Town of Evans

Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Revitalization

Winter 2014

Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force :

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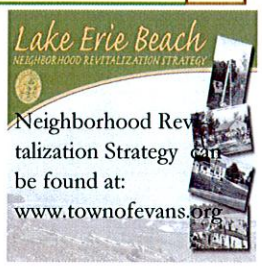

Town Secures Funding for Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Improvements

The Town of Evans has secured funding assistance through the **Erie County Consortium Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)** for revitalization efforts in the Lake Erie Beach community. The Town will utilize these funds to make infrastructure improvements that will help further develop neighborhood access and circulation. The projects are scheduled to begin in the spring of 2014.

Approximately $100,000 in funding will be utilized to construct Phase II of the **Kennedy Avenue greenway Streetscape**, which will *continue the sidewalk along Kennedy Avenue from it current end (intersection of Kennedy and Lenox) east to the intersection with Ivanhoe.* As the first link in the Lake Erie Beach multimodal circulation network, Kennedy Avenue is a crucial building block for this multimodal system. Phase II will bring the project closer to the ultimate goal of reaching the east terminus of Route 5; thereby establishing the primary east-west thoroughfare.

The Town of Evans is also pleased to announce the launch of the **Erie County Commercial Center Improvement Program (CCIP)**, a new community

development initiative for the Lake Erie Beach Commercial District.

The CCIP provides financial assistance to property owners (and tenant businesses with owner's approval) for visible "curbside appeal" improvements such as: *painting, masonry repair, awnings, signs and other eligible exterior renovation work.* The maximum grant assistance per property is $10,000. This program is a 50/50 matching grant.

This latest grant awards brings the total direct investment into the Lake Erie Beach community to ***$935,000*** since the completion of the **Lake *Erie Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy.***

The Strategy was adopted by the Evans Town Board in December 2010 as an addendum to the Town's Comprehensive Plan. The funding has been utilized to improve housing conditions for eligible applicants throughout the community as well as much needed infrastructure improvements to develop the roadway and circulation network, and enhance the

Housing Seminar Series

The **Town of Evans, Lake Erie Beach Task Force, Metro Roberts Realty** and **Evans Bank** are working on the third workshop in the ***Lake Erie Beach Community Housing Seminar Series.*** The workshop, scheduled for **Tuesday, April 1, 2014 (6:30-8:45 p.m.)**, will include information to assist first time home buyers as well as existing homeowners.

Potential topics include: *Housing Rehabilitation Programs; First Time Homebuyer Incentives; Property Tax Exemption Overview; Veterans to Realtors Program; Tips for Selecting a Contractor and Starting a Neighborhood Watch Program.* More information to follow in the next newsletter.

Neighborhood Revitalization Progress Report

In 2010, the **Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force** proposed a revitalization program that would function as a tool to facilitate progress in Lake Erie Beach.

The Town hired Peter J. Smith & Company, Inc. to develop a revitalization strategy, which involved an extensive public participation process including residents and stakeholders. The final **Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (LEBNRS)** outlines core recommendations and strategies for achieving the vision that residents have for their community.

Since the formal adoption of the LEBNRS by the Evans Town Board in late 2010, the Lake Erie Beach Task Force (Task Force) has been working with local and county officials, community organizations and business leaders to implement the core project recommendations to improve the neighborhood. Over the last four years, the following improvements have been achieved as a direct result of the LEBNRS:

* Secured more than ***$935,000 in grant funds*** for various infrastructure improvements;
* Created the ***LEB Overlay District*** to encourage commercial center revitalization;
* Implemented the ***Residential Investment Exemption*** to encourage renovation and rehabilitation of existing housing stock;
* Adopted revisions to the ***Town Code Zoning District*** to reduce minimum frontage and floor area for the Residential District in Lake Erie beach;
* Implemented the ***Community Housing Seminar series***; and,
* Conducted ***neighborhood cleanups.***

While the Town and the Task Force are working diligently to improve the quality of life in the Lake Erie Beach community, neighborhood revitalization begins with residents' participation and involvement. Community involvement is a very important aspect of revitalization for any neighborhood. It takes a lot of effort to move a revitalization strategy from concept to reality.

Please reflect on your own role in transforming your community. Consider serving on a LEBTF subcommittee or volunteering to assist with community events such as the neighborhood clean-up. Feel free to contact Lori Szewczyk at evanscommunitydev@yahoo.com or 549-3915 if you would like to learn about how you can become more involved in the Neighborhood Revitalization Program.

Save the Date: May 3, 2014
3rd Annual Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Cleanup

The ***Lake Erie Beach Neighborhood Revitalization Task Force*** in conjunction with the ***Lake Erie Beach Volunteer Fire Company*** will once again organize a neighborhood clean-up in celebration of earth day. The clean-up will focus on vacant lots, commercial areas, and streets in the community. The LEB Task Force is looking for volunteers to assist with the clean-up effort. Please contact Lori Szewczyk at 549-3915 or evanscommunitydev@yahoo.com if you are interested in helping with the cleanup.