

# OUR WEST BAYFRONT

## Spring 2022 News



Neighborhoods in action to build a better bayfront community.

## 2022 OWB Community Plan Update

### Our West Bayfront Community Plan Update

In the five years since the original 2016 OWB Community Plan was established much has changed in our neighborhood and beyond. As OWB approached our 5 year anniversary, we wanted to take an opportunity to reconnect with the community to review the ambitious goals set out in the original plan, and identify any emerging or particular priorities where our efforts should be focused in the coming 5 years.

With the input of hundreds of residents through surveys, group discussions, and individual interviews, the 2022 Community Plan Update was completed in late 2021. The update calls for continued efforts to support OWB homeowners, and new work focused on supporting small businesses and waterfront connections, among others.

Read the complete report at [ourwestbayfront.org/communityplan/](https://ourwestbayfront.org/communityplan/)

### 5 Year Plan Focus Issues

#### Housing

1. Home ownership programs/support
2. Home maintenance programs
3. Initiatives that maintain affordability
4. Code Enforcement

#### Economic Dev.

1. W. 8th Street Corridor Plan
2. Local business support marketing

#### Infrastr./ Services

1. Waterfront connections
2. Beautification and maintenance of public realm

#### Improve Safety

1. Address Crime
2. Improve traffic operations

#### Social/Events

1. Community building activities
2. Safety-focused activities

#### OWB Org.

1. Staffing
2. Funding
3. Long-term organizational sustainability
4. Measuring success

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit [ourwestbayfront.org](https://ourwestbayfront.org) for more details

### Benevolent Beers with Erie Ale Works

Thursday, March 31st 5-8PM  
416 W. 12th St.

Erie Ale Works will give 10% of all proceeds at this event to OWB to support projects that are transforming the West Bayfront neighborhoods.

### OWB Spring Cleanup

Saturday, April 2 9AM-12PM  
Locations throughout OWB

As the weather gets nicer, help us clean up our neighborhoods in preparation for a beautiful spring and summer.

### Erie Walks - Team OWB

April 4th-May 30th

Join our neighborhood team to participate in this free, 8-week competition! Participate on your own, or join several organized walks around the West Bayfront.

### HistERIE Week

May 22nd-28th

The Erie Public Library will offer a variety of activities, walks, and more, highlighting Erie's unique history.

## OWB Welcomes Veterans Leadership Program to New Office Location

OWB is excited to welcome a new neighbor to West 8th Street! Veterans Leadership Program of Western PA has a new office space at OWB's building at 406 West 8th Street.

For the past 40 years, VLP has provided necessary supports to local Veterans who are facing challenging transitions. In 2020, VLP assisted 6,208 Veterans with essential services throughout 30 counties in Western and Central Pennsylvania, New York, and Ohio.



The Grand Opening was held on Wednesday, February 16th from 10-4PM. Elected officials, including Mayor Joseph Schember, Representative Bob Merski, and many community members stopped in to learn more about the organization and the services they offer. More information is available at [veteransleadershipprogram.org/](https://veteransleadershipprogram.org/)

Sign up to volunteer at any West Bayfront event and get a FREE T-Shirt  
[www.surveymonkey.com/r/VolunteerOWB](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VolunteerOWB)



@OurWestBayfront | [OurWestBayfront.org](https://OurWestBayfront.org) |  
[info@ourwestbayfront.org](mailto:info@ourwestbayfront.org) | (814)-871-7050

## Interested in Keeping OWB Clean and Litter-Free?

A new committee has been formed to address the issue of litter in the West Bayfront. Residents took initiative to form a committee to implement solutions to the litter issue after Gannon students demonstrated potential solutions to clean up litter as part of a marketing course. The group considers a number of perspectives, including residential and business related litter.

Overall, the committee's aim will be to reduce litter through education and awareness, targeting outreach and cleanups, and encouraging all residents to help solve the problem. In 2022, the committee plans to conduct an assessment that accurately shows the scale of litter in the West Bayfront neighborhoods, as well as begin coordinating more frequent community cleanups.

Anyone interested in joining the committee is encouraged to email Marissa Litzenberg at [marissa@ourwestbayfront.org](mailto:marissa@ourwestbayfront.org) or call 814-871-7960.

## Erie Insurance Hagen Fellows to Assist OWB with Key Projects

OWB was excited to be selected by Erie Insurance as this year's community partner on the Thomas B. Hagen Fellowship Program, a leadership development initiative for Erie Insurance employees.

Through this program, a cohort of 15 ERIE employees are working closely with OWB staff and partners on two high-priority community projects: creating strategies to build neighborhood equity through homeownership, and developing a small business support and attraction strategy for the West Bayfront.

We are grateful for the opportunity to advance this work in partnership with Erie Insurance and look forward to sharing the outcomes of the project with the community!



OWB AmeriCorps Vista Member Marissa Litzenberg and Erie employees on West 4th Street!

## OWB Awarded Keystone Communities Grant!



OWB was excited to receive a Keystone Communities Program Grant that will allot \$165K in funds to help rehabilitate 3 vacant properties. These residential properties will be renovated to create affordable rental and home ownership opportunities in OWB.

Special thanks to State Representatives Bob Merski and Pat Harkins for their support of this important project.

## OWB Endowment

Join us for a special opportunity to ensure that OWB's work in the community continues. The establishment of the Our West Bayfront Endowment Fund, in partnership with Gannon University, will provide sustainable support for the revitalization work led by OWB. Endowment funds will be used to support unique projects and programs that bring together residents alongside Gannon University students and faculty to dramatically improve the quality of life in this community.

Right now, through a unique opportunity provided by Gannon University, **new donations of between \$500 to \$10,000 will be matched!** Donations may be pledged over a five year period. Help achieve this next important milestone for our neighbors by making a contribution today, putting us one step closer to our goals of a stronger West Bayfront.

Visit [ourwestbayfront.org/donate/](http://ourwestbayfront.org/donate/) or call Anna at (814) 871-7050 to discuss how your contribution can have a lasting impact on the neighborhood.

## Don't Miss OWB's 2020-2021 Report to the Community

We are pleased to share our 2020-21 Report to the Community, which highlights the projects and programs that are helping to strengthen our West Bayfront community.

Visit this link to read the full report [ourwestbayfront.org/2021update/](http://ourwestbayfront.org/2021update/)

## Thank you to our major partners!



UPMC HEALTH PLAN



THE CITY OF ERIE  
JOSEPH V. SCHEMBER, MAYOR



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