

Art By: Maggie Liesch

Communities in Conversation
Cultural Asset Mapping
in Sheboygan



GREEN BICYCLE CO.
Building conscious communities

Green Bicycle Co. would like to express our deep gratitude to various people for their contribution to this project. We would like to thank the John Michael Kohler Arts Center staff who made this project possible. Amy Horst and Ann Brusky provided vision, direction and ongoing support for the project. Mary Burkey and Ellie Masias offered us continual dedication and ideas, and Xoe Fiss provided leadership and coordination for the youth vision, voice, and artwork.

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Major funding for Our Town comes from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support comes from: Kohler Trust for Arts and Education, the Frederic Cornell Kohler Charitable Trust, and Kohler Foundation, Inc.

Communities in Conversation: Cultural Asset Mapping in Sheboygan

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A person wearing a face mask and a dark jacket is pointing at a map on a wall. The map is titled "Wisconsin" and shows various regions. The person is standing in a room with other maps on the wall and a large map on the floor in the foreground. The background is a gallery or museum setting.

INTRODUCTION

In September 2020, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, in collaboration with Green Bicycle Co., embarked on a project to map the cultural assets of Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

"Cultural asset mapping" is a process of identifying resources that make an area unique. Assets include the people, places and organizations that make valuable contributions to the community; they influence the cultural fabric of a region. By identifying and recognizing these assets within the city of Sheboygan, this project makes these treasures — both tangible and intangible — more visible.

In all of its facets, this project attempts to capture the diversity of voices among Sheboygan residents, to acknowledge their personal perspectives and to address their various needs. It aims to address gaps in the groups being reached and to deconstruct barriers that deter inclusion of all communities.

Aided by the community through one-on-one interviews, survey participation and open-ended discussions, the team identified existing cultural resources, as well as areas where additional resources could be developed. We used this information to create recommendations for investments and tools for collaboration that reflect what Sheboygan residents expressed as being most necessary, beneficial and sustainable.

Our process included facilitating conversations around themes of community, culture, representation and investment. Based on our findings, we organized our recommendations into three categories for maximum short-term and long-term impact: youth education, participation and engagement, and representation. We believe one leads to another.

Major funding for the exhibit "Our Town: Cultural Asset Mapping in Sheboygan" at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center came from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support came from the Kohler Trust for the Arts and Education, the Frederic Cornell Kohler Charitable Trust and Kohler Foundation, Inc.

PROJECT PURPOSE, BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT

Part 1: An Evolving Sheboygan

Historically, Sheboygan was a city with primarily white residents of German and Dutch descent. Anecdotes illustrating the differences between early residents focus on whether they were Catholic or Lutheran. In the mid-1970s, after the U.S. withdrew from the Vietnam War, Hmong asylum seekers and immigrants began arriving in Sheboygan. This marked a shift in Sheboygan's diversity, one that has expanded in the years since. Today, Sheboygan is predominantly white and has strong Hmong and Hispanic populations, as well as a growing Black population.

Sheboygan's continued diversification has become more evident in recent years. More than 40 languages are spoken in the Sheboygan Area School District, and white students are now in the minority. The white population in Sheboygan is decreasing, while other populations continue to grow.

National and local current events have focused a spotlight on the importance of understanding diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in our community. This cultural asset mapping project began an exploration of cultural and relational assets in Sheboygan; it allowed networks, values, priorities and gaps to emerge. This project set a foundation for a deeper understanding of the Sheboygan community and produced tools and recommendations to help organizations and individuals evolve, engage and thrive.

Part 2: JMKAC Digs Deep

In September 2020, the John Michael Kohler Arts Center began an initiative called "Communities in Conversation." Leaders at the JMKAC recognized a period of shift and change for their organization, as they prepared to build a new facility, the Art Preserve, and to expand their offerings and engagement with the Sheboygan community. JMKAC leaders determined it was an appropriate time to pause and reflect on their upcoming work. Through community conversations and cultural asset mapping, the JMKAC will better understand the needs, capacities and cultural resources of Sheboygan's ever-expanding community.

JMKAC reflected on what they needed to examine as an organization and began to bring other groups and institutions into the fold — understanding that a broad systemic approach was needed to uncover and engage the community's assets. The tools and recommendations developed in this cultural asset mapping project have the potential to provide municipal government and organizations an enriched understanding of our community, as well as a road map for deepening and growing that understanding.

GOALS

1. Gain a deeper understanding of our community.
2. Allow the process to guide the project.
3. Amplify voices that are underrepresented.
4. Engage effectively with key stakeholders including JMKAC Community Partners.
5. Find synergy with JMKAC projects as part of the process.
6. Make recommendations that are useful to the City of Sheboygan and other organizations.

See interviews for more background.
<https://vimeo.com/571805085/45d1c57c39>

This project offers tools and recommendations for utilizing and engaging networks — creating a culture of active community people rather than civic consumers — for educating and preparing youth, and for expanding representation. This project will become a document that can be referenced in the future to aid in development and decision-making, and it will deepen the conversation between residents and representatives.

WHAT IS CULTURAL ASSET MAPPING?

Cultural asset mapping is the process of identifying key cultural resources within the community. The purpose — to take full advantage of the resources; to build a strong, active, engaged community; and to utilize those assets in development efforts. Asset mapping reveals and explores cultural resources. But more importantly, it shows interconnections among assets that can reveal new ways to access and promote them. Each asset that is identified brings us closer to knowledge of our diverse community. This process helps us build a more comprehensive picture of the whole — learning about our community by finding out all that it encompasses.

The process of asset mapping works to identify tangible and intangible assets.

- Tangible assets include people, places and things. They are assets in a physical form.
- Intangible assets are qualities, experiences, relationships, connections and networks. Intangible assets cannot be touched or physically located, but they are equally important to explore and understand.

Both tangible and intangible assets make up a community's cultural asset map: they are interconnected and are critical contributors to making our community what it is.

A cultural asset mapping initiative can become a powerful tool for a city. The results can provide a deep understanding of key networks and cultural attitudes that shape the community. The results can be utilized in a number of ways:

- **In planning and policy development.** The findings can indicate gaps in assets that require further investment. They can inform municipal decision-making related to land use, social planning, heritage planning, urban design and place making.
- **To increase awareness and marketing.** The results can identify opportunities for promoting culture.
- **To create networks and collaboration.** The findings can facilitate partnerships with cultural groups and identify opportunities to maximize assets.
- **To push aside the status-quo way of thinking.** Cultural asset mapping can change the approaches used for community engagement and investment. The results can help teams transition from a top-down approach into more community-based discussions.

"Cultural Asset Mapping," Rob Voigt. PlannersWeb.com <https://bit.ly/CAMplannersweb>

"An Introduction to Cultural Asset Mapping," Artscape DIY <https://bit.ly/CAMintroArtscape>

"Mapping Community Assets Workbook," Diane Dorfman. Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory <https://bit.ly/AssetsWorkbook>



THERE'S A NEED TO DEFINE THE PROJECT IN ORDER FOR GREATER COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING AND PARTICIPATION:

What is this project, and why does it matter to Sheboygan?

Cultural asset mapping is a new concept to many people. It was important to define the project so everyone in the community had access to understand and participate — whether through data collection, community engagement, art exhibits, or simply by reading an article or social media post. The project team needed to have a well-thought-out answer when they were asked, "What is this project, and why does it matter to Sheboygan?"

PROJECT TEAM

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center contracted Green Bicycle Co. to facilitate the cultural asset mapping project. Green Bicycle Co. is a dynamic, engaging boutique-consulting firm whose staff

always seek to understand and build capacity around a topic or movement. Green Bicycle Co. was uniquely qualified to take on this project: the firm is located in Sheboygan, and all team members have a deep commitment to and understanding of the city. Green Bicycle Co. staff working on the project include:

- **Heather Cleveland**, company founder and owner, who served as project manager.
- **Lorenzo Backhaus**, community developer, a skilled connector and systems thinker.
- **Nancy Maring**, urban planner, a community-minded and creative problem solver.

Green Bicycle Co. worked closely with JMKAC staff throughout the project, ensuring the direction being taken fit the organization's needs and vision. This also allowed visual art to be seamlessly integrated into the project, offering a new perspective and method of engagement. Green Bicycle Co. and JMKAC staff met regularly, building trust and developing ideas to launch cultural asset mapping in the Sheboygan community. Staff members at the JMKAC Community Art Department who dedicated their time, energy and ideas to this project include:

- **Mary Burkey**, Community Arts program director.
- **Ellie Masias**, Community Arts program assistant.

JMKAC leadership who guided the project's direction and offered invaluable support, ideas and perspectives include:

- **Amy Horst**, associate director.
- **Ann Brusky**, director of public programs.

The John Michael Kohler Arts Center team provided incredibly valuable collaboration and input. As the project progressed, weekly meetings between the JMKAC and Green Bicycle Co. teams were established to share ideas and perspectives. Input from JMKAC staff became a pivotal part of the project, delivering constructive feedback and support.





OUR APPROACH

“

Throughout the project, it was essential that we kept the opportunities and interactions with the participants open. For us, we felt maintaining the ability to speak freely and highlight individuality was at the core of this process.

We understood that past projects and conventional community-engagement interactions kept individuals limited to categories or labels that restricted their ability to express themselves. As the project progressed, this component was discussed frequently and recognized as a technique to use with future community projects.

***—Lorenzo Backhaus
Community developer at Green Bicycle Co.***



OPPORTUNITIES — VISION

On the macro level, you should ask what kinds of trends are exposed or illustrated. What are the community’s principal strengths and weaknesses? What are the components of its identity? What challenges is it facing?

—Creative City Network of Canada, Cultural Mapping Toolkit

In order to allow the process to drive the project, the team adhered to these parameters: use open-ended prompts and conversations, avoid assumptions by not categorizing responses too soon, and focus on community-guided recommendations.

Initial community research included the examination of surveys, documents and plans from the city of Sheboygan and other nonprofit agencies. The team studied the city’s racial equity report. They reviewed United Way’s report on ALICE households, which focuses on those who are “Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed.” They also reviewed city planning and development presentations. After observing response limitations and the uniformity of respondents, there was a need and desire to engage with the community in new ways. This research was a paramount step in the process; it informed the project’s intentionality of design and inclusion.

