



**COMMUNITY DESIGN
CHARRETTE REPORT**
BROADVIEW BEND & BRIGHTON PARK
CLEVELAND, OHIO - MARCH 2023



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The annual Community Design Charrette is a collaborative initiative between Kent State's College of Architecture and Environmental Design graduate students and the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) to address urban design and community development challenges through short and intense community workshops. This year, the Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation and Cleveland Metroparks partnered with the Charrette team, which includes middle and high school students from the CUDC's Making Our Own Space Rapid Response Team, Kent State's College of Architecture and Environmental Design graduate students, and Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative staff.

The Charrette will focus on two main areas: the Brighton Park green space, which Cleveland Metroparks operates on the former site of the Heninger Landfill on Pearl Road, and the Broadview Bend, a mixed-use district that curves from Pearl Road to Broadview Road. During the Charrette, community stakeholders and students will consider the relationship between Brighton Park and Broadview Bend, the neighborhood's history, and identify new infrastructure investments, public amenities, and development opportunities. Given that Broadview Bend forms the boundary between Wards 12 and 13, the Charrette will also examine the intersections between the two wards.





BACKGROUND

CONTEXT & AREA INVENTORY

Background & Summary

In the Spring of 2023 Kent State University's Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative (CUDC) organized and led a design charrette in the historic Cleveland neighborhood of Old Brooklyn. Here the charrette team worked on identifying opportunities and proposing solutions to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors throughout Old Brooklyn, with the main areas of focus being that of Brighton Park and Broadview Bend. The charrette team was composed of Kent State University graduate students and CUDC faculty alongside middle and high school students from the CUDC's Making Our Own Space (MOOS) Rapid Response Team. Before going into the week of the design charrette, students were tasked with doing research on a variety of key conditions in the neighborhood to help prepare the team for a successful and insightful charrette.

History

Old Brooklyn is a tight-knit community with a deep and celebrated history with its roots dating back to the original Brooklyn Township in 1818; and was later annexed over time to the City of Cleveland starting in 1902 until 1927. Currently Old Brooklyn is Cleveland's largest and most populated neighborhood with about 38,000 residents; with around 60% identified as White, 9% Black, and 16% Hispanic/Latino. Old Brooklyn is home to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, a MetroHealth Campus and a variety of local businesses. In the last five years over 25-30 new businesses have opened shop, and despite the turbulent economy of 2020 there were no business closures within the neighborhood. Old Brooklyn sees less crime than downtown Cleveland, though residents view safety and crime very seriously and wish to see decreases where possible.

Demographics

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Local Market & Economy

Old Brooklyn is currently in a seller's housing market, where prices on average are higher and homes sell faster. Since October of 2021 to late 2022 homes have seen an average increase in selling price of 12% or \$14k. Old Brooklyn is home to the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo, a MetroHealth Campus and a variety of local businesses. In the last five years over 25-30 new businesses have opened shop, and despite the turbulent economy of 2020 there were no business closures within the neighborhood. Old Brooklyn sees less crime than downtown Cleveland, though residents view safety and crime very seriously and wish to see decreases where possible.

CONTEXT & AREA INVENTORY

Movement & Community Health

The neighborhoods of Old Brooklyn are noted as moderately walkable and bikeable (ranked 22 out of 34 with a walking score of 54) though most residents rely on vehicles to get to their destinations. It is also currently categorized as a food desert with no grocery stores in walking distance and many residents have to drive a minimum of 10 minutes for their groceries. Old Brooklyn has a strong sense of importance towards community, with over half of the residents part of or involved in a community group. Old Brooklyn is deeply connected to its ecology and green spaces through the Cleveland Metroparks and Zoo, Brighton Park, and being part of the Big Creek Watershed. Brighton Park was formerly an industrial site and landfill until it was remediated and transformed into the current park space today, complete with walking trails and native plant species. Big Creek Watershed is the 3rd largest tributary of the Cuyahoga river, and with over 90% of the watershed being developed and 40% impervious surfaces it is known as the most heavily urbanized watershed along the Cuyahoga.

Ecology

Old Brooklyn is deeply connected to its ecology and green spaces through the Cleveland Metroparks and Zoo, Brighton Park, and being part of the Big Creek Watershed. Brighton Park was formerly an industrial site and landfill until it was remediated and transformed into the current park space today, complete with walking trails and native plant species. Big Creek Watershed is the 3rd largest tributary of the Cuyahoga river, and with over 90% of the watershed being developed and 40% impervious surfaces it is known as the most heavily urbanized watershed along the Cuyahoga. "This degree of Urbanization provides tremendous challenges...and opportunity!"





INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

Recent News / Development Plans:

Feb 10, 2022: Planning the Future of Memphis

May 18, 2022: Old Brooklyn Remains Committed to Revitalization of Memphis & Pearl

Dec 2, 2022: 2 Developers Submit Proposals for Memphis & Pearl Revitalization

Old Brooklyn CDC: Strategic Plan:

Main Goals: *(Grow Together)*

1. Expand Community Connections *(and invite all residents, businesses, and partners to grow Old Brooklyn together)*

2. Create a Culture of Co-Creation *(for a future Old Brooklyn that empowers the passion, skills, and wisdom of all)*

3. Promise to Build Relationships *(with communities of color, low-income households, and renters to ensure equity and inclusion)*

Main Goals: *(Promote Opportunity)*

1. Re-Establish the Historical Center *(of Old Brooklyn as Brighton, a vibrant and unique hub that enriches community life, provides economic opportunity, and honors history)*

2. Facilitate and Maintain *(commercial real estate development to benefit diverse stakeholders, increase opportunity for wealth building, and ensure accessibility for all)*

3. Ensure that Every Resident Lives *(within a 10-minute walk of a park)*



CHARRETTE PROCESS

Intervention Identification:

Taking into account both the research done by the students in tandem with interviews conducted with Old Brooklyn residents and business owners, the charrette team identified a variety of key themes and conditions to be addressed through their proposals. One of the primary areas identified for improvement is safety, both in terms of lack of sufficient lighting as well as pedestrian & biker safety from traffic. With multiple community residents and MOOS students voicing their concern about dangerously fast traffic and insufficient crosswalks and bike infrastructure it was clear to the charrette team interventions around traffic slowing and improvements for walkers and bikers would be key. Additionally, concerns around the need for stronger unified identity and branding for Old Brooklyn were made clear and became a main focus. Finally, while Brighton Park is a great community park used by residents, many others in Old Brooklyn were unaware the space even existed and others thought it is underutilized. With these comments another objective for the charrette team was to increase and promote connections with Brighton Park to the rest of Old Brooklyn as well as generate more engaging program options for the area to be enjoyed by all.

Key Goals:

- » Traffic speed / Traffic slowing
- » Lighting & Safety
- » Identity / Branding
- » Creating Connections with Brighton Park into surrounding streets and neighborhoods
- » Lack of awareness about Brighton Park
- » More engaging programs and Interactions for Brighton Park
- » More Support for Bikers / Biker Infrastructure

CHARRETTE SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MARCH 10, 2023

12:30 - 1:30 pm Assemble and lunch @ Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation (OBCDC)

1:30 - 3:00 pm Neighborhood walking tour and documentation

3:30 - 6 pm Team work session @ South Brooklyn Library Branch

6 - 7 pm Working Dinner at El Rinconcito Chapin

7 pm MOOS students dismissed.

7 - 10 pm Work Session @ OBCDC

SATURDAY, MARCH 11, 2023

9 am - 12 pm Team Work Session @ Pearl Road United Methodist Church (PRUMC)

12 - 12:30 pm Lunch break @ PRUMC

12:30 - 3 pm Team Work Session @ PRUMC

3 - 5 pm WORK-IN-PROGRESS PIN-UP / PRESENTATION @ PRUMC

5 - 6:30 pm Dinner break and debrief

7 pm MOOS students dismissed.

