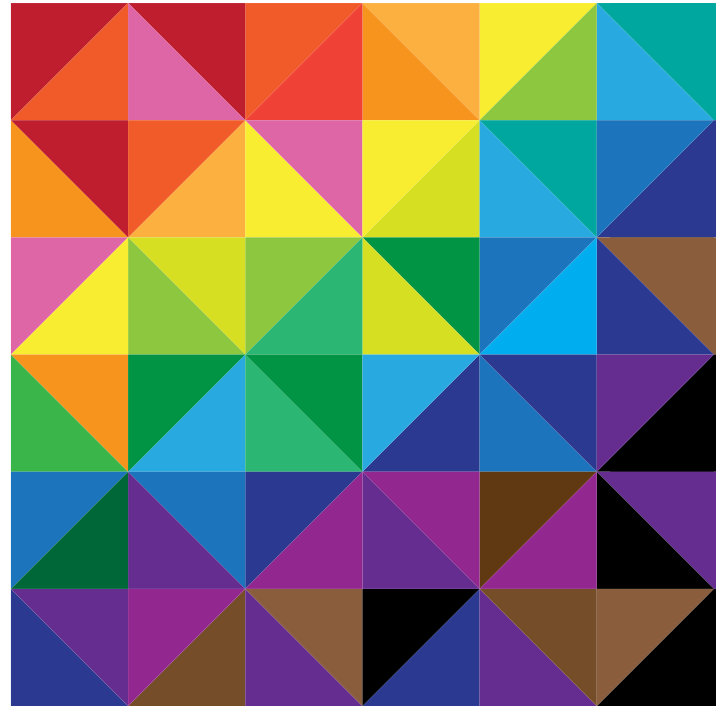


NEW ALBANY
INCLUSION,
DIVERSITY *and*
EQUITY ACTION
COMMITTEE
REPORT



December 2021

ACHIEVING A MORE WELCOMING COMMUNITY



As a community that prides itself on being welcoming, we recognize that diversity, inclusion and equity are multifaceted issues that we must tackle holistically to better support underrepresented groups and address the needs of our increasingly diverse constituency.

The release of these recommendations is only one step in the ongoing process of self-evaluation and improvement. The implementation of the recommendations will:

- Increase community awareness and educational opportunities around diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Strengthen partnerships between the City and community stakeholders to influence, uplift and support existing and emerging IDEA initiatives in New Albany.
- Sustain ongoing efforts by creating a successor board to the IDEA Committee.
- Align diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility practices in the City's daily work.
- Increase full and diverse participation in all City projects and initiatives.

By working together, we can cultivate real and lasting change in our community. The following recommendations will serve as our guide.

We are excited to share with you the recommendations of the New Albany Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Action (IDEA) Committee. On behalf of our City Council and staff, we want to thank the committee members for their generous time and commitment to this important work.

In New Albany, community truly does connect us. We are a City that is nationally recognized for having a "strategy" designed to improve our quality of life and protect everyone's investment for the long term. Community engagement is the central characteristic that informs and influences this work.

Our ability to embrace change is the result of actively collaborating with our residents, business partners and community stakeholders—listening to them and learning from them—to create a shared vision for our future that brings people together. If we are to live up to this ideal, we must celebrate our diversity and aspire to achieve inclusion and equity.



Mayor Sloan Spalding



Councilwoman Marlene Brisk

GRATITUDE FOR OUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTORS

We wish to thank the following individuals who generously contributed their time and insights to assist in developing recommendations for building a more welcoming and inclusive New Albany and to the consultants who guided us through the process.

OUR PURPOSE

The IDEA Committee, with the input of New Albany residents, will develop a set of recommendations for our City with the goal of creating a more welcoming and inclusive community.

We wish to encourage a diverse citizenship and to inspire participation by including everyone in community activities and leadership roles within New Albany.

City of New Albany

Mayor Sloan Spalding
Councilwoman
Marlene Brisk

IDEA Committee Members

Ben Collins
Nicole Dempsey
Angela Douglas
Vida Farwana
LaVerne Fudge-Williamson
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Chris Christian



Consultants

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Raising the Bar Performance Group, LLC

Courtnee Carrigan, Founder
and Senior Consultant
Sarah Thompson, Management
Consultant

NEW ALBANY'S COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

New Albany takes great pride in collaborating with residents, businesses and community partners through our strategic planning process to achieve an outstanding community of choice. Since the first strategic plan was adopted in 1998, it has been updated every five years, based upon community input and sound planning principles, to effectively manage our growth.