Initial research led to the development of the project’s guiding principles:

CULTURE COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION INVESTMENT

INITIAL RESEARCH

Prior to beginning data collection and community engagement, the team reviewed case studies and did community research to set direction for the project ahead. Research on cultural asset mapping allowed the team to further understand and identify potential approaches that could be useful and effective. This research phase helped guide discussions and provide examples of various community-engagement strategies. Two inspirational case studies can be found in Appendix A.

DATA COLLECTION

Conversational Interviews

Initially, Green Bicycle Co. planned to gather data through in-person interviews, focus groups and other forms of in-person engagement. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual engagement was utilized so data collection could continue.

The team conducted one-on-one interviews, and those became the main source of data. Interviews were purposefully conversational, allowing for unguarded dialogue, free thought and valuable input from participants. Using open-ended prompts required participants to reveal individual perspectives. The language used was accessible and understandable in order to reduce intimidation. Conversations were made available to participants via phone, Zoom video communications, or as in-person meetings; each participant was able to choose how the interview was conducted based on their personal comfort level. It was essential to ensure people were met where they were, and that they were comfortable with the interview format. Each interview was set for 30 minutes; however the conversation did not end if it ran over that time.

Each interview consisted of two sections: an optional demographic portion followed by conversation prompts. Demographic data was important to the project so participant diversity could be tracked and highlighted. Collecting demographic data also ensured the project was as representative of Sheboygan as possible. Participants were asked about age, race, ethnicity, education and employment, as well as how long they had lived in Sheboygan and what part of the city they lived in. Interviewers emphasized that if the participant didn’t feel comfortable or did not want to respond to any question, they could skip it and move on to the next.

After demographic data was collected, nine conversation prompts were used to gather additional information. The prompts focused on community, culture, investment, assets, representation, well-being and needs. These prompts were meticulously constructed and enabled freedom of expression, thought and response. Interviews were not recorded, but staff took detailed notes so data could be compiled and analyzed.

Overall, 43 interviews were conducted by two Green Bicycle Co. staff members over the course of five months.

A full list of interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

Surveys

Surveys were utilized as complements to in-person interviews, allowing for a wider reach. Because the surveys were administered and completed online, they lacked the conversational style of the interviews. However, the data gathered was useful, and the surveys followed the same structure and prompts as the interviews. Surveys sent to high-school participants were slightly altered, omitting certain demographic questions that didn't pertain to students.

A link to the online survey was sent to all groups and individuals participating in the project engagement, including school groups, community groups and nonprofit organizations. Overall, 24 survey responses were collected over the course of eight weeks.

Utilizing surveys allowed the project to reach groups and individuals who would not have been part of data collection if the process had relied on conversational interviews alone.

DATA ANALYSIS

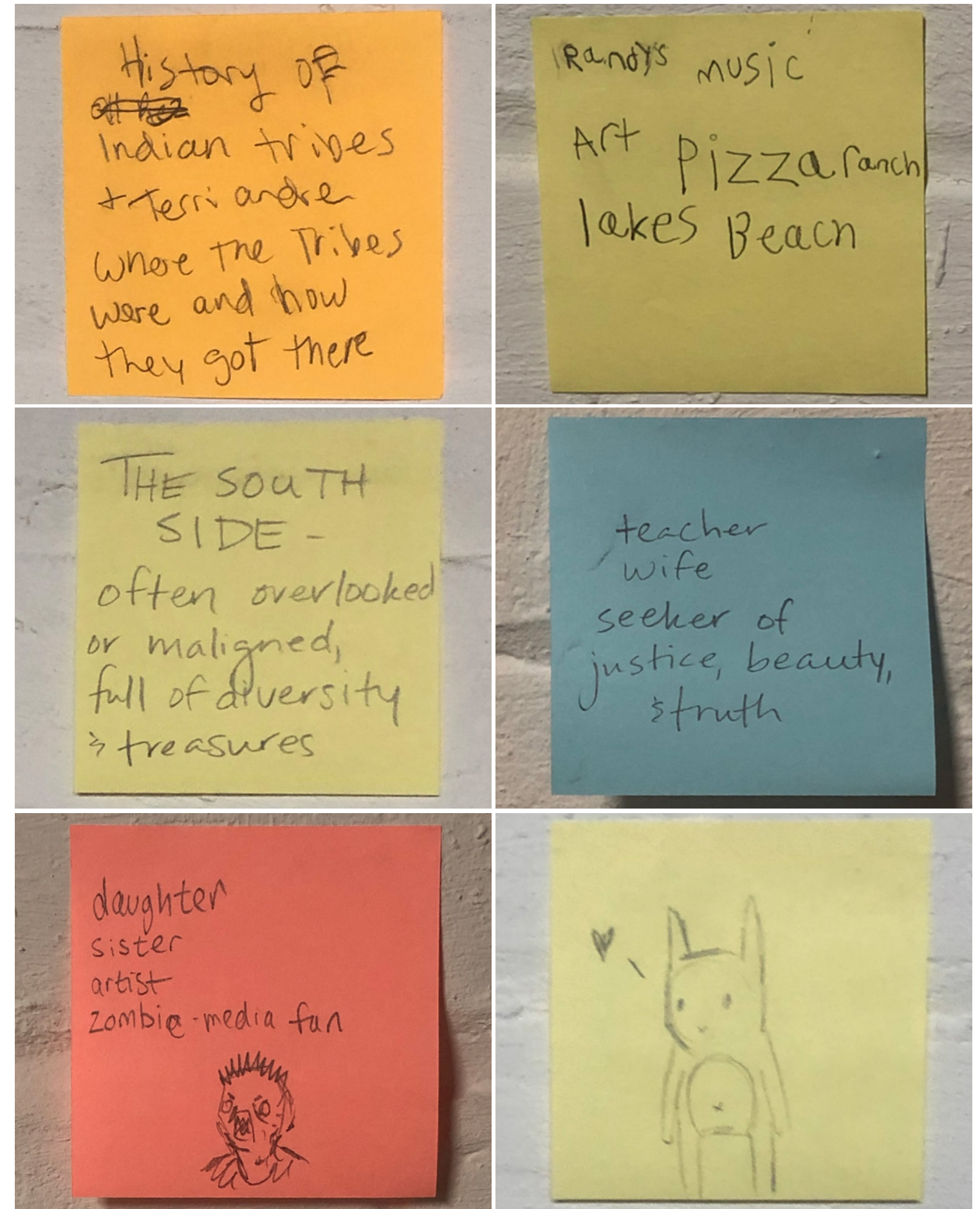
Prior to data analysis, all interview responses were entered into Google Forms, using the same survey that groups were sent. This allowed data to be organized and displayed more easily and clearly for analysis.

Demographic data was analyzed per question, finding similarities within responses and categorizing them in a way that conveyed the diversity appropriately. The team utilized Google Forms and Google Sheets to calculate numbers and determine results.

Responses to the prompts required more organization and analysis. Google Forms and Google Sheets were also utilized for this analysis, but additional steps were necessary for sorting and categorizing. Careful and deliberate consideration was important to determine what information needed to be communicated and the impact it could have. Each participant had their own perspective, and every response told a story. As trends and connections emerged from the responses, their importance had to be properly represented and highlighted. The trends found in the data led to recommendations, providing the information and support for creating next steps.

Comparing and contrasting responses to the conversational prompts provided an understanding of what community members saw as Sheboygan's current assets and needs. Each response was put into a category depending on the number of similar responses. These categories were then used to depict what the majority, plurality and minority of people thought. Once this was determined, responses were assessed and connected to other response categories. These connections directly correlated to preliminary recommendations, and to what people identified as needs and wants within the city of Sheboygan.

A full list of assets can be found in Appendix C.

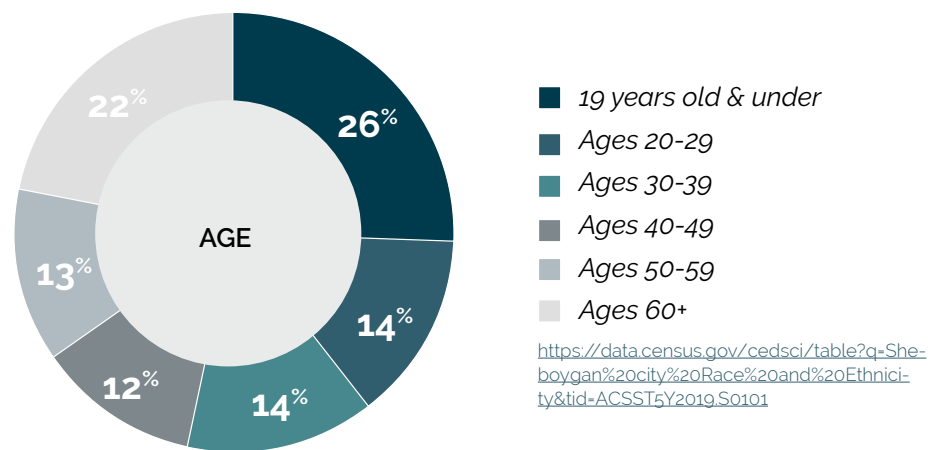


The sticky notes show participant responses to prompts included in the interactive January - February 2021 JMKAC exhibit. The prompts focused on individual identity and the assets of Sheboygan, WI.

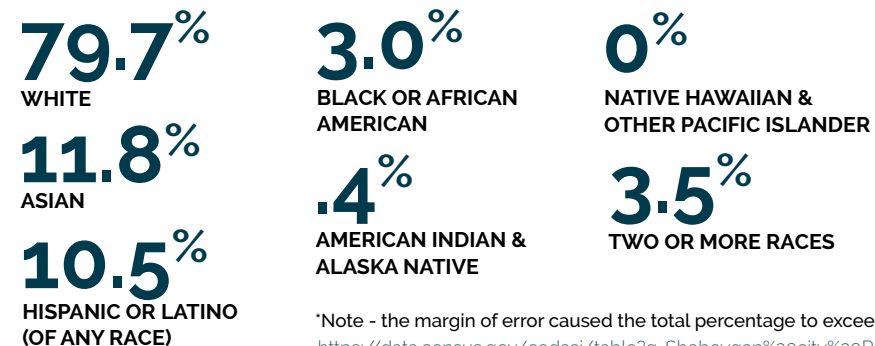


SHEBOYGAN STATISTICS

According to the U.S. Census Bureau 2019: American Community Survey 5-year Estimates Data Profiles.



