



## **Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation**

### **Mighty Volunteers Program (MVPs) Manual**

## Table of Contents

OBCDC Mission Statement	3
Contact Information	3
About Old Brooklyn	3
About OBCDC	5
Organization of the Volunteer Program	
• About the Mighty Volunteers Program (MVPs)	6
• Getting Started	7
• Volunteer Appreciation	7
• General Guidelines	8
Volunteer Opportunities	
• Events	10
○ Old Brooklyn Farmers Market	12
• Neighborhood Beautification	13
○ Step by Step	14
• Home Rehabs	15
Additional Resources	
• Personal Safety & Injury	16



## OBCDC Mission

Growing Old Brooklyn through empowered partnerships, leadership, programming, and advocacy.

## Contact Information

### Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation

4274 Pearl Road Cleveland, OH

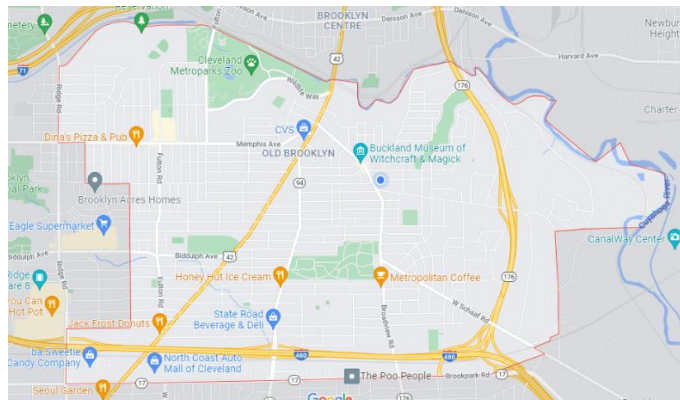
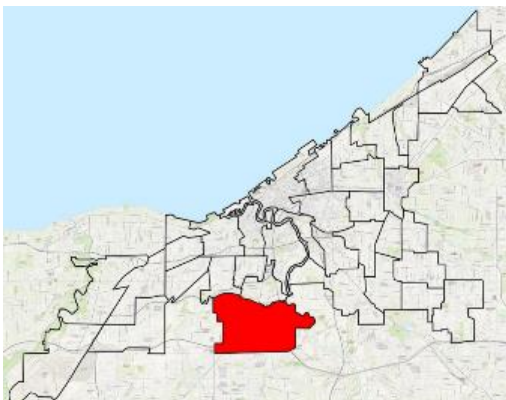
(216) 459-1000



## The Old Brooklyn Neighborhood

The Old Brooklyn neighborhood was founded in 1814 as Brighton Village, a trading outpost on the far outskirts of Cleveland, Ohio (approx. 5 miles south of Downtown). In the 1920s, the neighborhood was one of America's leading producers of greenhouse vegetables with more than 100 acres of agriculture under glass. It remained a rural trading outpost until the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Old Brooklyn was developed east to west. Housing boomed in the 1920s through 1940s as families moved into the area after the World Wars. The neighborhood was 'completed' by the development of the western part of Old Brooklyn in the 1970s.



Today, Old Brooklyn is home to over 32,000 residents! Compared to other Cleveland neighborhoods, Old Brooklyn has the:

- Largest senior population
- Largest growth in Black and Hispanic residents
- Second highest amount of college graduates
- Third fastest growing population of 25–34-year-olds

Some highlights of Old Brooklyn include:

- Brighton Commercial Corridor – the heartbeat of Old Brooklyn
  - Unique and diverse small businesses which truly represent a modern “main street” with green space, a post office, café, restaurants, pharmacies, hospital, and a public library
- Benjamin Franklin Community Garden – beloved by residents for generations
- Cleveland Metroparks Zoo – welcomes 1,000,000+ visitors each year
- Cleveland Metroparks Headquarters + 8 parks for residents to enjoy
- Jesse Owens Olympic Oak tree – one of four oak tree saplings brought back from Germany by US Olympian Jesse Owens (located at James Rhodes High School).
- Walkability, affordability, safety

*Old Brooklyn really is a “Great Place to Grow!”*

## About Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation

Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation (OBCDC) has provided services to the Old Brooklyn neighborhood since 1974. We were founded by John Young Sr. (of SPEED Exterminating), Rev. Elam Weist and Rev. Bob Airhard.

As a non-profit organization, we work to improve the lives of residents, support local businesses, and grow the neighborhood. To achieve this, we work with the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, local partners, and directly with our community members.