7 - 10pm Work Session @ OBCDC

SUNDAY, MARCH 12, 2023

10am - 3pm Work Session @ CUDC

3 - 4:30 pm Run-through of final presentation / recommendations

THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2023

4:30pm FINAL COMMUNITY PRESENTATION @ PRUMC

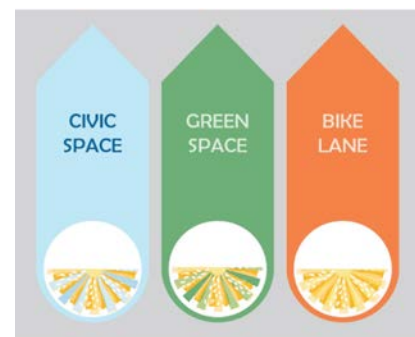
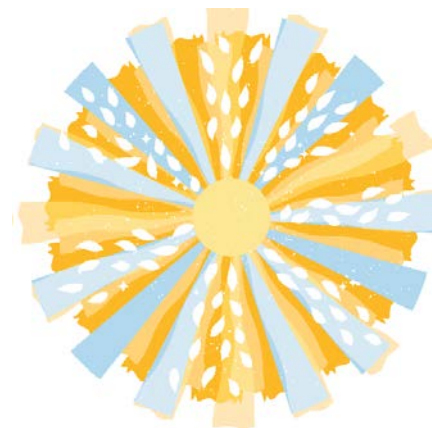
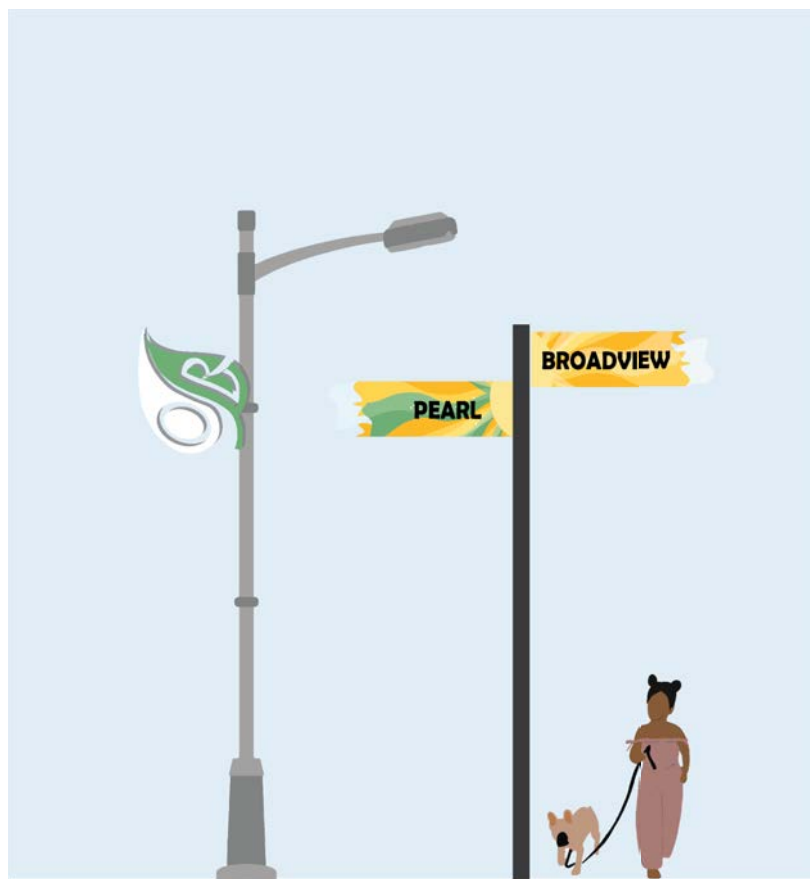




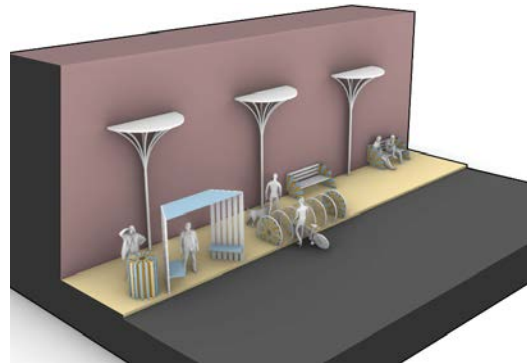
NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY DESIGN

NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY

The Neighborhood Identity group within the charrette team were tasked with coming up with new creative and impactful designs and branding to strengthen the sense of community for Old Brooklyn while also working to help with way finding and identification. A new general use and easily replicable logo was created for the overall branding of Old Brooklyn, with a leaf split into two halves; one half in blue representing the theme of water, and the other half in green representing nature within the neighborhood. Larger images and murals were also designed by the MOOS students using a consistent and bright color scheme, with one set styled after a sun radiating outwards with petals from a tree, and the alternate pattern consisting of the same circle but with a great tree in the front centered. Using these logos, the charrette team came up with a variety of ways to implement them across the neighborhood, appearing as crosswalk and sidewalk art, murals on both buildings and roads, and even in the form of urban furniture modeled and colored to match the artwork. To further help with way finding, the artwork and overall color scheme were brought to the street signs and park signs to both keep consistent the neighborhood's sense of identity and breathe new life into spaces of interest.