RACE AND ETHNICITY



RACE AND ETHNICITY

The U.S. Census Bureau considers race and ethnicity different concepts. Race is how a person identifies with one or more social groups — White, Black, Asian, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, or another race.

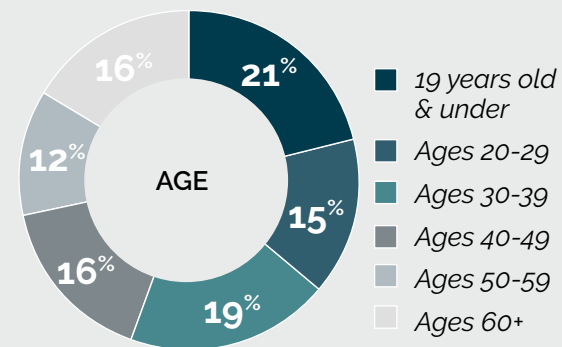
Ethnicity is whether a person is of Hispanic origin or not — census options are "Hispanic or Latino (of any race)" and "Not Hispanic or Latino."

Interview responses to our open-ended questions about ethnicity did not follow the same structure. In the intentional interview/survey design, participants could identify themselves any way they chose. Some people stated a country of origin or ethnic group ("Guatemalan," "Swedish and Slovenian," "Hmong.") Others identified themselves by race ("Black") or a combination of race and ethnicity ("White, non-Hispanic.")



INTERVIEW STATISTICS

Our interview and survey process involved in-depth conversations with a cross section of our community.



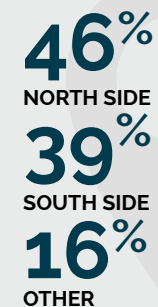
YEARS IN SHEBOYGAN INTERVIEWS (ADULTS)



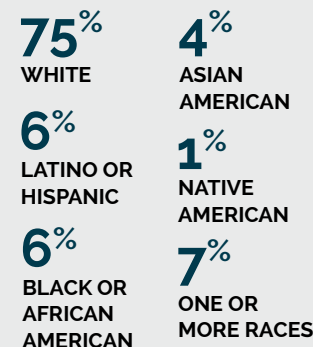
SURVEYS (HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS)



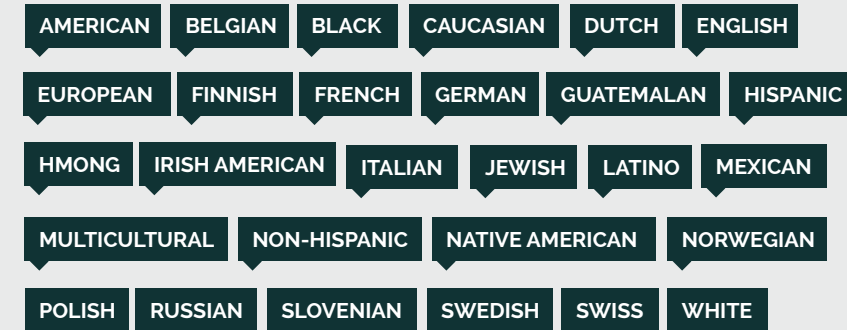
NEIGHBORHOOD



RACE AND ETHNICITY

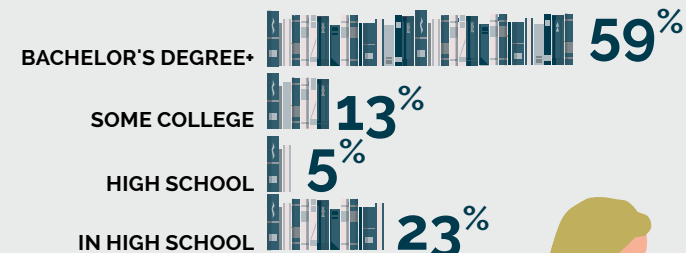


ETHNICITY ANSWERS



Responses to the ethnicity question included descriptions both of race and ethnicity, as well as country of origin. This demonstrates the ambiguity of the term "ethnicity." The fact that respondents were not limited to check-the-box options allowed for further ambiguity.

EDUCATION



EMPLOYMENT

- Sadoff Iron and Metal
- City administrator
- Self-employed sales rep, substitute teacher
- Educator, executive director
- Mayor
- Community and economic development planner
- Teacher
- RAYS: Runaway and Youth Services
- Retired
- Lakeland University
- Kohler
- Lakeshore Community
- Action Program
- Actively searching for employment
- Barber
- Sheboygan Area School District
- Mead Public Library
- Lakeshore Technical College
- Retired, martial arts instructor, songwriter
- Senior Activity Center of Sheboygan
- Weill Center
- Sheboygan Police Department
- Caregiver (assisted living)
- Gym owner
- Business analyst
- Retired, volunteering
- The Duke of Devon
- Yoga teacher
- Retired, substitute teacher
- Nemak
- Jake's Cafe
- Unemployed
- Acuity Insurance
- Financial advisor
- Multiple jobs, pastor
- Boys and Girls Club

Note: Some respondents were more comfortable than others with revealing details about their employment. Open-ended questions allowed people to answer with the names of their employers or their job titles. Some streamlining has been done for readability.

ENGAGEMENT

Engagement was an important part of this project from the beginning. Engagement provided a way to educate and raise awareness about cultural asset mapping, to connect for one-on-one interviews or surveys, and to continue the connection throughout the project and into the future.

Connecting with people in our community is an important part of building that community. At the onset of the project, a presentation was given to JMKAC Community Partners. Representatives from 14 organizations attended, thus launching the beginning of the many networks this project was able to engage and navigate. Sheboygan's community is filled with networks and connections. Community members belong to many different networks, and networks are assets in themselves. By presenting to one representative, that person became informed and was able to share with their organizations and beyond.

COVID-19 and the pandemic brought a unique challenge to the engagement process, and it most likely limited our ability to outreach. But at the same time, it also created an opportunity for deeper conversations with individuals.

Youth Engagement

During the planning stages, the team from Green Bicycle Co. determined a need to get youth involved in the cultural asset mapping project. Including young people was important, because their input is often overlooked and undervalued. The team believed this would be a valuable opportunity to provide youth a space to share their thoughts and experiences. It would also bring additional perspective to the project.

Through networking and targeted outreach, the Green Bicycle Co. team created opportunities to speak with multiple high-school classes and clubs about the project. These groups included Central High School students, South High School's Forensics Club and a newly formed youth group at South High School called WE RISE (Working to Eliminate Racial Injustice and Support Equity). WE RISE is a student-led social justice organization composed of more than 40 students in grades nine through 12.

Each group was given a short presentation about the cultural asset mapping project via Zoom, followed by time to share thoughts, ideas and questions. Following the presentation, participants were sent an email link to a shortened version of the survey that included only a few of the demographic questions. (Since these participants were still in high school, some questions were not pertinent.) The prompts from the community interviews were used again in the high-school survey. It was important to the group that the high-school students were given the same opportunities as other participants to share their input and ideas.

"Community Report Back" Presentation and Discussion

Green Bicycle Co. staff members were dedicated to connecting with people throughout the project. On March 30, 2021, we held a public "Community Report Back" event that included a presentation of our findings to date. We also held small-group discussions to assess our findings and direction with the community. A cultural asset mapping project belongs to the community, and Green Bicycle Co.'s role was to facilitate, communicate and connect.

The Community Report Back event was held after five months of presentations, interviews, surveys and analysis. This coincided with the beginning of the findings-and-recommendations part of the project.

To make the Community Report Back as successful as possible, Green Bicycle Co. partnered with Mead Public Library and JMKAC for facilitation assistance. The initial idea was to create facilitation kits that would allow other small groups throughout the community to participate; it was later determined that do-it-yourself kits would not allow for the level of facilitation the project needed.

The team invited all past interview participants and JMKAC community-partner organizations, and the event was posted on the JMKAC website and on social media.

The experience was positive for us as a group; it allowed us to synthesize our information and assess our findings and initial recommendations. It was at this time we determined our recommendation themes.

Themes:

- 1. YOUTH EDUCATION**
- 2. PARTICIPATION + ENGAGEMENT**
- 3. DIVERSE REPRESENTATION**

After a brief presentation on the project, attendees were divided into smaller groups for deeper discussions of the three themes. Feedback from the groups helped keep the focus on what the community has (assets) versus what it lacks.



The presentation was recorded and shared with interview participants later in the process.

Community Report-Back recording:
<https://youtu.be/Dt-kGJE8YzM>



Organization Conversations

One major goal of this project was to make recommendations, tools and conclusions accessible to leadership. Achieving that goal required continued engagement with community organizations. The recorded Community Report Back presentation was shared with representatives from Sheboygan Area School District and the city of Sheboygan. One-on-one interviews were conducted with the same groups; both play key roles in the community in respect to the recommendation themes: Youth Education, Participation and Engagement, and Diverse Representation.

As in the individual interviews, the questions in the organization conversations were open ended; this allowed for interpretation and a stream of consciousness in discussions. The goal was to gather information that would help us develop tools for strengthening engagement, outreach, diversity, network capability and effectiveness. The organization conversations were a shift from individual representation to entity representation and assets.

The organization conversations provided additional important recommendations. The prompts used, shown in Appendix B, allowed Green Bicycle Co. to ask about existing assets, needs and ideals. The conversations gave people opportunities to provide their own ideas related to the topics — making it easier for implementation in the future.

Youth Education Network Conversations

As trends and themes were identified through data analysis, the team began planning next steps. One key theme that emerged was the importance of youth investment and education; this was the focus of many community members' responses.

Individuals from various demographics and backgrounds emphasized the need for improved investment in Sheboygan's youth. Participants mentioned the importance of educational opportunities, programs, leisure activities and other forms of youth interaction. Once this was established as a key area for recommendations, we understood that further engagement and research was important.