As an organization we recognize the impact our environment has on our health. Our goal is to continuously improve the lives and health of residents living in Old Brooklyn. To do so, OBCDC takes on a variety of tasks including but not limited to:

- Surveying homes, assisting residents with repairs & maintenance, testing rental properties for lead
- Improving streetscapes & green spaces, supporting public art & murals, planting & trimming trees
- Acquiring & rehabbing homes for sale to owner occupant buyers, support new single-family home construction
- Ensuring neighborhood stabilization, property value & sustained investment
- Bringing in new businesses & supporting those already established
- Relaying critical information to residents, advocating for neighborhood voices, conducting community meetings
- Organizing events to build community & Old Brooklyn pride!





# Organization of the Mighty Volunteers Program

## About the Mighty Volunteers Program (MVPs)

The Mighty Volunteer Program at OBCDC was created with the intent to provide service to the community as well as create a space for neighbors to meet and work together. Our goal is to continue making Old Brooklyn a “great place to grow,” while unifying residents around a common cause.

In order to continue to help Old Brooklyn grow and thrive, **we need your help!** Through our Mighty Volunteers Program, you’ll have the opportunity to:

- Meet neighbors
- Network with fellow entrepreneurs
- Build community connection
- Form memories
- Bridge the gap between generations
- Disperse critical information about local services
- Help your neighbors
- Beautify Old Brooklyn
- Assist with neighborhood walkability
- Improve the quality of life of your neighbor
- Increase the value of your neighborhood
- Give back



The Mighty Volunteers Program members are the *real* MVPs of Old Brooklyn!

## Getting Started



1. Fill out volunteer program application on our website: [oldbrooklyn.com/volunteer](http://oldbrooklyn.com/volunteer) and sign up online or through the OBCDC office to volunteer for an individual event; repeating time slot; or specific project
2. A staff member of OBCDC will reach out for a quick phone call to discuss interests, availability, and to answer any questions
3. A staff member of OBCDC will send an email with pertinent information prior to volunteer shift
4. Volunteer arrives at shift ready to make a difference!

## Volunteer Appreciation

On behalf of everyone at OBCDC, **thank you** for taking the time to assist us and Old Brooklyn! Your community truly appreciates your time and skills to assist your neighbors in making Old Brooklyn a beautiful, engaging neighborhood.

- Your 1<sup>st</sup> time volunteering, you'll receive an OBCDC koozie
- Volunteers who have served **25** hours will receive water bottle
- Those who have served **50** hours will receive volunteer t-shirt
- Those who have served **75** hours will receive option of 4 OBCDC SWAG items
- Those who have served **100** hours will be highlighted individually on our social media and website + surprise gift!
- The **top 5 volunteers each year** will be recognized with a certificate at our Annual Meeting in October

## General Guidelines

### Overall Expectations

- Have a friendly, positive attitude!
- Be professional: communicate needs or issues in a timely manner, be respectful to staff, volunteers and community members, be dependable and reliable.
- Arrive on time and ready to jump into the project; listen to instructions.
- Clean up after yourself, leaving the space better than you found it.
- Know that pictures will be taken throughout the volunteer opportunity for future outreach and promotion. *\*\*Please let OBCDC staff know if you do not wish to be photographed.*
- Have fun!

### Dress Code

Dress code is generally casual. For most events, volunteers should expect to wear an OBCDC volunteer lanyard (given and returned at the shift), comfortable bottoms, and safe/comfortable shoes. Please keep in mind that our events are public and attended by community members of varying ages. *\*\*Some special events will require dressing up or specific clothing. Volunteers will be notified ahead of time of all dress requirements or any special considerations.*

### Safety

Volunteers are expected to follow all safety rules shared by the volunteer staff or OBCDC staff, and to exhibit common sense when volunteering to prevent injury to themselves and others. No volunteer will be asked to perform an activity that is objectively dangerous, nor will they be asked to perform tasks that make them uncomfortable or feel unsafe. A first aid kit will be on-site at all volunteer events, and available for use throughout the volunteer session. In the event of severe injury, participants should contact medical services.

### Respect

Volunteers are expected to treat community members, fellow volunteers, and staff members with respect. Unwelcome verbal, physical or visual conduct involving any individual's race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, medical condition, physical disability, marital status, or military service etc. is strictly prohibited. Volunteers who engage in such conduct may be asked to leave the volunteer session and/or dismissed from the program.



