



Tour in Old North St. Louis

## DESCRIPTION

Host themed walking or biking tours of your neighborhood to encourage urban exploration, active lifestyles, and to offer unique insight to your neighborhood for residents and visitors. Examples themes are sustainable backyards, unique homes, green buildings, historic buildings, churches, local businesses, parks, schools, haunted houses, places for kids, etc. Marketing and branding your neighborhood can have a dramatic impact on the perception and actual quality of life for residents, visitors, and business owners. Introduce a unique design, logo, and or slogan that gives an identity to your neighborhood and capitalizes on good and unique qualities.

## NEIGHBORHOOD BENEFITS

### Environmental

- Tours to promote historic preservation or sustainable activities and design features
- Walking and biking to promote sustainable transportation choices

### Social

- Increased knowledge, respect, and investment in your neighborhood
- Highlighted successes that create community solidarity
- Marketing and branding that build a common neighborhood vision to unite neighbors
- Unique qualities highlighted to preserve local culture

### Economic

- Buildings are preserved and future redevelopment is encouraged
- Investment and promotion for development in the neighborhood
- Marketing and branding that promote local spending and local investment



Bicycle tour in Old North St. Louis



Cherokee Street Marketing

## RELATED TOOLS

When paired with other tools, walking tours, marketing, and branding can contribute to a greater and more holistic, sustainable neighborhood. Think about community cohesion, active lifestyles, public art, and local prosperity. Try combining this strategy with:

- **Develop a Neighborhood Sustainability Asset Inventory**
- **Create Public Art Installations or Exhibits**
- **Organize a Walking Group or Community Fitness Program**
- **Paint Intersections or Building Murals**

## EXAMPLES

### Sustainable Backyard Tour, St. Louis, MO

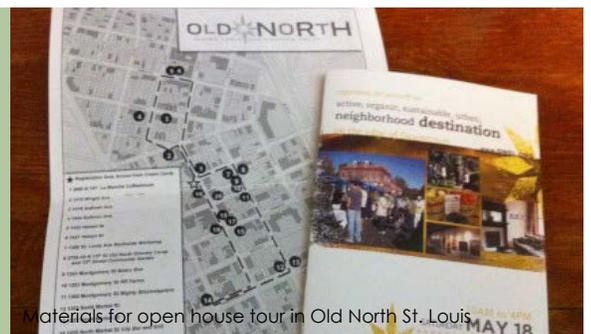
A free, self-guided, open-house-style tour of sustainable outdoor residential spaces around St. Louis.

### Cherokee Street Walking Tour hosted by CAM, St. Louis, MO

A historical and contemporary walking tour of the Cherokee St. area.

### Forest Park Southeast, St. Louis, MO

Marketing, branding, and signage efforts are improving the neighborhood.



Materials for open house tour in Old North St. Louis

## GET STARTED

- 1. Research** A tour and marketing strategy will serve residents and visitors best by highlighting what makes your community exciting and special compared to other neighborhoods. Research and brainstorm with your neighborhood association, long-time residents, youth, and other community organizations about ideas for tours. Visit your library for books about the history of your neighborhood. You can host a community event to get input, conduct a survey, or talk casually with neighbors. Some St. Louis neighborhoods already have tours, so be sure not to duplicate one that already exists.
- 2. Plan** Establish a theme for your tour. Ideas include sustainable backyards, historical buildings and sites, tours for kids, community gardens, churches, public art, local specialty shops (antiques, breweries, artisan foods, etc), architecture, and home open house tours that showcase houses for sale or newly renovated. Some existing tours include **Shaw on Show**, **FPSE Rehabbers Tour**, and **Annual Old North House & Community Tour**.
- 3. Create** Create the tour. Map out the route for walking or biking and write and rehearse the information you or your tour host will be presenting. If you are not hosting, ask an exciting expert or long time resident to volunteer their time. You can also work with an established organization such as a museum, a community group, or an existing tour group such as **Renegade Tours STL**, **Metropolis Downtown Architectural Walking Tours**, or **St. Louis Walking Tours**.
- 4. Schedule & Advertise** Choose a date and time, then advertise your tour. Use your local paper, a neighborhood association newsletter, flyers, a website, and word-of-mouth. Walking/Bike tours can be free, by donation, or by a small cost. If led by volunteers, donations could go toward maintaining a website or creating printed material.
- 5. Share Information** Create a printed card or guide as a take home for tour guests so they remember their experience and are encouraged to participate in future tours. You can also make self-guided tours and put the information online via a map and typed information or a recorded speech for download. A donations button on the website could help raise money.
- 6. Market** Take a similar approach to marketing and highlight all the most special things about your neighborhood. Branding and marketing can have an incredible impact on the perception of your neighborhood, economic development, individual investment, and pride from neighborhood residents. Marketing is most successful when your neighborhood already has organized leadership, a reasonable sense of security, and a revitalization strategy. To begin the marketing and branding process, these online resources provide a good starting point:
  - **What is a Neighborhood Brand**
  - **Neighborhood Notes**
  - **Community Progress**
- 7. Examples** Neighborhoods and districts such as **South Grand**, **Benton Park**, **Old North**, **Covenant Blu/Grand Center**, and **Midtown Alley** are examples of neighborhood branding success stories. **Shaw** is going through the process now as well.



### RELATED SUSTAINABILITY PLAN CATEGORIES

This tool supports the following goals and strategies:

#### Urban Character, Vitality & Ecology

Strategies: B7-Encourage communities to improve their own neighborhood; F3-Create additional events, resources, and publications that document and celebrate St. Louis' heritage; F5-Promote the redevelopment of historic homes and commercial properties.

#### Health, well-being & Safety

Strategies: D1-Include options, program opportunities and cultural attributes in greenways and public spaces. D2-Promote public events that feature fitness and physical activity.

#### Prosperity, Opportunity & Employment

Strategies: B7-Market assets and accomplishments of the City to attract new and retain existing residents; G4-Market City assets to draw visitors to City neighborhoods.