First, we identified and reviewed entities that were assets for community youth. We contacted representatives to gauge interest and schedule interviews. These interviews were aimed at obtaining more information about the current programs and opportunities being offered, as well as at understanding where the organizations felt they needed support, could improve or lacked resources. To do so, the interviews included prompts based around organizational assets, networking and existing gaps. The goal was to gather as much information as possible to help construct recommendations for future youth investment.

The background features a collage of children's drawings on a semi-transparent orange overlay. The drawings include: a beach scene with a person and the text 'Beach activities'; a landscape with a person and the text 'Little Madiya'; a drawing of a person with the text 'Rat'; a drawing of a person with the text 'Poke man'; a drawing of a tree with the text 'Winter seasonal activity'; and a drawing of a person with the text 'bike'.

ART & CULTURAL ASSET MAPPING

Partnership with the John Michael Kohler Arts Center allowed the inclusion of art to enrich and elevate each phase of this project. The JMKAC opened its galleries and staff to work collaboratively on the project, exploring cultural asset mapping through art.

Using art throughout the project facilitated a connection to the community. Artwork expressed key themes and complex ideas, and it encouraged new perspectives — all of which drove deeper engagement. Including art in our process helped raise awareness about what cultural asset mapping is and about this project specifically. Having interactive exhibits expanded the project's reach, allowing more people to participate in the process. It effectively engaged more people and in different ways.

COMMUNITY GALLERY ENGAGEMENT: OUR TOWN

In January and February of 2021, the JMKAC hosted an interactive exhibit called "Our Town: Cultural Asset Mapping in Sheboygan." Designed to expand outreach and engagement, the exhibit had multiple displays that allowed attendees to get involved in the project. Ample space was provided for easy interaction.

The engagement questions used were prompts from the conversational interviews. There was also a QR code linking directly to the online survey; this was an alternative version of the community conversations. Although the survey was less interactive than the conversations, we took into consideration people's comfort levels, availability and awareness of the project. Offering a survey at the exhibit was an effective way to get more people involved, through a method that was simple and straightforward.

The exhibit, held in the JMKAC Community Gallery, included four basic sections.

"Where are you from and where do you call home?"

This section of the exhibit allowed participants to identify their places of origin and the places they currently call home, shedding light on the diverse backgrounds of Sheboygan's residents. Culture and identity can be shaped by where people are from and where people call home. It included the following maps:

- World
- U.S.
- Wisconsin
- Sheboygan County
- City of Sheboygan neighborhoods

The maps were mounted on metal. Each participant was invited to place a red magnet indicating where they were from and a yellow magnet showing the location of their current residence.

"Self Post-It®" Exhibit

The "Self Post-it" exhibit was designed to help visitors understand that assets go beyond physical "tangible" places and things. It included a display of tangible and intangible assets. To encourage interaction, Post-it Notes and pencils were provided, along with two prompts:

- What are your favorite or important things in Sheboygan?*
- Which community, group, term, or phrase describes your identity? (For example: surfer, cyclist, reader, musician, foodie, etc.)*
- An additional encouragement was shared: *Please list any and all! We want to recognize all of the uniqueness in Sheboygan.*



"Dear Sheboygan" Exhibit

In an effort to include a variety of ways for people to participate in both the exhibit and mapping project, the JMKAC invited people to submit photos of the community.

Inspired by the #DearMKE project, DearSheboygan asks community members to contribute photos taken around the city. We hope to receive a range of images showing the special character, beauty, and intricacies of Sheboygan. This is your chance to bring light to the well-known treasures as well as the hidden gems of the city!



Postcard and Survey

A QR code that offered information about the project, along with the QR code to access the survey. The survey included prompts similar to those used in the one-on-one interviews. Postcards were delivered to local businesses throughout Sheboygan. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, an emphasis was given to businesses with regular guests.

FINAL EXHIBITION: COMMUNITIES IN CONVERSATION

The final exhibition of the cultural asset mapping project is called "Communities in Conversation: Cultural Asset Mapping in Sheboygan." It will be on display in the JMKAC Community Gallery through September 2021, allowing community members and visitors to continue to engage in the project. It will include digital access to the final report.

The exhibit begins with an introduction to the project in English; translations in Hmong and Spanish are also available. An attempt to have a Braille translation fell short, but it's acknowledged that accessibility is important. Planning for this will be a priority moving forward.

The exhibit, held in the JMKAC Community Arts Gallery, included six basic sections.

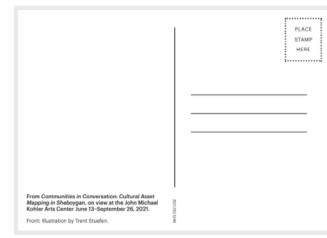
Call for Artists

In February 2021, the Arts Center put out a call for artists who have connections to Sheboygan, seeking work relating to ideas of representation, culture, investment and community in the city. The call-for-artist opportunity was included on a postcard displaying commissioned art from local artist Tony Brandl. Postcards were, again, delivered to local businesses throughout Sheboygan. In March 2021, artists submitted proposals for work they were inspired to create. Acknowledging the importance of process throughout all facets of this project, the call asked for proposals for work rather than finished and polished artwork.

The artists were asked to consider assets and opportunities in the city and to express their perspective on the work of cultural asset mapping. They were invited to convey their perspectives via illustrated stories, graphic novels and graphic art. They were also encouraged to think about both tangible and intangible assets in the creation of work conveying culture, community and belonging in Sheboygan.

Green Bicycle Co. and JMKAC staff met with selected semifinal artists to help refine the direction of their proposals. In April 2021, five artists were selected for inclusion in the exhibition. An artist statement accompanies each work of art created, giving a little more insight into the artist's perspective on the work of cultural asset mapping.





Art by: Trent Stuefen



Exhibit and Project Postcard

To continue to raise awareness about the project, a complementary postcard was created using artwork by local artist Trent Stuefen.

Youth: Student Voices and Visions

Over 350 students from twelve schools participated in the cultural asset mapping project. During March and April 2021, JMKAC and Green Bicycle Co. staff virtually visited more than 20 local first-grade through eighth-grade classrooms. Students

were introduced to cultural asset mapping, learning about assets and talking about what they appreciated in their community.

Each student received a pack of colored pencils and a square of card-stock paper. Students were asked to draw something in Sheboygan that was important to them. The students' artwork enabled them to share their perspectives visually. This format allowed the inclusion of youth voices on a larger scale than would have been possible through conversations or meetings.

High-school students served as curators for this project. These curators worked with JMKAC and Green Bicycle Co. staff to sort the drawings into initial categories. Then, along with participants at The Club at the Y for Teens, they designed layouts for a printed book. The layouts show at a glance which assets young people in our community find most valuable. A copy of the book will go to each classroom that participated.

The following schools participated: Cleveland Elementary School (fourth grade), Cooper Elementary School (first and fifth grades), Étude Elementary School (first grade), Grant Elementary School (second and fifth grades), Jackson Elementary School (third grade), James Madison Elementary School (fifth grade), Longfellow Elementary School (second grade), Pigeon River Elementary School (first and second grades), Sheboygan Falls Middle School (seventh and eighth grade), Sheboygan's North High School (Grace Zhang, 10th grade, senior curator), Sheboygan's South High School (Grace Vue, 10th grade, curator), and Wilson Elementary School (fourth grade).



Commissioned Artist

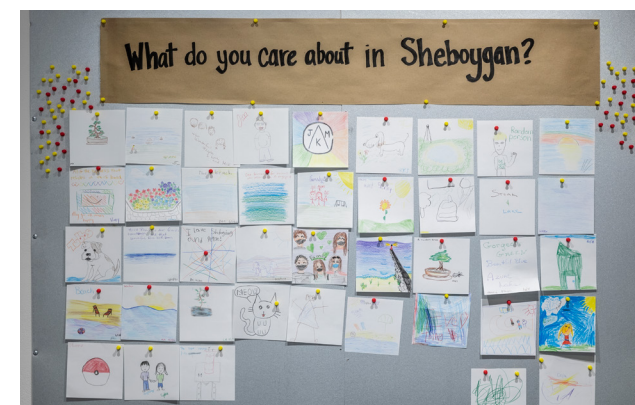
Local artist Sarah Baughman was commissioned to use art to explain complex processes in the exhibition. Through her art, she conceptualizes abstract thoughts and relationships to inspire the community to lean into the process, findings and recommendations.



Interviews

For the final exhibition, JMKAC Associate Director Amy Horst and Green Bicycle Co. staff Heather Cleveland, Lorenzo Backhaus and Nancy Maring were interviewed about the project and process. The videos are on display in the exhibit to help the audience understand the origin of the project and how the work was conducted.

Watch the interview » <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dt-kGJE8YzM>



Interactive Art

Visitor engagement is an important component of the final exhibition, as it was in the earlier "Our Town" exhibit. Visitors will have an opportunity to create their own 6-by-6-inch square using the same colored pencils the students used for their work. The initial prompt will match the youth art prompt: "Draw something in Sheboygan that is important to you!" The prompt will also change several times over the life of the exhibit, eventually leading to the next phase of the cultural asset mapping project.



FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS + TOOLS

After engaging the community in multiple ways and in multiple forums, several themes began to emerge, synthesizing ideas and perspectives.

When the team began the process of cultural asset mapping, we sought to identify with a cross section of people from our community. The slightly surprising results were the intangible assets that need strengthening in order to add value to already existing assets. Our research focused on culture, community, representation and investment. Our recommendations focus on youth education, participation and engagement, and diverse representation.

COMMUNITY

Sheboygan residents that participated in our engagement identified a community with a geographic boundary: they belong to the Sheboygan community simply because they live in Sheboygan. Some respondents took their definitions deeper and connected community with action. Community often meant taking ownership, care and working toward common goals.

"Community means a group of people with shared understanding, location, support. And within it you have a sense of belonging." - Female, 60 years old, five-year resident.

