



## **Neighborhood Association Organization Guide**

## **What is a Neighborhood Association?**

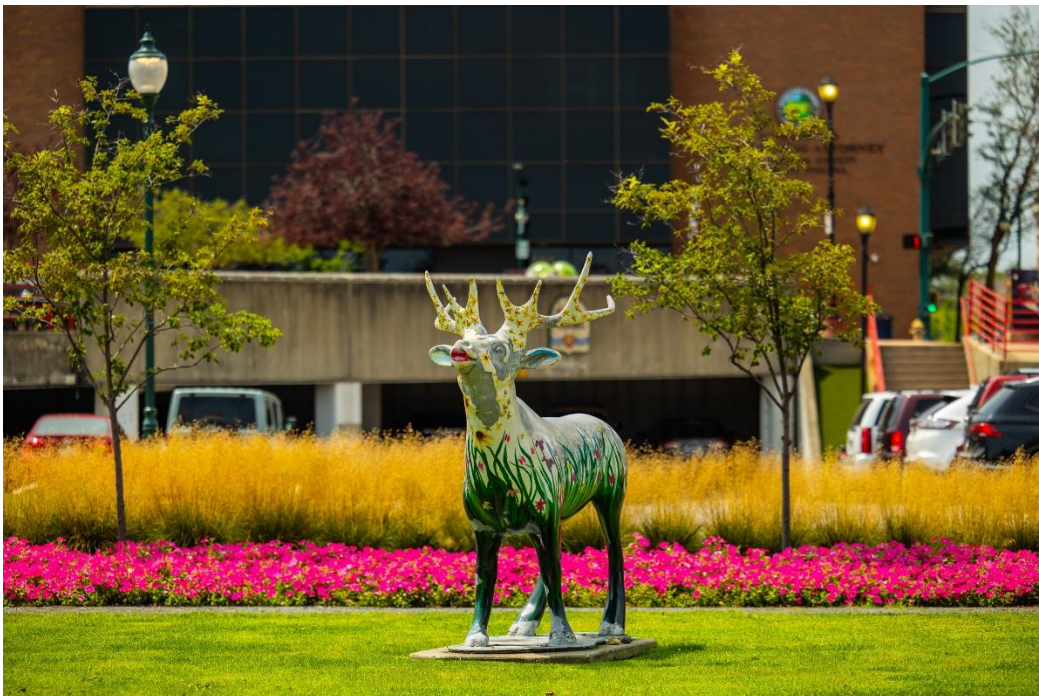
A neighborhood association is a group of neighbors who come together, exchange ideas, and work together to improve their neighborhood. For this document, membership in a neighborhood association is voluntary and open to anyone living or working in the neighborhood. Neighborhood associations can collaborate with residents and the city to address community issues. Establishing a neighborhood association can significantly enhance the quality of life for you and your community.

## **Why have a registered Neighborhood Association?**

Registering your neighborhood association makes it official with the City of Elkhart. It also provides your group with a point of contact for obtaining information about upcoming decisions that may affect your area.

There are many ways to get involved in your neighborhood and community. The most direct way to participate is through the neighborhood association. Neighborhood associations work to actively improve the quality of life by uniting residents' voices and encouraging commitment to neighborhood issues and initiatives.

The neighborhood association provides a platform for neighbors to meet, organize social events, and express their opinions on decisions that affect their property and neighborhood.