1 Way finding and branding



2 Branding

3 Street Furniture



4 Proposed neighborhood identity strategies implemented in the community



5 Proposed street furniture placement opportunities



6 Way finding and crosswalk mural



7 Way finding and redesigned public space



8 Street furniture and traffic calming

BRIGHTON PARK

Introduction

From an industrial landfill to a blossoming green space, Brighton Park has come a long way into becoming a wonderful community area with walking trails, native fauna, and a great overlook. Through conversations with community members and exploration of the site the charrette team identified various problems and conditions that could be improved upon to help further transform the space into a fantastic area to be enjoyed by all in Old Brooklyn.

1 Park Trail Connections Master Plan

Currently Brighton Park consists of one main trail running from Pearl Rd. to W 21. St. with two secondary paths branching off and looping back to the main trail. Brighton Park's new master plan works to generate and further connections from the park to the rest of Old Brooklyn. The Neighborhood Connection Loop serves to expand a walking trail option back into the neighborhood while improving the sidewalks and roads where it extends to, as well as containing new signage and branding to help residents and visitors find and enjoy Brighton Park. The Metroparks / Towpath Connection continues the current Metroparks path through the park eventually reconnecting with the towpath. Elevation / Bridge to Overlook Connection is the most ambitious addition, looking to create a new trail down to the lowest portion of the site by the bridge and then back up to the park overlook.

2 Proposed Picnic Area

An example of a simple yet impactful intervention, the addition of a picnic area with seating and amenities gives community members and visitors a space to socialize, rest and enjoy the park, and relax.

3 Pollinator Garden

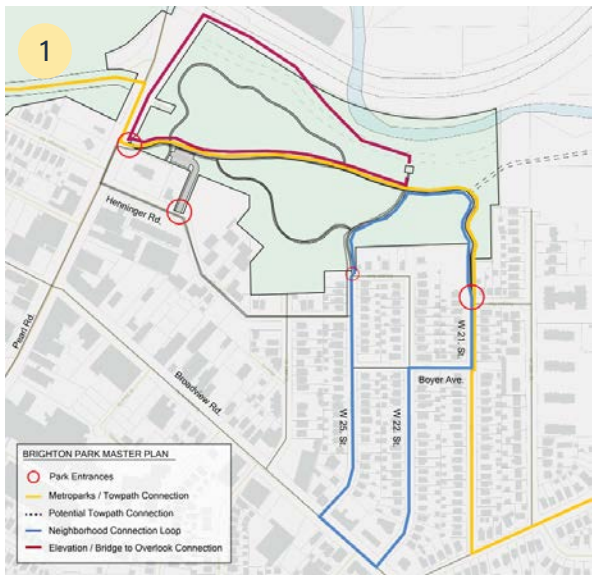
The charrette team was told of mosquitoes being an issue in Brighton Park during certain operating months, alongside the voicing of the importance of native plants and species, the addition of pollinator gardens could provide the perfect improvement. Proposed are pollinator garden spaces to promote local flora and fauna with street furniture tied into the branding and identity proposals to create areas of interest for both the ecology and community members alike.

4 Park Path Intervention (MOOS Student Work)

Within Brighton Park, providing spaces to break up the trail with planters and picnic tables is a great way to increase interaction within the park and community.

5 Overlook

The current view from Brighton Park's overlook is wonderful, though the current space and infrastructure could see large improvements to bring it to life. Here an expansion of the overlook and its access as well as further street furniture such as benches are proposed to increase safety and viewing experience.



BRIGHTON PARK

1 W. 23rd & Broadview

The corner of W. 23rd and Broadview serves as the perfect example of improvements and the addition of new branding techniques to both increase the quality of the streets as well as helping residents find their way to Brighton Park. This can include green barriers to protect pedestrians and bikers. Support public and local art, and use the new branding and identity in the form of signs and street murals.

2 W. 21st. Entrance

Brighton Park's back entrance off of W. 21st finds itself in a great location to connect with the surrounding neighborhood, though is currently unwelcoming and hard to identify as a park entrance. Here a new Brighton Park sign as well as new Old Brooklyn branding and string lights are proposed to make the space easier to locate and feel more inviting.