### **Concerns & Harassment Policies**

Any volunteer who has concerns regarding safety, treatment, harassment etc. are encouraged to immediately notify an OBCDC staff member of their concerns. If a volunteer feels uncomfortable approaching a staff member, or prefers to maintain anonymity, a trusted friend or other volunteer may be used to notify OBCDC of the situation.

OBCDC takes all complaints of harassment or discrimination seriously. OBCDC will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident in a confidential nature. If the investigation discloses that an individual has committed an act of discrimination, that individual will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Retaliation in any form against a volunteer or employee who complains of discrimination or harassment is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary action. Any supervisory employee to whom a volunteer or employee brings a complaint of sexual harassment but who fails to take appropriate action to resolve it will also be disciplined.

# Volunteer Opportunities

## Events

OBCDC organizes a variety of events throughout the year! Some of which include:

- **Takeover Old Brooklyn Summer Series**

- Takeover Old Brooklyn allows for Old Brooklyn residents to bridge the gap of age and form shared memories, enjoy local parks, listen to music, and learn about local services, shops, and vendors.

- **Old Brooklyn Farmers Market**

- The Farmers Market allows for the community vendors to engage with residents, demonstrate cooking skills and recipe ideas, as well as make fresh produce readily available to the neighborhood.



- **Young Professional Series**

- Old Brooklyn has an emerging young professional community. These events are geared towards building community connection and friendships, networking, and showcasing local shops and attractions.

- **Home Buyers Panel**

- These panels inform residents of critical information about buying a home. Topics may include discussion on the current housing market, rebuilding credit, home insurance, and the lending process. It is also a great opportunity for interested buyers to ask questions and meet home professionals!

- **Home Repair Workshops**

- Our home repair workshops typically provide residents with the skills to accomplish carpentry, drywall, plumbing, and electrical tasks.

- **OBCDC Annual Meeting**

- Highlights accomplishments and goals of OBCDC staff
- Opportunity to engage with OBCDC board, staff, and members
- Open to all OBCDC members; membership is free!

Volunteers are encouraged to sign up for individual or recurring events. Volunteers will meet the at either the OBCDC office (4274 Pearl) or a predetermined site. Prior to your volunteer shift, the volunteers will receive an email with pertinent information.



## Roles

Given the differing focuses of events, some tasks may change. However, volunteers should expect to complete some/all/similar tasks to:

- Set-up: Move and set-up tables and tents, place tablecloths and backdrops, hang signage on tents, clean-up litter
- Tear-down: Tear-down tents and tables, pack materials back into boxes, move materials, clean-up trash
- Operating the OBCDC Table: Maintain a presence at the OBCDC table to answer questions, offer swag for sale, greet guests
- Help Guests: Guide guests to various areas, show guests where bathrooms are, help guests to best of ability or find supervisor
- Maintain Cleanliness of Event: Pick-up litter and deposit in trash cans





## Old Brooklyn Farmers Market



The Old Brooklyn Farmers Market takes place on Saturday mornings and the second Thursday evening of July, August, and September. OBCDC operates the market with the intent of providing fresh food to those in Old Brooklyn, providing a space for building community, and accessible transportation throughout the neighborhood. The farmers market takes numerous food assistance programs including SNAP, Produce Perks, and WIC Perks, and through a partnership with Senior Citizen Resources, anyone can take the Diamond Line transit routes throughout Old Brooklyn to and from the market.

The farmers market will be June 24 to September 30:

- *Saturdays*: 10am-1pm, shifts run 9am to 1:30pm.
- *2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays*: 4pm-7pm, shifts run 3pm to 7:30pm

Prior to your volunteer shift, the volunteers will receive an email with pertinent information.

### Roles

Beyond the main volunteer duties associated with events (listed above), volunteer duties at the market can also include the following:

- **Give Market Survey:** Provide guests market survey to complete, place completed market surveys in folder
- **Carey the Carrot:** Greet visitors and vendors in the Carey the Carrot mascot costume; cannot talk, but should wave and pose for photos; must wear a black long-sleeve shirt and black pants

## Neighborhood Beautification

Volunteers will help OBCDC maintain the Brighton Corridor by gardening, picking up litter and/or completing other maintenance tasks.

It's wild how picking up one piece of trash has a direct impact on the education of children in Old Brooklyn. One piece of trash removed from the street helps: remove hazard from the walking path → increases walkability (people like walking on clean paths) → walkability increases street safety – increases safety for other walkers, shops, and homes → safety increases home values → home values determine taxes → taxes assist school funding → school funding lends to better education. Imagine the impact of picking up dozens or hundreds of pieces. You'll be helping better the lives of SO many community members and you'll also be deterring others from littering. This is a long-winded way of saying by picking up trash, you'll be improving Old Brooklyn!