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## Introduction

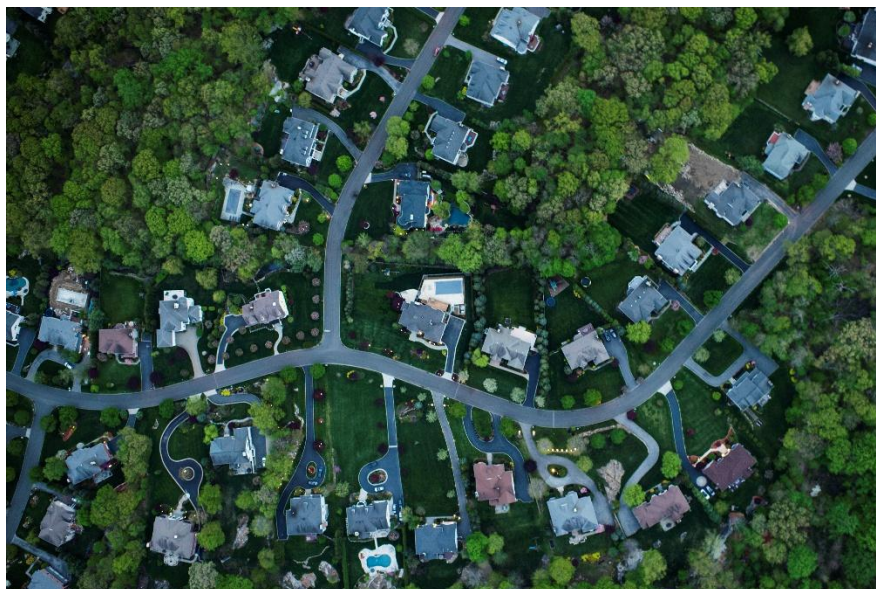
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Congratulations on taking the first step toward starting a neighborhood association! A neighborhood association is a group of homeowners, renters, apartment residents, and representatives from local businesses, churches, and schools that organize to improve neighborhood conditions. When you establish a neighborhood association, residents have the chance to identify needs and work collaboratively to address them. A community-representing group will have stability, credibility, and political influence to be an effective force for positive change in the neighborhood.

Some benefits include:

- Facilitating common neighborhood goals.
- Providing the neighborhood with a familiar voice and an effective means of communicating with government officials and other stakeholder groups.
- Empowering residents to have input in events happening in their area and to take part in the decision-making that affects their neighborhoods and community.
- Preserving, improving, and organizing neighborhood projects.
- Planning and holding neighborhood social activities.

This Neighborhood Association Guide is designed to help you establish a neighborhood association. It is not a rulebook for your neighborhood association, but rather a resource to refer to when needed. The Guide contains best practices from cities and counties across the United States.



Organizing a neighborhood association is a big task. The material in this guide breaks the process into clear steps, making it feel less overwhelming. Although it may seem tough at first, developing your association will be very rewarding as people come together to tackle common issues and learn to collaborate as a group.

Keep in mind some important guidelines as you begin to organize:

- Building an organization is a process. It cannot be done overnight. Be patient. Identify your priorities and build them one step at a time.
- Set realistic goals. Start small and build upward. As your organizational capacity grows, start setting higher goals.
- How you treat people is crucial to your success. By treating people with respect and honesty, people will be more likely to get involved in the organization.
- Adapt the ideas and strategies outlined in this guide to the specific needs and circumstances of your community and your organization.
- People join neighborhood groups for various reasons. One of them is to get to know their neighbors better and to feel a sense of community. So, as you build your organization, be sure to have fun!



## Role of Local Government

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The preservation and maintenance of an area's quality of life is a shared responsibility. Local government is responsible for ensuring that the common good is protected and public services are provided efficiently. Registering your neighborhood association will improve communication between residents, the government, and other important groups.

- The city will assist with departmental resources.
- The city will post your neighborhood association events on the MyElkhart311 and City Event Calendar.
- The Mayor's Office & 311 may serve as a point of contact for the association regarding planning efforts and other actions affecting the area.

Please contact via email [neighborhoods@cityofelkhartin.gov](mailto:neighborhoods@cityofelkhartin.gov) for more information.



## Conducting Neighborhood Outreach

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Neighborhood outreach is a great way to connect with new and longtime neighbors, build relationships, and grow your association. Reaching potential members is key to long-term success.

