

Building the Community of North Chicago.

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Project Summary

The Building the Community of North Chicago project will invest in building of a strong coalition of local partners capable of designing and implementing a community-based participatory research project that will inform and help define the coalition's future community building efforts. Over a period of 12 months, the project will convene and support relationship building among residents and other local individuals and associations that are interested in exploring the questions associated with their own involvement in an effort to improve the health of the community. Simultaneously, as the residents are building confidence in their ability to generate a positive impact on local conditions, we will identify potential members of a larger stakeholder group that might include other individuals, organizations, and agencies that are interested in partnering with residents on community-driven efforts. Using an asset-oriented, grassroots approach, we will bring these groups together, first to develop trusting relationships, then to consider shared interests, and the assets, skills, and knowledge each member brings to the table. The project will accomplish this work through a series of smaller community meetings that will happen on a monthly basis. Participants—both individual residents and representatives of local organizations and institutions—will be encouraged to identify and invite other interested individuals to help expand the stakeholder group. Additionally, two strategically positioned community-wide meetings will provide the venue for community visioning and moving toward identifying what kind of local research the coalition might undertake that would contribute to establishing priorities and setting goals for improving the overall health of the community. A major coalition goal will be to position local residents as *drivers* of the work, and other stakeholders as *partners* in the work.