"Community is the intersection of narratives. The telling. The listening. The co-authoring of discourse, where our distinct experiences in the world join together to define something shared and new. When sharing compels action — community."
— Female, 35 years old, nine-year resident

"Community is the shared space and resources, and how people come together to work in that same environment. Schools, for example, have a community — a smaller piece of the bigger community. Community is a feeling that we belong and contribute to a common goal. It's also about how we fit in the bigger place. We have small communities, but we all belong to Sheboygan." — Male, 49 years old, five-year resident



Community means a group of people with shared understanding, location, support and within it you have a sense of belonging.

—Female, 60 years old, five-year resident



Culture is the belief system you carry with you and values you carry with you: hidden habits of how you live, things you don't often think about (language, food, attitudes, dress). Cultural disputes come from beliefs, values and behaviors, not language food and dress.

—Male, 61 years old, 30-year resident

CULTURE

Sheboygan community members interviewed for this project identified art, food, language, music and race as important factors contributing to culture. Often, the participants reflected that people could be members of multiple subcultures but that Sheboygan as a whole has a recognizable culture for them.

"Culture means a collection of conditioning, habits, art and other assets from an area or a group that you belong to. Also, practices, expectations and values."
— Female, 60 years old, 12-year resident

"Culture is the belief system you carry with you and values you carry with you: hidden habits of how you live, things you don't often think about (language, food, attitudes, dress). Cultural disputes come from beliefs, values and behaviors, not language food and dress." — Male, 61 years old, 30-year resident

"Culture has many different levels and can exist in many different areas in a person's life. I have culture at my job, culture within my family, a culture at the university I attended, and so on. Culture is a mindset and a way of living." —Male, 26 years old, 26-year resident

BELONGING AND WELL-BEING

| *"What are things in our community that are important to your well-being or belonging?"*

In the Sheboygan community, there are both tangible and intangible aspects important to people's well-being and belonging. In the community conversations, people mentioned more intangible elements than tangible elements.

The tangible elements mentioned most often related to the community's lakefront and to its parks and trails. Of 63 people who responded to the question, 35% mentioned these two elements as important to well-being or belonging. Lake Michigan and Sheboygan's lakefront were most often mentioned. Other parks and trails throughout the city and county were also mentioned, including Evergreen Park, Interurban Trail, Kettle Moraine State Forest, Kiwanis Skate Park and Maywood Park. The community considers parks and natural areas throughout Sheboygan incredibly valuable assets; access to them is paramount.

The most frequently listed intangible assets contributing to Sheboyganites' well-being and belonging included education (16% of responses), access to art (14% of responses), plus a sense of safety and a healthy economy (each with 13% of responses). A sense of being a part of something larger than oneself was also a frequently-cited asset. Related intangible assets included activities that help others grow, servanthood and volunteerism, as well as participating in religious and political organizations. Opportunities for fellowship and community development are important assets helping Sheboygan's community thrive.

A striking trend in responses to this question relates to local assets. Respondents mentioned the importance of access to local food, locally-owned businesses, local communities and festivals. Any specific businesses, events, restaurants, etc. that were listed in the conversations were local and unique to Sheboygan. No franchises or chains were included in any of the responses.

Based on data from the belonging and well-being question, these assets emerged as valuable:

- Structured social opportunities/shared-interest groups
- Parks/open spaces and community gatherings
- Intangible atmosphere and culture (such as acceptance, diversity and tolerance)
- Economic strength and community infrastructure
- Passive social opportunities/familiar social settings and "third spaces"

Overall, residents need opportunities to connect with the community as a whole. But they also need familiar, smaller groups in which to find support, stimulation and comfort. They also need opportunities to cross-pollinate and network with other groups and parts of the community with whom they wouldn't otherwise interact. Residents appreciate access to nature and outdoor recreation, access to the arts and the unique local elements in Sheboygan.

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

| *"What would you like to see in your community?"*

The topic of community investment elicited a variety of responses during our one-on-one conversational interviews. This interest area prompted unique discussions that allowed each participant to advocate for their beliefs and ideas.

The most frequent topics mentioned in these responses were investments in youth (23% of responses) and support of local assets (32% of responses).

There was an array of ideas for youth investment, including increased investment in schools, more activities in which to participate, facilities for youth to utilize, volunteer opportunities and improved programming to fit youth wants and needs. Improving programming and offering more activities for youth of all ages were common ideas, both of which can be addressed by providing youth more opportunities to voice their opinions and have input on decision-making.

There were many ideas on how to invest in and support local assets. The range of investments related to the environment and lake, local arts, affordable housing, nonprofit support, small businesses, public spaces and micro community events. Local support and investment ideas depend on individual experiences, knowledge and backgrounds. In order to understand and amplify communities throughout Sheboygan, we must have representation and leadership opportunities for everyone. One way to address many of the current needs and wants for community investment is to meet people where they are and invite them to the decision-making table: diversifying our leadership roles and increasing cultural competency.

Another common trend that arose was a desire for ethnic and cultural investment. Emphasis was put on integrating cultures and communities, improving diversity at leadership tables, highlighting diverse voices, and allocating resources to various communities.

Main themes identified from the community investment data:

- Youth
- Ethnic/cultural investment
- Community events
- Local support
- Community development/engagement

In summary, constituents have varied investment wants and needs, but they have commonalities in desired outcomes. One common thread: investment that benefits all communities throughout Sheboygan and offers opportunities for everyone.

Project participants desire investment in:

- Youth development and inclusion
- Local businesses and assets
- Leadership that represents everyone
- Opportunities that integrate and bring everyone together.

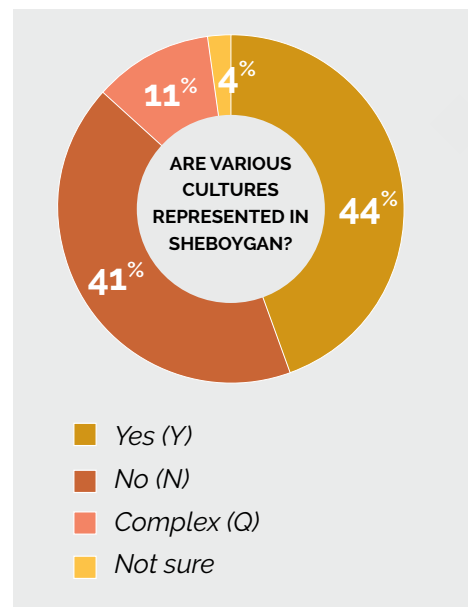
CULTURAL REPRESENTATION

| *"Are various cultures represented in Sheboygan? And how?"*

Sheboygan community members had differing ideologies when discussing representation. Responses for whether or not various cultures were represented in Sheboygan provided a spectrum of perspectives and observations.

Participant feedback regarding cultural representation in Sheboygan was put into the following categories:

- Yes, various cultures are represented ("Y")
- No, not completely or needs improvement ("N")
- Questioning or identified as a complex response ("Q")
- Not sure



Participants answered "yes" in 44% of responses. This was supported by the many festivals, memorials, events, restaurants and businesses throughout the city. People also referenced what they experienced when out in the community, whether it was while shopping, during parades or in the school system.

Answers sorted into the "N" category made up 41% of responses. Answers sorted in the "Q" category made up 11% of responses. These responses included observations, experiences and perspectives that highlighted various levels of understanding of representation.

Some people surveyed thought representation was sufficient in businesses, restaurants and festivals. Others noted the lack of representation in leadership.

Within the "N" responses, the main ideology conveyed was that businesses and restaurants, as well as the presence of culturally diverse people, are minimal components of cultural representation. These responses included statements that ethnic representation was needed in decision-making roles, leadership and board seats. Other ideas provided: promoting cultural events, connecting ethnic groups to the city, funding community opportunities, and highlighting events that promote the sharing of cultures. Affordability and increased prices due to gentrification were frequently cited as issues.

From the data, it can be concluded that a discrepancy exists when referring to representation. There are community members who believe various cultures are represented fairly in Sheboygan and others who do not. The difference lies in what people view as representation and the extent that those within the culture feel represented. Most respondents included examples and support for their perspectives. Overall, it seems important to the majority of participants that cultures are represented and feel welcome throughout Sheboygan.



Recommendations and Tools

Our recommendations tie to one or all of our focus areas: Youth Education, Participation and Engagement, and Diverse Representation. Recommendations are not specific to a single focus area. Additionally, investment in one focus area will positively impact the others.

Each recommendation includes advisement on which groups in the community could take the lead on an initiative or action step. The city and community groups considered include:



Each recommendation also includes a specific example and/or tool an entity can use as a starting point for moving forward.

RECOMMENDATION #1

Assess Youth & Parent Engagement

LEADERS:

NBHA

SD

YO

Effective engagement can be attributed to inclusive design in local organizations. Amplifying youth and parent ideas will improve interest and support for programs.

Action Step: Conduct a Youth Civic Assessment

Assess Sheboygan's youth to better understand their interests and needs. The cultural asset mapping survey scratched the surface. A civic assessment could start small, with youth engaged in a program like the Boys and Girls Club, district wide at the Sheboygan Area School District or through a neighborhood association.

EXAMPLES + TOOLS

YOUTH CIVIC AND CHARACTER MEASURES TOOLKIT

The Roots of Engaged Citizenship Project – a multi-phase, mixed-methods research endeavor – was launched in July 2012 with the purpose of studying how young people become good citizens and identifying the developmental roots of active participation in communities and society. Research has shown that civic engagement is good for young people's well-being and functioning in other areas of life, and that youth engagement makes our communities and society stronger.

Download a PDF of the Toolkit:

<http://www.civicroots.org/www.search-institute.org/downloadable/Youth-Civic-Character-Measures-Toolkit.pdf>

RECOMMENDATION #2

Foster Youth Education & Engagement

LEADERS:

BS

CC

CSSO

GOV

NBHA

NPO

SD

YO

Diversifying representation in leadership takes a long-term investment of education and relationship building. Ideally this begins while community members are in school.

Action Step: Create a Youth Council or Youth Board

A Youth Council, Youth Board and/or Youth Committee would allow young people to observe the decision-making process and, in some instances, participate.

A similar conclusion was drawn by leaders of the Citizenship Program at Wisconsin 4-H, part of University of Wisconsin's Division of Extension. In 2002, over 2,000 Wisconsin residents came together in 83 county-based conversations on youth development. They identified two priorities that emphasized the role of youth in building healthy communities and a vital democracy:

1. Create a culture where youth are equal partners in decision making and governance
2. Encourage youth community service and civic involvement.