During the most recent planning process, a new topic, community-wellbeing, emerged as a direct result of feedback from our constituents with the goal of "fostering a more healthy, supportive, livable and inclusive New Albany for all community members" by focusing on the following objectives:

- Foster an inclusive and welcoming sense of community.
- Continue open City communication with the public.
- Encourage programming to support the needs of all residents.
- Support initiatives that enhance community well-being and happiness.

Our strategic plans address connectivity, pedestrian-friendly amenities, mixed-use environments, parks and open spaces, quality architecture, traditional neighborhoods, versatile residential choices, economic development and environmental sustainability. From the beginning, we have worked to ensure that New Albany's four pillars - lifelong learning, arts and culture, health and wellness and environmental sustainability - are reflected in our future vision.

HOW WE LIVE UP TO OUR COMMITMENT



In response to community input and against the backdrop of a social awakening across the country regarding diversity, inclusion and equity, the City chose to turn a lens on itself to understand how we live up to our commitment to be a welcoming, inclusive community.

As the City began to explore these issues more fully, a review

of best practices and model programs led us to the creation of the Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Action (IDEA) Committee in the summer of 2020. Under the capable and passionate guidance of Mayor Sloan Spalding and Councilwoman Marlene Brisk and in partnership with our residents, business community, council, administration, consultants and others, we embarked on a journey to educate ourselves through open and honest dialogue.

As the City strived to achieve a better understanding of the needs and expectations of our constituents, it became evident that we did not have a strategy to effectively address issues of inclusion, diversity and equity. We needed greater representation and input from minority members of our community and a more accurate assessment of how New Albany is perceived by the people who live and work here.

The IDEA Committee was designed to include a mix of residents and community partners with a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives that would result in a robust exchange of ideas as well as information. Their purpose was to develop a set of recommendations to create a more welcoming and inclusive community with the goal of including more residents in community initiatives and leadership roles.

The IDEA Committee proceeded to work with consultants to design, implement and facilitate a process that included education, candid discussion and recommendations for the path forward.

Three core components were explored in the development of the IDEA Committee's recommendations: 1) Programming and Events, 2) Developing Partnerships, and 3) Increasing Communication. In addition to these areas of focus, the IDEA Committee also became a forum for problem-solving regarding areas of concern for the community.

IDEA COMMITTEE MILESTONES

DEC 2020	First IDEA Committee convened
JAN 2021	Statement of purpose and working definitions developed
FEB 2021	Committee structure and planning process created
MAR 2021	Workgroup process established
APRIL 2021	Street signs reviewed; recommendations approved
MAY 2021	Meeting focuses on programs and events; sought community input at New Albany Farmers Market
JULY 2021	Program and event recommendations approved; partnerships reviewed; sought community input at Farmers Market
AUG 2021	Partnership recommendations approved; sought community input at Farmers Market
SEPT 2021	New Albany communications reviewed
OCT 2021	Communication recommendations approved
NOV 2021	Committee appreciation event; final recommendations shared
DEC 2021	Committee recommendations presented to City Council

OUR WORK





I want my children to grow up in an inclusive community that appreciates and celebrates our amazing diversity, and that sees people for who they are and can be accepting. If we embrace each other and are open to learn from each other, we will be stronger. New Albany is beautifully diverse in ways other communities aren't. The issue is not diversity. The issue is inclusion and equity.

~ Kimberly Lee Minor, Idea Committee Member and New Albany Resident



My focus and goal during my tenure on the IDEA Committee has been to listen, research and, ultimately, recommend substantive policy that encourages and creates an environment to support generational inclusion. For our community to achieve full inclusion, we need children to be born and raised with a desire to want to call New Albany home throughout their lives, no matter their gender, race, orientation or creed.

~ Abraham J. Jacob, Idea Committee Member and New Albany Resident





Our fullest sense of community cannot be achieved unless individuals of different cultures, backgrounds, beliefs and intersections feel a sense of belonging, appreciation and opportunity. The physical community and relational community are two sides of the same coin. By adopting inclusive and equitable strategic action, New Albany is investing in relational community. It's an investment that is equally as important as the efforts we dedicate to the built environment.

~ Tiana Samuels, Idea Committee Member and New Albany Resident



I believe strong communities are built by people who welcome, support and encourage each other. To build and sustain this strength in New Albany, we must invest time to identify, understand and value each resident's unique story. The result of our investment could be amazing. We would become the community where the individual strengths of all our residents are harnessed for everyone's benefit, and everyone would feel welcome.

