



Oshkosh Neighborhood Study

The purpose of this multi-year project is to develop a better understanding of Oshkosh's neighborhoods and the quality of life within them. The information gained from these activities will then be used to construct a report about Oshkosh neighborhoods, including recommendations for addressing issues that we identify. We hope that not only will the participants learn more about themselves and their community, but they will also be empowered to take action to improve it.

Participant: Please conduct the following activities in the order given below.

Step 1: *Draw a map of your neighborhood.* Simply take a pen and a sheet of paper (the larger, the better) and draw:

- The boundaries, clearly marking the northern, southern, eastern, and western boundaries (streets or physical features), of the area that you consider to be your neighborhood.
 - Then, draw in the following details within those boundaries, as they apply to you and your neighborhood:
 - Major streets
 - Landmarks (natural features, historical buildings, etc., that are well-known to people in this area)
 - Parks
 - Stores, restaurants, bars, etc.
 - Public facilities (schools, government buildings)
 - Houses of worship
 - Other gathering places
 - The place where you currently live
 - The place where you currently work (if it is within the boundaries)
 - Places where people you know on a first-name basis live; and,
 - Anything else of importance in your neighborhood.

The map does not have to be to scale, to look good, or necessarily be “accurate.” The purpose is to simply see how you think about your neighborhood. Hang on to the map, as you’ll use it for the next two steps in the process.

Step 2: *Take photographs around your neighborhood* (as defined by your map) that fall into the following categories:

1. Places or things that you value (for social, economic, cultural, ecological, and/or recreational reasons)
2. Places or things that you believe have changed in recent years
3. Places or things that you feel should be preserved and/or fixed up/modified
4. When you are thinking about your neighborhood, places/landmarks that come to mind
5. People who you feel represent who lives in your neighborhood
6. Your most important neighborhood hangout (a place that is not home, not work)
7. One image that best captures the overall essence of the neighborhood (what it’s all about)

Please take at least one (1) photo in each category, but not more than fifteen (15) total photos, ideally with your own digital camera; let us know if you need a camera, and we will provide one and reimburse you for the cost of developing hard copies, if applicable. If possible, take some time to carefully think about which places/things/landmarks/people offer the best fit for you with the above photo categories, and have fun with it!

Step 3 – Interview: Once you have completed the first two steps, please contact us to schedule an interview, which will use your map and photos as the basis for a discussion about your neighborhood and life in Oshkosh. We will view the map/photos together and ask you a series of questions related to our research topic.

Note: after all of our interviews have been completed, we plan to have some events in the community to generate discussion in this regard, and we will touch base with you down the road about this.

Thanks!

Paul Van Auken, Ph.D.; Sociology Department, Environmental Studies Program - UW Oshkosh
vanaukep@uwosh.edu; 920.424.2038 (office phone)