3 Main Entrance

Brighton Park's main entrance off of Pearl Rd is in a prime location . Moving its main park sign closer to the sidewalk and street allows Brighton Park to more easily be identified as a welcoming Cleveland Metroparks space, alongside further branding signage serves to draw visitors into the park. New native plants and flowers with a viewing platform near the entrance helps draw in interest, as well as new park lights proposed to improve safety and walking experience.

4 Overlook Connection / Intervention

Drawing inspiration from projects such as LOCK 4 in Akron, OH, the charrette team proposed improvements and new infrastructure from the park entrance to the lower site by the existing skate park, back up to the overlook. In addition to passive improvements such as lighting, native species gardens and new paved paths, an amphitheater and seating along the hill slope are proposed to bring new interest and use to a currently underutilized but impressive area.





FOCUS AREAS



1 Proposed re-use of former Rite Aid as co-op community market



2 Community co-op with clinic access and public space



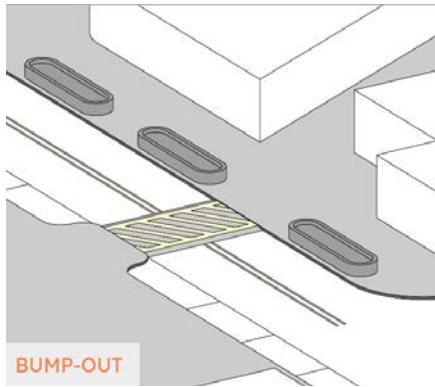
1 Proposed re-use of former fire station as community kitchen



2 Community kitchen for local residents and aspiring entrepreneurs

TRAFFIC CALMING

Being one of the most requested and needed themes during the charrette, the traffic calming group worked diligently to listen to all the comments provided by the residents of Old Brooklyn and design interventions to best serve the neighborhood and its pedestrians and bikers. The main goal behind the traffic calming designs were to improve safety and the overall aesthetics of the street while also enhancing the vitality of the commercial area within Old Brooklyn. New crosswalks and bump-outs using the new branding discussed and shown in the neighborhood identity section were designed along Broadview Rd. to help slow traffic and provide better points for pedestrians to cross the street safely. More ambitious roundabouts were also proposed to further help with the slowing of traffic at key points and intersections, though under the process of future considerations. New designs and uses were also proposed for the currently vacant former Rite Aid and former fire department buildings. The former Rite Aid is imagined as a fresh produce market with an attached clinic to help serve as a more convenient and healthy grocery option and bring more interest to the space. Seating, greenery, and new paths were also introduced leading up to the new market to transform the space into something more dynamic. For the former fire department building across the street, a co-op owned community kitchen with outdoor seating was proposed. Here in addition to being a commercial kitchen space for upcoming food entrepreneurs within the community, it could also provide cooking classes and a space for the residents of Old Brooklyn to enjoy.



BUMP-OUT



RAISED CROSSWALK



PROPOSED CROSSWALKS & BUMP-OUTS



FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS:
CONSECUTIVE ROUNDABOUTS



MASTER PLAN

CONCLUSION

With the charrette team finishing neighborhood designs and the final presentation of proposed interventions on Sunday, March 12th, the next step was to present the work to the community of Old Brooklyn and hear their thoughts and suggestions. On Thursday, March 16th, this final presentation was given and was greeted with a strong turnout from the community members, including representation from middle and high school students, business owners and workers, and residents who've lived in Old Brooklyn for decades who gave great insight to the area. All feedback and suggestions were greatly appreciated, and ranged from comments giving thanks to the thoughts and considerations of the work to clarifying questions and ways to improve proposals with additional knowledge of the community. (Such as that the informal Skate Park adjacent to Brighton Park had become recognized and made official). Overall, proposals around the themes of traffic calming, safety, and branding / identity were met with strong approval and interest from most, exemplifying the future need of improvements in these areas to better Old Brooklyn and its residents and visitors. Interventions and stronger connections to Brighton Park and the rest of the neighborhood were also positive, and residents enjoyed the proposals of more social spaces within the park, a strong connection to the rest of the Metroparks and Towpath, and furthering identification and paths into the rest of Old Brooklyn. In Conclusion through the hard work of the entire charrette team, all partnered groups including the Old Brooklyn CDC, Cleveland Metroparks, and the Western Reserve Land Conservancy, and the community members and residents of Old Brooklyn who gave their time and thoughts, this design charrette was a great success that generated many proposals and ideas that can serve as great references for future designs and proposals to work towards improving the neighborhood for all.





