

# Good Neighbor Campaign Proposal

October 4, 2006

Town and Gown issues have made their way to the forefront in the last decade for any number of reasons including riots in two Colorado college towns in the late '90s, increased concern for citizen/student safety, and the reality that a university's appeal is closely tied to its sister town and the neighborhoods that make up its physical place or "setting." The growth and success of Manhattan and Kansas State University-and the build up of troop strength in neighboring Fort Riley-has increased the need to address our community's willingness to partner, invest, and work to continue our reputation as a town of Good Neighbors.

What follows in this Good Neighbor Campaign Proposal are options which will help lead Manhattan to the long-range goal of do-able, cost-effective, sustainable, and effectual community-building. As we address the growing needs of neighborhoods, we will increase our overall appeal to families, businesses, and industry that are looking for a great and affordable place to live. Over a few years and generations of overlapping Kansas State University (KSU) students and troops, the Good Neighbor Campaign has the potential to foster Manhattan's Good Neighbor Mindset among long and short-term residents.

## **Potential Partners, Strategic Alliances**

We have experienced a subtle but real shift in community over the last years. The City has continued it's under-girding of neighborhood associations and programs, but partners are needed to actively step in and encourage/build a community mindset that views Manhattan not as fragments of City, KSU, Westside, Eastside, etc. ("That's the City's problem" or "Westside businesses can deal with it"), but as a whole community. It will also require a "champion." Whether KSU or the City or a person puts a public and influential face to addressing the needs in knitting the City/University community, a credible entity will need to actively lead the charge. Recruiting committed partners early in the planning will be key and improve the outcome of any effort made. Below is a list of potential strategic partners.

City of Manhattan, City Commission, Administration, Zoning, Code, Fire,  
Kansas State University, Student Government Association, Residence Houses  
Neighborhood Associations, Citizens' Academy Participants and Alumni  
Chamber of Commerce/CVB, Business Associations, and Civic Organizations  
Riley County Police Department  
Riley County/Manhattan Health Department  
Greek Affairs and Greek Houses; KSU Clubs and Organizations  
Landlords Association  
Schools

## **What Can Be Done "Today" at Very Little or No Cost**

### **Website**

I've taken a hard look at our website and think that we can move and shift things around a bit to draw the attention of potential students/residents, newcomers, students, and incoming troops and their families. Whether this means adding a link on the front page which says "Welcome Wildcats" as some City sites have done with "their" colleges (not to exclude MCC, AIB, etc.) or highlighting our "Moving to Manhattan", we can better utilize this site-at no extra cost to the City except for the time it takes to make the changes. If we go with a "Welcome Wildcats" or similar link, I recommend highlighting the following info:

Welcome

- Things to Do in and Around Manhattan (links to existing pages on our site)
- People to Call (links to existing pages with an additional link to KSU, MCC, AIB info)
- Online Bill Payment (links to existing pages on our site)

- Looking for a Job (links to existing pages on our site)
- Landlord/Tenant Info (links to existing pages on our site)
- Check Your New Home (links to existing pages on our site)
- How to Be a Good Neighbor
  - We are glad you are here
    - Join in your Neighborhood Association and activities, You are Needed!
    - Looking to Volunteer?
  - Neighborhood Watch (link to RCPD)
  - City Ordinances to Keep in Mind (quick overview with full text of ordinance and Top 10 ways to Meet Police and City Officials)
    - Alcohol/Liquor (will include underage drinking, operating unlicensed saloon, public drunkenness, public urination, etc.)
    - Garbage and Trash
    - Noise and Other Nuisances
    - Disorderly House
    - Dogs and Cats (license, leash, housing, etc.)
    - Environmental Regs/Open Burning
    - Weeds and Sidewalks (snow and Ice)
  - Safety (will include a link to KSU's date safety, KSU-Police, RCPD, etc.)

### **Code Enforcement Sweeps**

As the Code Office returns to full strength, I recommend advertising an upcoming Code Enforcement sweep and highlight some of the common issues that officers will be addressing. Sweep twice; issue warnings after the first and cite unresolved issues following the second sweep. This takes people and their time. If the City were to commit to conducting Fall and Spring Sweeps-with the Spring Sweep occurring either directly before Spring Clean up or after- I believe that in a few years, the City's commitment to enforcing Good Neighbor ordinances and encouraging Good Neighbor practices will have become part of the community consciousness.

### **Channel 3 Resources**

We can use scrolling news items to further inform the community about the Good Neighbor Campaign.