Benefits:

- **Youth Voice and Representation:** Youth have a voice in decisions that affect them.
- **Community Improvement:** As youth become stakeholders and change agents in communities and organizations, they bring perspectives, knowledge and relationships that lead to better decisions and more productive action.
- **Positive Youth Development:** It promotes positive outcomes among youth. It teaches young people the skills of active community members, such as understanding how decisions are made and how to organize, plan and communicate.
- **Civic Development:** Our civil society is strengthened when youth become informed and thoughtful citizens. Young people with skills, knowledge, commitment and experience can reflect upon the common good, become full members of their communities, and take political action.

EXAMPLES + TOOLS

MAYOR'S YOUTH ACTION COUNCIL

The youth council in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, is dedicated to continuously improving unity and engagement through government and civic participation. Members strive to raise awareness within their community and develop a sense of pride among their peers.

Download Manitowoc's structure and application documents:

https://bit.ly/MYAC_Application

<https://bit.ly/ManitowocYAC>

RECOMMENDATION #3

Make Government Accessible to All

LEADERS:



Understanding how local government works is key to improving diversity in decision-making roles and leadership.

Action Step: Create a "Local Government 101" Program

By improving the understanding of Sheboygan's local government processes, a "Local Government 101" program could increase representation in civic and service organizations. Youth and adults would be welcome to participate.

EXAMPLES • TOOLS

BALTIMORE PLANNING ACADEMY

The Planning Academy is a free, six-week course from Baltimore, Maryland's Department of Planning. Their vision is to build community leadership around urban planning, zoning and development issues through a Baltimore lens.

Their goals:

- Build community across neighborhoods in Baltimore City through engagement around urban planning.
- Connect advocates and leaders to City resources, tools and information around zoning and development.
- Empower residents to shape the future of their neighborhoods and of Baltimore.

Download the Fall 2020 sample curriculum:

<https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/Sample%20Curriculum.pdf>

RECOMMENDATION #4

Create a Welcoming Environment

LEADERS:



Participation and engagement with community groups will increase — in diversity, quality and longevity — when members understand their roles on Common Council, boards and committees.

Action Step: Have an Onboarding Plan

Before a community member considers participating in a group or organization, they need to understand the commitment and expectations. Communicate the following in a forum accessible to the general public:

- The group's or organization's purpose.
- Roles and responsibilities of members and leaders.
- Term lengths.
- Nomination process for membership or leadership roles.

Once a person is nominated, elected and/or appointed to a role, provide a Welcome Packet, including:

- The group's or organization's history.
- Their vision, mission and values.
- Any code of ordinances, bylaws and/or charter.
- Current members, committees and/or departments.
- Group financials.
- Calendar.
- Details on one-on-one orientation.
- Mentor contact details.
- Historic and current file-access information.

DIVERSE REPRESENTATION:

During this project, it was made clear that there is an existing network of engaged and involved community members — mostly middle-aged and older residents above the median income level, who have lived in the community for decades. Their voices and perspectives are amplified. Other community members are not engaging at the same level, which can skew city leadership's understanding of community needs and priorities. It can also lead to the use of damaging assumptions when making policy, development plans and decisions.

EXAMPLES • TOOLS

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NONPROFITS

This group has additional resources and tools for boards, which can be adapted for other organizations.

Find more information on the council's Board Orientation webpage:

<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/board-orientation>

RECOMMENDATION #5

Develop Cultural Competency

LEADERS:

- BS
- CC
- CSSO
- GOV
- NBHA
- NPO
- SP
- YO

Organizations that work to develop cultural competency position themselves to meet the needs of diverse groups.

Action Step: Prioritize Understanding

Diversity, acceptance and tolerance were identified as important intangible assets that create belonging and well-being in Sheboygan’s community. Diversity is increasing, which will benefit organizations through new ideas and perspectives.

Creating cultural competence begins by respecting differences between and within cultures. It involves creating an understanding that diversity is complex, which will help avoid cultural assumptions that lead to incorrect conclusions.

Organizations can use surveys and discussions to develop awareness of their own organizational culture; that in turn helps members adjust to other cultures. Knowledge developed through this process then needs to be institutionalized, effectively integrating cultural diversity into all facets of the organization.

EXAMPLES + TOOLS

COMMUNITY TOOL BOX

The Tool Box is a service of The Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. Their action steps for learning about cultural competency:

· Develop support for change throughout the organization.	(Who wants change and who doesn't?)
· Identify the cultural groups to be involved.	(Who needs to be involved in the planning, implementation and reinforcement of change?)
· Identify barriers to working with the organization.	(What is currently not working? What will stop or slow you down?)
· Assess your current level of cultural competence.	(What knowledge, skills, and resources can you build on? Where are the gaps?)
· Identify the resource needed.	(How much funding is required for change? Where can you find the resources?)
· Develop goals and implementation steps and deadlines for achieving them.	(Who can do what, when, and how?)
· Commit to an ongoing evaluation of progress ... and be willing to respond to change.	(What does progress and success look like? What are the signs to indicate the organization is on the right track?)

For more resources, visit the Community Tool Box website: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/enhancing-cultural-competence>

RECOMMENDATION #6

Encourage Government Participation

LEADERS:

- GOV

Municipal governments have the opportunity to build successful, diverse and vibrant engagement in the community.

Sheboygan’s city government acknowledges the need for improved participation and engagement, particularly with minority populations — the majority of which are Hmong, Hispanic and Black. But with more than 40 languages spoken in the Sheboygan Area School District, diversity in the city is much broader and more complex. Diversity in age, ability, length of residency in Sheboygan, gender, LGBTQ — these should also be represented properly in city engagement efforts.

Action Step: Incorporate Effective Engagement into Project Plans

One way the city can continue to build on current engagement efforts is to work through project plans that identify the need for engagement on a case-by-case basis. Creating individual road maps for each project requires:

- Matching an approach to the needs of the project.
- Identifying stakeholders and affected parties.
- Monitoring engagement for each project, to ensure the intended audience is reached effectively and to the appropriate degree.

EXAMPLES + TOOLS

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RESOURCE GUIDE

The Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative in Madison, Wisconsin, offers a guide with helpful steps for encouraging participation.

Download the guide: https://www.cityofmadison.com/civil-rights/documents/RESJI_PublicParticipationResourceGuide.pdf

City personnel in Madison developed their resource kit with tools adapted and used with permission from the International Association for Public Participation Federation. The IAP2 website is another resource that can help users develop their own tools. Any time content is adapted, the creator should be contacted and permission granted. For more information: <https://www.iap2.org/mpage/Home>

RECOMMENDATION #7

Offer Paid Participation

LEADERS:

CC

GOV

NPO

Compensating people for participating in community projects or assignments has multiple benefits — including bringing more people to the table.

Action Step: Consider Short- and Long-Term Employment Opportunities

Inviting public participation in a project can be beneficial in numerous ways. The city of Sheboygan is made up of diverse communities and demographics, which can be utilized as an advantage to all sectors.

Designing projects and assignments to be inclusive has the potential to offer community members short- and long-term employment opportunities. It can improve business and nonprofit relations, build partnerships and bring awareness to efforts. Transitioning to short-term income opportunities can help community members get involved, as well as provide stakeholders expanded capacity and information.

EXAMPLES • TOOLS

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION RESOURCE GUIDE

This guide from Madison, Wisconsin's Racial Equity & Social Justice Initiative states that offering limited-time income can transform the way community members view and interact with government, businesses and organizations. A key advantage for the stakeholders is being able to increase internal capacity at low cost. This also means improved community relations and understanding, potentially benefiting long-term growth. Overall, the importance lies in providing opportunities for public participation and developing new approaches to continue their involvement while changing the way employment is viewed.

For more information, download the guide:
<https://bit.ly/MadisonRESJI>

Throughout this project, the teams from Green Bicycle Co. and JMKAC discussed various ways to include diverse community representation. We assessed a number of opportunities to bring in new team members and ways to compensate those who could help improve the project.

RECOMMENDATION #8

Develop “Third Space” Assets

WHO:

BS

GOV

When community members were asked what was important to their well-being and belonging, they cited “third spaces.”

Urban Socialist Ray Oldenburg coined the term “third space” in the 1980s and defined it as the “level, neutral place between work and home that individuals frequent for social connection to their community.”

Third spaces are often private businesses, restaurants, bars, cafes, bookshops, etc. However, data collected throughout this project emphasized the importance of outdoor spaces — parks, natural areas and trails — to well-being and belonging.

To the question “What would you like to see in your community?” answers from residents included:

“We have a really nice beach, but there is nothing to it. Bring vendors to the beach and create events for families and community members — face painting, bike rental, etc. There’s nothing really to do at the beach, only to sit and hang out. Creating more events and activities will engage the community and will provide people things to do and ways to interact with one another.” — Female, 26 years old, seven-year resident

“Somewhere, an outside space where people can just go and relax whenever. It’s always open, and it’s public. The space should have some spaced-out seats, but outside.” — 17 years old, high-school student

“I would like to see more places where people can just go and hang out and have a good time.” — 16 years old, high-school student

The intersection of third spaces and outdoor spaces should be explored. Developing parks into areas of passive and active recreation that spark social interaction could fulfill our community’s needs. These third spaces should go beyond the traditional play set and picnic facilities found at most parks. Utilizing place-making techniques, teams can work to imagine spaces that encourage users to feel comfortable, provoke a sense of belonging and a desire to linger and connect.

Examples of these passive spaces are found in communities across the world. People abroad expect and rely on these spaces to build social networks and fulfill their natural human need for connection.

Fredrick Law Olmsted, the founder of American landscape architecture, believed universal access to nature and beauty in designed landscapes would help elevate community health and in turn social discourse. He was guided by the belief that public spaces should be accessible and inclusive.

