



Dayton Announces Next Round of “ORION” Neighborhoods

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After evaluating proposals from 12 neighborhoods, the City of Dayton has selected participants for the next round of its neighborhood stabilization program, called the ORION Solution program.

The three neighborhoods selected to participate during the first half of 2007 are Five Oaks and Mt. Vernon (combined) and Twin Towers. Three neighborhoods identified to participate in the program during the second half of 2007 are Westwood and Roosevelt (combined) and Old North Dayton.

The ORION program, which was first announced last year, stands for “Organizing Resources to Improve Our Neighborhoods.” The program’s objective is to coordinate key City services in targeted neighborhoods for a concentrated period of time. City departments work with neighborhood organizations and citizens to focus services like police, fire, building inspection, recreation, and public works in areas that need the extra attention, according to circumstances that are immediately affecting residents who live there.

The first four neighborhoods to participate in the ORION Solution this year were Riverdale, Santa Clara, Wolf Creek and Old Dayton View. Results show the program made significant improvements in the targeted areas.

“The first phase of the ORION Solution showed us the kind of success we can achieve if we coordinate our staff and our services with the active participation of neighborhood residents,” City Manager Rashad Young said. “Collaboration and involvement among our residents is key to making sure the impact of the ORION program continues for the long-term. The results we saw for the inaugural ORION neighborhoods makes me believe we can achieve similar on-going success in 2007.”

This Fall neighborhoods were encouraged to submit applications to be included in the ORION program for 2007. Twelve neighborhoods responded. An evaluation committee of City staff reviewed each proposal and made the final recommendations to the City Manager. The evaluation team looked at such factors as crime, housing conditions, demographic make-up, and citizen involvement capabilities to reach their recommendation.

Although the Five Oaks and Mt. Vernon neighborhoods applied separately, their close proximity to one another, as well as to recent ORION program participant Santa Clara, made them a good candidate for the opening round of 2007, roughly January-June. Both neighborhoods enjoy a high level of citizen participation and good housing stock. At the same time, they each face various quality of life issues especially relating to criminal activity.

Twin Towers possess diverse housing stock ranging from well-maintained homes to vacant and boarded structures. They have an active Community Council and other options for citizen participation that can help with implementing the ORION efforts. There is also a good opportunity to collaborate with the nearby South Park Planning District. Crime issues are a leading neighborhood concern.

The second round of 2007 program is expected to run from roughly July-December. Old North Dayton was selected for this round in part because of several quality of life issues, such as housing code violations, theft of copper piping, vandalism and vacant homes and businesses. Children's Medical Center and the Old North Dayton Development Corporation will serve as important anchors for any future stabilization efforts.

The southern Westwood and Roosevelt neighborhoods will be addressed in unison due to their close proximity and related issues, including crime and housing concerns. A tradition of strong citizen involvement coupled with the opportunity to re-energize block clubs and other citizen groups helped in the committee's decision-making.

City of Dayton staff will be meeting with leaders from the selected neighborhoods early next year. At that time, residents and appropriate departments will coordinate efforts to best deal with the individual neighborhood concerns.