~ Jennie Wilson, Idea Committee Member and New Albany Resident



IDEA COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Convene a community conversation to discuss street sign name concerns; share results of the street name analysis and seek community input. Immediate actions that can be taken include A) Changing the name of Planters Grove subdivision; and B) Creating a historical marker explaining the origin of the subdivision name and the community awareness that prompted its change.*
2	In keeping with the community pillar of Lifelong Learning, increase community awareness and educational opportunities around diversity, equity and inclusion by A) Partnering with the school district for school-age outreach; and B) Drafting an intolerance of racism message to display, share and promote community-wide.*
3	Create a vendor review process to ensure vendors reflect and are responsive to our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by A) Developing more robust inclusion criteria; and B) Including specific goals to quantify and evaluate progress.*
4	Create a welcoming initiative for new residents and periodic open houses. Additional recommendations include A) Creating a Day of Service community event; B) Partnering with New Albany Community Foundation on its Multicultural Film Festival; C) Developing an inclusive calendar and presentations to coincide with different awareness months, including mental health awareness, pride awareness, etc.; and D) Including related community events in one location on the city website.
5	Strengthen partnerships with community stakeholders to influence, uplift and support existing and emerging IDEA initiatives by A) Catalogue current and emerging efforts in New Albany that advance IDEA; B) Evaluate which community efforts have needs that intersect with City objectives and determine type of support it is uniquely positioned provide; and C) Form small groups of partners to act on driving change through specific partnerships.
6	Create a successor board to the IDEA Committee to continue to elevate awareness, drive change and weave diversity, equity and inclusion into the fabric of our community. As the City of New Albany explores how to develop a formal structure to sustain and continue this committee's work, it can A) Equip the City to serve as a hub for these activities with partner organizations as the spokes; and B) Establish one goal and one shared outcome for the successor organization in addition to its other responsibilities.
7	Embed diversity into programming. Create a process to incorporate race, gender, neurodiversity, and other dimensions of diversity considerations when evaluating what programming is needed and adding programming.
8	Support full and community-reflective participation in the resident survey via IDEA input into the survey and with an awareness campaign to increase participation among all residents.
9	Create an IDEA Content Calendar that includes guest columns, IDEA update columns, "my story" videos and other resident-focused content to showcase the diversity dimensions present in New Albany.
10	Build equity in New Albany by embedding IDEA into all municipal policies, practices and procedures.
11	Capitalize on the unique opportunity to amplify diversity and inclusion in the school district by partnering in the creation of a district wide mentoring program. The program creates an opportunity to bring diverse professionals to the district to support career preparedness and core skills needed for advancement in an inclusive society.

*Recommendations presented June 2021

OUR FIRST STEP TOWARD A STRONGER, HEALTHIER FUTURE

The establishment of the IDEA Committee was a pivotal first step toward building a stronger, healthier and more welcoming New Albany. The diverse voices of this committee resulted in open, candid and honest conversations that thriving cities across the nation are hosting right now. The members of the IDEA Committee personify the level of resident engagement and private partnership that is needed to improve policies, practices and structures throughout New Albany.

New Albany is already a diverse City. Through these recommendations, City Council can continue to embrace growth and develop systems and policies to promote a fully inclusive and equitable community for all. Our hope is that we can lift up all of our residents and continue to increase our inclusion efforts by advocating for public and private sector

policies that promote diversity, inclusion and equity. These recommendations will require the active participation of City leaders, residents, businesses and community partners. It will take intentional and transparent practices to create and sustain an environment where all feel welcome.



UNDERSTANDING OUR COMMON LANGUAGE

A common vocabulary is vital to the success of diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility initiatives. The IDEA Committee quickly realized that we needed to develop a fundamental understanding of these terms and their meaning so that we can advance together.

DIVERSITY

Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among all individuals; including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles. Diversity is all the ways people are different and the same at the individual and group levels. Even when people appear the same, they are different. Organizational diversity requires examining and questioning the makeup of a group to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented.

EQUITY

The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations, and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups. Equity requires commitment to strategic priorities, resources, respect, and civility, as well as ongoing action and assessment of progress toward achieving specified goals.

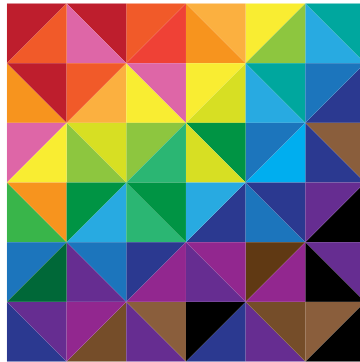
INCLUSION

The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate and bring their full, authentic selves to work. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in the words/actions/ thoughts of all people.

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility* is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings.

* Courtesy of the American Alliance of Museums



JOIN US

We invite citizens who want to engage in our ongoing efforts to view the calendar of upcoming meetings at newalbanyohio.org/answers/boards-commissions.

We welcome input, suggestions and questions about the IDEA Committee's work and recommendations. Share your views by sending an email to idea@newalbanyohio.org.