Volunteers will meet the at the OBCDC office or a predetermined site. Volunteers should wear comfortable clothing that can get dirty, is reasonable for the weather outside, and is safe for the activities expected for the day (closed-toe shoes, sunscreen, winter coat). Prior to your volunteer shift, the volunteers will receive an email with pertinent information.

### Roles



- Landscaping: Volunteers may plant flowers & remove weeds along sidewalks and streets
- Litter Pick-up: Volunteers will utilize trash pickers to pick up litter and other debris from the sidewalk, side of the road, flowerbeds, and grass
- Graffiti Removal: Volunteers will scrub or repaint over areas of walls to remove graffiti as needed and directed by the supervisor
- Volunteers should constantly be aware of their surroundings and act in a safe manner



## Neighborhood Beautification: Kits

Want the flexibility to volunteer early in the morning, after work, or on weekends? We have the solution for you!

Groups of volunteers can sign up to “rent” out trash bags, trash pickers, gloves, and buckets from the OBCDC office free of charge! This allows volunteers to assist with neighborhood beautification at the time that best suits them.

There are just a few rules!

- Supplies must be used for neighborhood beautification projects within Old Brooklyn
- Volunteers must agree to:
  - Pick up supplies from the OBCDC office during normal business hours M-F 9am-4pm the week of the volunteer event
  - Use reasonable care when using OBCDC’s property
  - Return supplies, including buckets, pickers, unused trash bags, and unused gloves within this timeline
    - Supplies must be returned within 3 days of the volunteer event during normal business hours M-F 9am-4pm
  - Record the amount of trash bags used (as this is needed for OBCDC’s collection tracking purposes)
  - Ensure participating volunteers will sign waiver forms online or on paper releasing OBCDC of any liability from injury during volunteer event
  - Record the # of Volunteers, route of cleanup, date, and time must be recorded with the OBCDC office



## Neighborhood Beautification: Step by Step

### Litter Pick Up:

- Thoroughly look for and pick up any trash from:
  - Sidewalks
  - Curb lawns/beds
  - Street
  - Empty areas that have garbage (will eventually blow onto the sidewalk/street)
  - Side streets along corner buildings
- Check street along the curb
  - Go as far out as your grabber will reach from the curb
  - Only go onto the street if it's safe to do so
- Sweep up any glass or other debris on the sidewalk
  - Edible food scraps can be swept up or swept into the grass for critters.
  - You don't have to pick up loose gravel/rocks on a normal run. If they are in the way, just sweep them off to the side
  - Remove feces from sidewalk
- Wipe down benches, garbage cans, and signal buttons
- Clear sewer drains
- If you find anything suspicious (weapons, gun casings, etc.) **call police 216-621-1234**
- Document number of garbage bags, graffiti/sticker removal, car parts, broken glass, pounds of garbage, pounds of aluminum cans for recycling

### Landscaping:

- Keeping the landscape beds along the corridor neat and clean
- Pull weeds along the corridor (video: <https://youtu.be/CT-ioLzvlR0>)
- Plant flowers
- Keep beds free of weeds and garbage (Raking video <https://youtu.be/iosEPe9GMYy>)
- Trim trees



## Home Rehabs

Old Brooklyn is home to Cleveland's largest senior population, and some of our residents need our help to age in place. Since 2021, OBCDC has completed small and large home rehabilitation projects for our seniors including reattaching hand railings, painting porches, fixing stairs, etc. We hope to expand this program to all homeowners needing support. Not only do these projects improve the quality of life for our property owners, but they also maintain and/or improve the streetscape for neighbors and increase home values in the area for potential buyers.

### Roles

- Landscaping: Volunteers may plant flowers, remove weeds, & mulch inside flower beds
- Litter Pick-up: Volunteers will utilize trash pickers to pick up litter and other debris from the sidewalk, flowerbeds, and grass
- Repairs: Volunteers will be completing minor repairs, including fixing porches, steps/stairs, and handrails
- Painting: Volunteers will paint areas of the home as needed and directed by the supervisor



Have at least 4 people who want to make a difference? Groups can sign up through our office for their own home rehab project! We'll provide the supplies and guidance. You provide the hands!