Source: <https://dirt.asla.org/2021/05/10/a-vision-for-truly-inclusive-public-spaces-rooted-in-olmsteds-core-values/>

Action Step: Explore Third Spaces

- To begin, assess current third spaces in terms of:
 - Accessibility
 - Promotion
 - Location and proximity
- When developing outdoor areas into third spaces, consider:
 - Amenities including seating and bathrooms
 - Shade
 - Water
 - Electricity
 - Wi-Fi
 - Local vendors
 - Food/food trucks
 - Music and entertainment
 - Parking
 - Access to public transportation and trails
 - Bike racks
 - Lighting
- Engage community to create programming
- Plan for inclusion of non-programmed passive space

EXAMPLES + TOOLS

CAMPUS MARTIUS PARK: DETROIT, MICHIGAN

CHURCH STREET MARKETPLACE DISTRICT: BURLINGTON, VERMONT

Both of these spaces are in central locations, offer public art, vendors, gathering spaces and flexible passive spaces. Although these examples both host larger festivals and events, they also serve as spaces where residents can go to just hang out and commune with one another and the city.

More details can be found on their websites:

Campus Martius Park: <https://downtowndetroitparks.com/parks/Campus-Martius/>

Church Street Marketplace: <https://churchstmarketplace.com/>

RECOMMENDATION #9

Build Effective Partnerships

LEADERS:

BS	CC
CSSO	GOV
NBHA	NPO
SD	YO

Leadership can do better at connecting mutually beneficial organizations. And they can strengthen the bridges from resources and assets to those they serve.

One finding of the cultural asset mapping project was that youth in the community would like to see increased connectivity with existing resources.

GSA clubs are student-run organizations that unite LGBTQ+ and allied youth to build community and organize around issues impacting them in schools and communities.

For more information, visit the GSA Network website: <https://gsanetwork.org/>

"I would like to see more clubs like GSA in schools to bring more awareness and to educate more people." — High-school student

"We need more ways to get young people involved. There are many volunteer opportunities through my high school, at places like Bookworm Gardens and Goodside Grocery. My school organizes it — 'This is what we're going to do today' — rather than expecting people to do it on their own. I really valued the opportunity to experience Bookworm Gardens. There are many hidden ways to volunteer. Make them more accessible to people." — High-school student

The team identified many existing cultural assets and resources. The issue at hand: mutually beneficial organizations are not always connecting, making for missed opportunities. There are additional gaps when it comes to connecting resources and assets with those they serve. With intentional communication and continuous awareness, we can help bridge these gaps.

Action Step: Build Stronger Connections

To strengthen relationships among communities and organizations, members and leaders can:

- **Increase awareness.** Regularly assess what resources exist in the community. Who are the people your group serves? If you are a point of contact on their journeys, how can you connect them with community resources that are accessible physically or virtually?
- **Develop cultural competency.** Explored in Recommendation #5, this concept is an important step in creating partnerships and building a network. With cultural competency, you can identify assets outside your own culture and better serve, assist and/or partner with a broad range of cultural resources.

- **Do an identity check.** Clearly identify the audience or community you serve. Take time to identify other organizations that serve the same people. At a minimum, make an introduction and raise awareness.
- **Be active in your outreach.** If your organization is in the position to invite outside resources to share their offerings, consider hosting such an event.

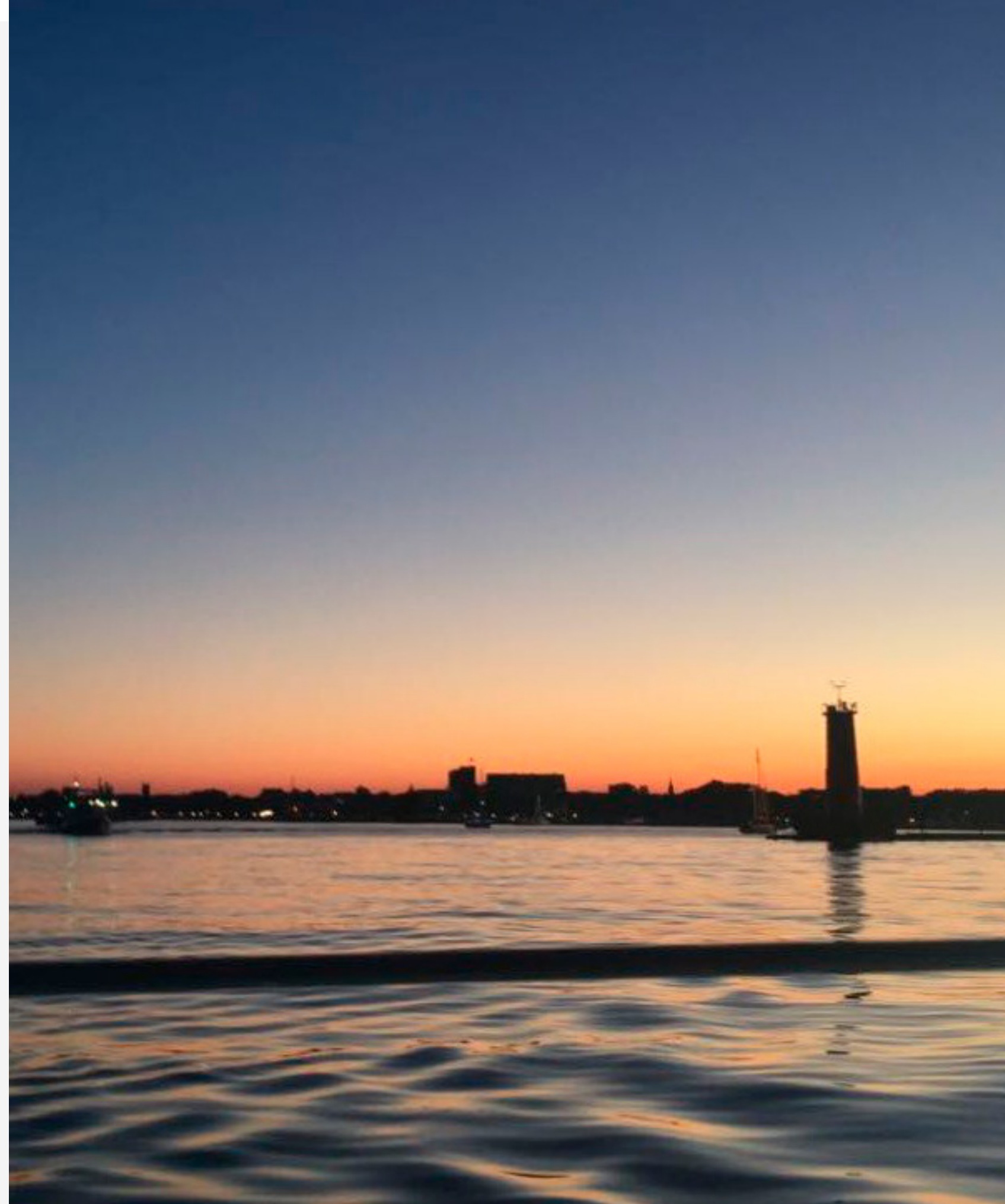
EXAMPLES • TOOLS

COMMUNITY TOOL BOX

A comprehensive resource for developing effective partnerships is "Creating and Maintaining Coalitions and Partnerships," from University of Kansas's Community Toolbox.

Download it at the Toolbox website:

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/creating-and-maintaining-coalitions-and-partnerships>



CONCLUSION

I think we should consider representation. Who is making or has made choices about representation in Sheboygan? Who is preventing representation? There should be more representation of cultures in Sheboygan.
—A 35-year-old who has lived in Sheboygan for 9 years.

Cultural asset mapping was a new concept for the team working on this project, as well as for the city of Sheboygan. The project team believes it can be an effective catalyst to changing the way the city and local organizations design and implement community-based projects.

It was clear that limitations and restrictions of past community-engagement projects reduced input from diverse communities. To ensure change and productive outcomes for future projects — that improved not only cultural-community investment but engagement — there needed to be a sustainable transition from projects based on affirmation to projects focused on intentionality and inclusion.

Cultural asset mapping provides opportunities for ongoing learning and assessment, which are necessary to address this project's goals. Asset mapping invites continued input and engagement. It enables communities and partners to collaborate and work together toward sustainable changes.

The team's goals for this project focused on cultural-community investment and on how relationships between diverse communities could be improved. Our belief is that this is the first step towards sustainable transformation, because cultural asset mapping is a process-focused approach. In order to create effective next steps, we first have to value and understand the process.

This project launches the process by: identifying the assets and needs of Sheboygan's communities. It is imperative we allow the community to steer the direction of the next steps, and make sure community input is the main influence. Process-based approaches allow for sustainable development, because the next steps will introduce themselves as the learning progresses.

The most important conclusion drawn from this project is that we are only at the beginning of what needs to be done. Effective cultural-community investment will happen over time, as we begin addressing the components that hinder its success. As we continue to value the process and collaborate with communities, we believe the project's impact will promote sustainable, proactive transformation that benefits all of Sheboygan.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CASE STUDIES

1. Rockwood Cultural and Asset Mapping

Building Community and Engaging Residents

Location

Rockwood neighborhood in Gresham, Oregon

Conducted by

University of Oregon

Dr. John B. Fenn, III, Assistant Professor, Arts and Administration

Philip Carnahan, Arts and Administration Graduate

Gretchen Drew, Arts and Administration Graduate

Damara Hall, Art History Graduate

Stephanie Moore, Arts and Administration Graduate

Patricia Morales, Arts and Administration Graduate

Project done by graduate students in the Public Folklore and Cultural Programming course during the winter term 2010. It provides recommendations to the Gresham Redevelopment Commission for further study.

Project Summary

This project began by defining terms such as "cultural assets" and "cultural asset mapping," so community members understood the project's direction and purpose. The students' goal was to build community identity by collecting cultural assets that were important to the residents. Students then engaged with residents and local stakeholders, hosting various meetings and discussions, in order to identify the community's needs and wants. They examined and studied previous development projects to better understand the approaches, barriers and gaps that had existed.

The group identified short-, medium- and long-term goals that could help city and community leaders engage residents in their process and build an inclusive community identity. The students provided future study recommendations and stated the limitations to their study. Ultimately, this work provided an outline for initiating dialogue and building community awareness.

Project Significance

The Oregon project was useful to our work for many reasons. First, they were very cautious with their planning and steps. They wanted to ensure the community and stakeholders understood the process and were involved throughout.

