Presidentâ??s Message â?? April 2026

Description

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A Neighborhood Worth Protecting

A neighborhood is not just a place on a map.
It is a living story written by those who choose to protect it.

There are moments in a neighborhoodâ??s life when it becomes clear that we are not just maintaining a placeâ?¦ we are shaping history.

This is one of those moments.

Our **Historic Designation effort** continues to move forward with strength, intention, and deep community care. On **April 3rd**, we went before the Planning Commission to present the work that so many of you have poured your time, energy, and heart into. The Board shared feedback and raised important questions, and we are actively addressing those concerns and refining our approach.

This process is meant to be collaborative and neighborly. We welcome your input. This belongs to all of us.

I want to take a moment to say thank you.

Thank you to our neighbors who have shown up, asked questions, and stayed engaged. Thank you to those who believe in protecting what makes North Avondale special. And a very special thank you to **Matt Cornell and his family** for their unwavering dedication to this project. Matt has been steady, thoughtful, and tireless in his leadership, and this progress would not be possible without him.

Historic designation is not just about preservation.
It is about protection.
It is about intention.
It is about ensuring that future generations inherit the same beauty, diversity, and character that we are fortunate enough to experience today.

North Avondale carries a powerful history. Parts of this neighborhood were connected to the **Underground Railroad**, a place where courage lived and where people risked everything for freedom. That legacy calls us to be thoughtful stewards of this community.

Because we have seen what happens when communities are not protected.

Across the country, neighborhoods rich in culture and history have been altered or erased by irresponsible development. Character replaced with convenience. Legacy traded for short-term gain. Communities losing not just structures, but identity.

We are grateful.

We are not fighting to rebuild what was lost.
We are working to protect what we still have.

And we are doing it together.

As you explore this monthâ??s newsletter, you will see that same spirit of community in action. From the **Mattie Legacy Project Community Cleanup**, bringing neighbors together to care for shared spaces, to opportunities for connection, creativity, and learning throughout the neighborhood , these are reflections of who we are.

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We are a neighborhood that shows up.
We are a neighborhood that cares.
We are a neighborhood that acts.

And that is how legacies are built.

I invite each of you to stay engaged. Share your voice. Attend meetings. Be part of this process.

Because one day, people will look back and say:

This was the generation that chose to protect North Avondale.
This was the generation that chose legacy.
This was the generation that came together and made history.

With gratitude and deep pride,

Dawn Johnson | NANA President

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