing, and market rebuilding. She is the principal of Fall Creek Consultants and a founding member of the Healthy Neighborhoods Group. [www.fallcreekconsultants.com](http://www.fallcreekconsultants.com)*