Their project design also provided a great starting point for new projects. It helped outline what steps are important and ways to adapt for different communities. The goals they set were most useful, providing detailed information and transitions from step to step. These included using open-ended questions, having continued community and stakeholder engagement, and understanding audiences.

The report design itself was a resource for our report. Their structure and flow made it easy for readers to follow along and comprehend the study. Overall, it helped support our project by ensuring we valued and maintained inclusiveness and were considerate when it came to community input and engagement.

Source:

<https://bit.ly/RockwoodAssetMap>

2. Cultural Mapping Toolkit, Creative City Network of Canada

The Creative City Network of Canada consists of dedicated municipal culture leaders who strive to ignite communities and contribute to a vibrant, creative Canada.

Project Summary

Creative City Network of Canada developed a Cultural Mapping Toolkit that describes the entire cultural asset mapping process — from planning and designing a project to synthesizing data and finalizing the report. To assist with organization, each step is accompanied by examples, checklists or worksheets.

Toolkit Significance

The toolkit was especially helpful during our design phase. We knew from the beginning that this project might go beyond creating a geographic map. The table "Some Uses of Cultural Mapping" provided information that allowed us to shift from purely categorical, tangible assets (such as grocery stores) to "getting a fresh perspective" and "locating gaps, needs and overlaps."

The toolkit describes accurately the notable differences between interviewing individuals and people representing organizations. With this in mind, our initial interviews focused on the individual. After synthesizing data and looking to make recommendations, we interviewed representatives of organizations. This helped us assess the reality of the potential recommendations.

The analysis section was especially helpful in raising consciousness about trends and patterns identified in the interviews.

Source:

<https://ccednet-rcdec.ca/en/toolbox/cultural-mapping-toolkit>

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEWS

Questionnaire for Organizations

Goal

To gather information for use in developing tools that strengthen engagement, outreach, diversity, network strength and effectiveness.

Questions

Youth Education:

- Does the city engage with youth (high-school or college students) in any capacity?
- Does the city see benefit in engaging youth?
- Do you have ideas for youth education, participation, and engagement opportunities at the city (or school district, etc.)?

Participation & Engagement:

- How would you describe the relationship the city (or school district, etc.) has with the community?
- What level of engagement with the community is ideal?
- What does community advancement mean to the city (or school district, etc.)?
- What are your biggest obstacles when engaging with the community?

Representation:

The following questions pertain to elected officials, committee members and staff.

- What plans does the city have to increase representation?
- How does the city (or school district, etc.) welcome new staff, elected officials and committee members? Are you satisfied with the approach or do you have planned changes? Such as: onboarding, etc.
- How does the city (or school district, etc.) learn from the experiences of their staff, and are you satisfied with the approach or do you have planned changes? Such as: exit interviews, surveys, etc.
- How is the city (or school district, etc.) held accountable?
- How has the city (or school district, etc.) considered increasing transparency for information and processes?

Moving Forward

- Do you have ideas, recommendations or tools you think should be considered? In the report we will be making recommendations and offering tools to help our community move forward.

Youth Engagement Questions

Goals

1. To help create an understanding of assets, resources and existing networks, and to create a network map.
2. To add to the network map to fill gaps.

Questions

Asset:

- What is your mission? OR This is your mission "_____."
- How does your organization serve youth in our community (resources and assets)?
- What current programs or initiatives does your organization have for youth engagement/involvement in our community inside or outside your organization that are successful?
- (If programs exist) What is the attendance? (age, diversity, frequency)
- Do you feel this needs to be improved?
- If so, how might this be done?

Network:

- Do you have current partnerships with other youth organizations or organizations that offer opportunities?
- If so, what is the nature and extent of the partnership?
- Are there areas in this partnership that could be improved? How so?
- Are there any other organizations you feel your organization could benefit from partnering with?

Gaps

- Are there resources or assets that you need?
- What could help improve youth involvement (internally or externally)?

One-on-One Interview

Demographics gathered:

- Age
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Education
- Years in Sheboygan
- Neighborhood
- Employment
- Background (What brought you to where you are?)
- Other information you'd like to share

Individual Prompts

- What does culture mean to you?
- What does community mean to you?
- Do you think Sheboygan is culturally diverse?
- Are various cultures represented in Sheboygan? How?
- What are things in our community that are important to your well-being or belonging?
- What is community investment to you?
- What would you like to see in your community (community investment)?
- What organizations/programs are already working on cultural community investment and why?
- Do you know of any community leaders that we should reach out to?
- Would you like to share any further information, for example, projects your business or organization is working on?

APPENDIX C: ASSETS

Below is one of the prompts utilized during our conversations with community members. Through this prompt, we were able to identify and extract the assets and needs of the project participants (see in table). The assets and needs helped us to better understand respondents' perspectives and ideas for cultural community investment.

Prompt 5 : What are things in our community that are important to your well-being or belonging?

Identified Assets

- Safety
- Economics
- Plenty of jobs
- Good education
- Fitness community
- Golf courses
- Bars
- Low crime/violence
- Clean city (air, resources)
- Lake Michigan
- Good companies
- Local businesses
- Big corporations (Acuity, Kohler)
- Lakeland University
- Lakeshore Technical College
- North High School
- Sailing community
- Arts community
- Park system
- Lakefront
- JMKAC
- Stefanie H. Weill Center for the Performing Arts
- Access to nature
- Basic services: roads repaired, clean, safe streets
- Boardwalk
- State parks
- Restaurant diversity
- Available health outlets
- Social outlets: bars, restaurants, etc.
- Nonprofits
- Sheboygan County Food Bank
- Access to public spaces
- Goodside Grocery
- Visual arts community
- Urbane restaurant
- Paradigm Coffee and Music
- Lakeshore Art Supplies
- Maywood and Evergreen parks
- Sports leagues
- Sheboygan Symphony Orchestra
- Sports Core Health and Racquet Club
- Parnell Tower
- Kettle Moraine State Forest
- Rivers
- Urban trails
- Lighthouse
- Community foundations
- Religious and spiritual outlets
- Yoga and political communities
- Art fair
- Library
- Police and fire departments
- Neighborhood associations
- Mayor's Neighborhood Leadership Cabinet
- City Green concerts
- Food trucks
- Z Spot Espresso Coffee
- Levitt AMP music series
- Fountain Park
- Johnsonville Brat Days
- Good health care
- Community gathering spaces
- Weather Center Cafe
- Recycling and pollution
- GSA club; LGBTQ community
- Literacy
- Social justice
- Urban green spaces
- Recreational opportunities

Identified Needs

- More options for schools
- Resources or activities that capture people's attention and interest
- Venues for coaches
- Mentor groups
- Higher-paying mentor jobs
- Community activities: events, concerts, farmers markets, runs (Festival Foods Turkey Trot)
- Diversity
- Increased art development and programs
- Access to cultural diversity
- More theater in the city
- Promotion of local artists and arts
- More diversity and inclusion
- Community involvement and awareness
- Acceptance; intentional relationship building
- Fresh, local food
- Support for schools
- Opportunities for people
- Focus on the underdog and youth
- Ability to get involved
- Recognition of differences and being tolerant
- Increased variety of activities and social events
- Services for the disabled
- Support for people with mental illness
- Diverse boards/leadership
- Community center
- Cultural centers
- Services for substance-abuse addiction
- Fundraisers and volunteer centers
- Improved infrastructure: roads

Data collected through Prompt 5 was also sorted into intangible and tangible assets. The information collected was categorized into asset lists and then sorted. The numbers in parentheses identify how many times each item was found in the data. Items in the list do not appear in any order of importance.

Intangible

- Education (10)
- Access to art (9)
- Safety (8)
- Neighborhood associations (1)
- Healthy economy, jobs, shopping (8)
- Basic services (1)
- Diversity (7)
- Stability (1)
- Sports leagues and camaraderie (1)
- Something bigger than self (4)
- Helping others (1)
- Servanthood/volunteering (2)
- Fitness community (3)
- Religion (1)
- Political organizations (2)
- Familiarity and connection (3)
- Acceptance (2)
- Caring for others (1)
- Access to information (1)
- Music (5)
- Tolerance (1)
- Mental-health support and understanding (2)
- Cleanliness (2)
- Youth engagement (3)
- Engagement with leadership (1)

Tangible

- Locally owned businesses (7)
- Lakefront/Lake Michigan (12)
- Downtown (1)
- Community events and festivals (7)
- Bars (3)
- Parks and trails (10)
- Library (5)
- Housing (1)
- Infrastructure (2)
- Winter activities (2)
- Golf courses (3)
- Natural environment (4)
- Local food (7)
- Restaurants and coffee shops (7)
- Nonprofits (3)
- Food trucks (3)
- Public spaces (5)
- Walkability (1)
- Health care (2)
- Free activities (4)
- Substance-abuse treatment (2)

Data collected through Prompt 7 was collected and sorted into categories. Each category was then linked to further distilled groups. Below is a table of categories from the data, with the colorful markers identifying the groups each belong to.

Beyond these groups, each category was also evaluated on whether it dealt with any or all of three basic categories for investment: Resident health and advancement, community culture, and infrastructure and economy.

Prompt 7 : What would you like to see in your community (community investment)?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth programming & engagement (sports/arts, etc.) †‡ • Fresh local food* †‡ • Community center* † • Waste reduction* † • City connection to ethnic diversity* ‡ • Winter activities* †‡ • Substance-abuse solutions* • Communication/outreach/connection* ‡ • Mental-health resources* • Waterfront preservation/protection* • Homelessness resources* • Local focus vs. tourist focus* ‡ • Housing-stock improvements* • Lakefront infrastructure/activities* ‡ • Life-skill support/mentorship ‡ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare* † • Support for local businesses/diverse ownership* ‡ • Education* †‡ • Support for arts* †‡ • Communication when investment happens - celebrate it* ‡ • Employment resources* † • Neighborhoods/associations* †‡ • Diverse representation † ‡ <p>KEY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth outreach/enrichment/engagement • Community connection & communication • Infrastructure • General recreation • Individual advancement/mentorship • Arts • Natural-resource protection • Local economy • Community health • Diversity/representation <p>* Infrastructure and economy † Resident health and advancement ‡ Community culture</p>
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