Friendly Fronts
Creating Community One Front Yard at a Time

2017 Walk Summit
How can we build social capital between neighbors?

How can we make it more interesting and safe to walk around?

How can we build agency to shape the environment within all people?

How can we activate (and leverage) the most underutilized space in America?
INSPIRING AND GUIDING PEOPLE TO
“CREATE COMMUNITY, ONE FRONT YARD AT A TIME”
1. A user-focused toolkit
2. With a process for people to shape their environment so that it facilitates the things they want to do and feel, by focusing on:
   • Taking action
   • Experiences
   • Relationships between things, not just objects themselves
   • Design by following feelings
The Pathways of Desire
The Relationships of Place

**SEMI-ENCLOSURE FEELS GOOD**
Think of a good porch or a cozy booth at a restaurant it allows you to choose whether to be social or private.

**HAVE MANY THINGS TO DO**
If there is nothing to do, you won’t be there. Think about what you like to do and others in your neighborhood.

**DAYLIGHT AND SUNSHINE**
Sun in the morning comes from the east. In late afternoon and evening it is from the west. The sunniest direction is the south. Consider how activity areas interact with the sunny and shady parts of your space.

**ADD {MOVEABLE} SEATING**
If you can’t sit down comfortably you won’t want to stay in your front yard.

**PROTECT YOUR BACK**
Having a structure behind you – like a house, ledge or hedge – so as not to be surprised, ideally with a view out to a larger space.

**ACTIVE EDGES MAKE ACTIVE INTERIORS**
If you don’t feel comfortable on the edge of a space, they won’t venture into the middle.
FRIENDLY FRONTS
Single-family Pilot

22 Pilot Project Participants from Frogtown and Hamline-Midway in St. Paul
• Training
• Micro-grants
• One-on-one advising
• Mutual aid via social media platforms
• Friendly Front Yard Festival

250+ Downloads of Toolkit at www.friendlyfronts.com
OTHER FRIENDLY FRONT EXAMPLES

GAMES AND ENTERTAINMENT

EATING OUTSIDE
SLEEPING AND RELAXING

TALKING TO NEIGHBORS

THE BOULEVARD

CHILDREN PLAYING
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Results for Single Family Homedwellers

Building Relationships
• *Met 5.4 new neighbors*
  • 43% saw people more frequently in their neighborhood (0% less so)

Changing Behaviors
• 75% ate outside and played games for the first time due to using the toolkit
  • 43% bike and walk more often

Connection to Place
• 38% feel safer in their neighborhood (0% less so)
  • 71% feel more interested in continuing to live in their neighborhood (0% less so)
“Was I social before? No, not like this,” Giles says. “I just wasn’t really outside. Or if I was outside, I was in back. I always thought like, it’s so hard to meet your neighbors, how do you do that? Now, sitting in front, you just say ‘hi’ and that’s how it starts.”
- Andrea Giles, recent resident of Frogtown
FRIENDLY FRONTS
Multifamily Pilot

Partnership with:
• Whittier Alliance (Minneapolis)
• Blaisdell Housing (5 buildings)
  • Section 8
  • Market rate
• Common Bond (1 building)

Goals
• Enhance the positive social atmosphere of the Whittier Neighborhood
• Increase the real and perceived safety of the neighborhood
• Increase the likelihood the renters will remain in the neighborhood
User Engagement
• “Meet people where they are”
• Tenants and Management
  • Surveys
  • Fliers
  • Focus groups
• Asking tenants what they want to do

What tenants wanted to do
• Place to sit outside
  • Talk with neighbors
  • Wait for school bus
  • Watch their kids
  • Enjoy the outdoors
  • Have a meal
• Activities with and for children
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Process

Implementation: delivering the desired experiences
• Physical enhancements
  • Tables
  • Chairs
  • Umbrellas
  • Solar lights along paths
• Management processes
  • Coordination with onsite managers
• Activities
  • Lawn games
• Communications
  • Lawn signs
  • Fliers
Benefits and Results
- 77% were more interested in staying in their apartments long term
- 43% felt safer in their building
- No theft or vandalism of new items
FRIENDLY FRONTS
Multifamily Pilot

Landlord Testimonials
“Tenants loved having seating out by the playground!”
– Common Bond Property Manager

“Overall, it was nice to have designated places (for people) and I didn’t see any of the misuse that I feared would happen in the neighborhood.”
– Blaisdell Housing manager

Tenant Testimonials
“Safety has been really good since having the tables, chairs and lights”
“My children use it, especially right after they come home from school. They do homework there.”
“Adds to the ambiance”
“It was a good idea; good for people to meet each other”
If every place is going to be walkable, we need everyone to be involved.

Friendly Fronts provides us with a pathway to a walkable future that is:

- Social
- Fun
- Safe
- Authentic
- Alive!
Join the movement to:

To reconnect to the places where we live;

And reclaim our right and ability to shape them for the good of ourselves and our community.

More info at: www.friendlyfronts.com
Let’s do this!

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