### **Tie-Ins to Existing Resources**

Good Neighbor and Neighborhood representatives may be available to speak to school groups, citizen and neighborhood groups; KSU orientation, etc. Good Neighbor information can be made available on the web for duplication by existing businesses and entities. It is not difficult to place quality resources at the Manhattan Public Library, Mall, USD 383, SGA Office at the Union, Senior Center, etc.

## **What Will Require an Investment of Time and Minimum Cash Outlay**

### **Welcome Back Cats Night**

Following riots in their community and subsequent task force initiatives, Fort Collins initiated a Welcome Back night which involves teams of representatives from their police force, neighborhoods, University, and City to visit every household in the neighborhoods which rim CSU. I recommend that our community approach the students and neighborhoods with a similar Welcome Back Cats Night. Each household in the designated neighborhoods receives a welcome back bag with a modified Check Your Home code/zoning, etc. flier (will include a undated welcome message and a coupon for a free Zoo admission, or one visit free to City Pools), Online Water Utility Payment/Top 10 Ways to Meet Your Local Police & City Officials flier, Disorderly House/Who Do I Call flier, Q-card, and a bag of popcorn (\$.18 per bag at Wal-Mart-who may want to be a Good Neighbor partner as reflected in their recent Good Neighbor advertising). This way, a team of community reps put "faces" to the information-a friendly and decisive move. Cam Identified 21 neighborhoods (not associations, chunks of housing

bordered by major arterials) which amounted to 6,048 homes. Ockert narrowed the 21 neighborhoods to 13 ½, representing 4,867 households in areas with the highest density of students and residents at the target age group.

Popcorn: .18 x 6,048 = \$1,087  
.18 x 4,867 = \$876  
.18 x 7,000 = \$1,260

Check Your Home Fliers: 7,000, estimate \$2,000

1/3 of Tri-fold Fliers x 2: \$750

Plastic Bags (plain handled bags) case of 2000 for \$23 (looking for a better option)

Advertising Costs: market and budget dependent

These Welcome Back bags can be kept at City Hall, Senior Center, KSU SGA office and available for neighborhood groups or individuals to pick up as needed.

Though this presents an initial cost in materials and time (overtime, etc.), this has the potential to offset current “hidden costs” of police, code, and fire responses to citizen calls/complaints. Ultimately, when the tide begins to turn in the neighborhood, the value of the cleaner, friendlier neighborhoods will be realized by residents and people/businesses looking to relocate in Manhattan.

### **Couch and Mattress Amnesty Day, Swap and Drop**

Another good idea from Colorado, involves hosting a day (or two) each year when students and residents may drop off or pick up unwanted/used couches, recliners, and mattresses. Last year, Fort Collins offered the drop for several hours on a Saturday and received 500 items, recycled 200, and disposed of 300. The coordinator mentioned that the unswapped furniture was generally in wretched condition. Costs to this would involve dumping fees at the land fill, advertising, any man hours involved in the Swap and Drop (fire personnel partner with the Fort Collins Sofa Round Up), and cost of transporting the furniture to the landfill. Businesses which sell furniture might wish to donate moving trucks, refreshments for volunteers, etc. The County may wish to waive all or a portion of the dumping fees.

### **Good Neighbor Day**

A clean up day offered Fall and Spring Semester where students, Greek houses, leadership studies students, and residents come together to clean up surrounding neighborhoods and perhaps City parks and green space. Post clean up barbecues and picnics could be encouraged and perhaps Willie the Wildcat could cruise around the neighborhoods as a nifty pr move for K-State. All participants invited to Good Neighbor Day at the Zoo-either a designated free-admission day where we can offer info and talk to Zoo guests, highlight work day activities, or a special event to all Good Neighbor participants-a behind the scenes at the Zoo 2 hour event. Advertising, refuse collection costs, and costs to Sunset Zoo may be off-set by the Zoo advertising aspect and decrease in hidden costs as mention above.

### **Utility Billing Reminders**

We can utilize our Utility Billing to reinforce what the community partners are doing to keep Manhattan a great place to live, work, and play by offering Neighborhood Resources, pointing to the web resources, Citizen Academy, Neighborhood Associations, RCPD Academy, and highlighting upcoming planned Good Neighbor events.

Manhattan is known for its big city opportunities, small town atmosphere, educated workforce, and willing volunteers. A modest investment of time and money has the potential to produce generous results and a return to a reputation as a community rich in Good Neighbors.