*Thank you for volunteering with OBCDC and making Old Brooklyn a Great Place to Grow!*

# Additional Resources

## Personal Safety & Injury

### Personal Safety

- Safety begins and ends with you! (video: <https://youtu.be/fcv1BxCL3Z8>)
  - Your own responsibility. Approach every task with varying levels of hazard awareness. Approach each job with care
- Safety Issues:
  - Other people, Traffic, Hand injuries, Eye injuries, Strains and sprains, Faulty tools and equipment
- Safety Reminders
  - Be aware of your surroundings, potential hazards, trip hazards, and your fellow colleagues
  - Before you start a task, take a couple minutes to think through what you're about to do (Procedures, PPE, hazards)
  - Address unsafe actions when you see them. Don't be afraid to speak up when you see something unsafe
  - Use personal protective equipment (PPE) as prescribed
  - Be aware of your body position. Move your body the right way, keep away from hazards
  - Use the right tool for the right job. The proper tools help you avoid hazards
  - Follow procedures for safe work. Take the extra time to make sure you are being safe
  - Stay in shape. Keeping your core muscles in shape is important to prevent injuries. Take a few moments to stretch. Know your body's limitations
  - Watch your step. Slips, trips, and falls are the #1 cause of workplace accidents

### Eye Safety (video: <https://youtu.be/pfAZwGZS-Hk>)

Use OSHA approved safety glasses that have an ANSI (American National Standard Institute) marking

- Wear safety glasses when scraping and when using landscape equipment

### Strains and Sprains (video: <https://youtu.be/tkT586quo2k>)

- Strains and sprains affect muscles, tendons, and ligaments
- Causes are overuse, improper technique, and lack of conditioning
  - Sprains are caused when a joint is forced to move into an unnatural position
  - Strains are caused when muscles are pulled, twisted, or torn
- How to avoid injuries
  - Wear protective footwear that fit comfortably
  - Avoid activities for which you are not trained
  - Warm up joints: Stretch and move



- Stack joints – don't twist
- If you have pain, then take a rest
- Use good posture
- Lift according to good lifting rules (lift with your legs, not your back)
- Decrease distance to the item you are lifting; bring item close to body
- Get help when you need it. Know your body's limits.
- Use knee pads or padded kneelers

**Hand Protection** (video: [https://youtu.be/-Blx\\_OsfbCk](https://youtu.be/-Blx_OsfbCk))

- Stay focused and follow basic principles of hand safety
  - Watch for pinch points
  - Wear proper gloves to avoid
    - Cuts, Scrapes & torn skin, Burns, Splinters
- Use your brain before your hands

**Ladders and Falls** (video: [https://youtu.be/Tc8mtVt\\_VA8](https://youtu.be/Tc8mtVt_VA8))

- Safety rules
  - Inspect your ladder before using: make sure all rungs are free of debris, obstructions, and slippery materials
  - Make sure all moving pieces are functional: make sure there are no cracks or missing hardware
  - Choose the right size ladder for the job
  - Use 3 points of contact when climbing and descending
  - Don't overreach
  - Have secure, unbroken safety feet
    - 4 to 1 rule – Foot of ladder is 1 foot out for every 4 feet up
  - Take broken ladders out of use
  - Place ladder feet on substantial base
  - DO NOT use a ladder as a horizontal platform
  - DO NOT leave in walkways, doorways, driveways, any location where they may be hit
  - Top of extension ladder should extend 3 rungs past the top of a platform
- Inattention is the #1 reason for falling! Pay attention!



## Heat & Sun Protection (video: <https://youtu.be/WYnj1G94e6Y>)

- Signs of heat exhaustion
  - Hot, dry skin & lack of sweating
  - Hot, dry skin
  - Headaches, weakness, & dizziness
  - Lack of appetite
  - Shortness of breath
  - Vomiting
- Learn to keep your body temperature under control
  - Allow yourself to become acclimatized to hot weather
  - Drink small amounts of water more frequently – on a schedule
  - Eat smaller meals, more frequently
  - Avoid alcohol and large amounts of sugar
  - If you are working directly in the sun, take more frequent short breaks in the shade
  - Cool skin frequently
    - Use a fan, wrap a wet towel around your neck, or use cooling bandannas
  - Avoid direct sunlight if possible
    - Wear a hat
    - Wear long sleeves
    - Wear sunscreen – waterproof, sweat proof. Reapply every 2-3 hours
    - Create a form of shade protection
- Dehydration
  - Usually associated with heat, but can happen in the cold too
  - Signs: Dizziness, weakness, loss of energy
  - Drink plenty of liquids
  - Sweat evaporates quickly, resulting in water loss
  - Vasoconstriction – blood vessels near the skin contract which reduces body's thirst sensation
  - Drink lots of fluids!