Here are some steps to aid in attracting association members:

### 1. Identify helpers and leaders

- Canvass your neighborhood and gauge interest in forming or expanding an association
- Share this Neighborhood Association Guide and City contact info ([neighborhoods@cityofelkhartin.gov](mailto:neighborhoods@cityofelkhartin.gov))
- Invite interested residents to meetings
- Identify potential block leaders
- Create a neighborhood contact list

### 2. Build on neighborhood strengths

- Connect with other neighborhood associations
- Engage key stakeholders, including schools, local groups, churches, law enforcement, nonprofits, businesses, and community organizations



## Membership and Recruitment

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- Recruiting is essential for long-term success. Many groups gain members through popular issues or projects, but participation often drops once those end. To avoid this, be intentional and creative with outreach.

### Ways to build membership:

- Host meetings on topics like public safety (e.g., Neighborhood Watch) and invite Police or Fire to present.
- Organize door-to-door outreach or membership drives, followed by a volunteer celebration.
- Share printed materials (letters, flyers, brochures) about events and opportunities.
- Assign block captains to welcome residents, share updates, and organize volunteers.
- Set up booths at community events, markets, or festivals with sign-up sheets and information.

### Ways to retain members:

- Help new members get involved with clear volunteer opportunities.
- Welcome newcomers and assign a greeter at meetings.
- Avoid cliques—encourage broad participation and leadership.
- Invite new ideas and perspectives.
- Keep meetings organized with a clear agenda.
- Maintain an updated member database.
- Make it fun—host inclusive events and celebrations to build community.



## Neighborhood Association Best Practices

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This section provides strategies to help leaders build a stronger, more cohesive neighborhood association. These best practices come from associations nationwide—adapt them to fit your group’s needs.

### **Mission Statement**

A mission statement defines your organization’s purpose and guides its actions. It should be broad enough to allow flexibility, but clear enough to provide direction. As your association grows, develop it with member input while staying focused on your core purpose.

Mission statements often focus on neighborhood needs but should also reflect a commitment to the broader community, since a neighborhood’s success is tied to the larger area it belongs to.

### Neighborhood Association Mission Statement Samples:

The Woodlawn Area Neighborhood Association, Inc. (WANA) exists to improve the overall quality of life in the WANA area and to support the commonwealth of its members, which ultimately enhances homeowner property values. WANA achieves its mission by building long-term residency, encouraging neighborhood hike renovation and preservation of our homes, supporting properly managed growth and development, enhancing safety & security, promoting volunteer activism, combating community deterioration, and building community by joining neighbors together in a common cause.

The Cherrywood Neighborhood Association (CNA) represents all residents of Cherrywood, including homeowners and renters, who are automatically members of the association. We affirm our intent to build active consensus, broaden participation, act collectively, capitalize on opportunities, and manage problems. The Cherrywood Neighborhood Association Mission is to promote open discussion of neighborhood Issues, pursue solutions and actions favored by members, and monitor and inform CNA members of private initiatives and public policies significant to Cherrywood.

The Lower Greenville Neighborhood Association (LGNA) is composed of residents dedicated to supporting and promoting a positive quality of life in our neighborhood by: Providing a forum where neighbors can communicate on items of mutual interest; Identifying, encouraging, and promoting interests and concerns of the neighborhood including but not limited to safety and neighborhood improvements; Representing neighborhood interests by acting as liaison to other neighborhood associations, civic entities, and other groups; and promoting desirable

development within and adjacent to the neighborhood association boundaries all in order to protect the residential integrity of the neighborhood.

The Bancroft Neighborhood Association (BA) facilitates community inclusiveness, sustainability, awareness, investment, and involvement to promote a safe, vibrant neighborhood. The primary goals of the BA are to: build interest of residents in the welfare of the neighborhood, support the improvement of the neighborhood, create awareness of issues that affect all residents of the neighborhood, encourage participation of residents in neighborhood gatherings and initiatives, and represent the neighborhood and its residents in the wider Minneapolis community.

### **Bylaws**

Bylaws are rules that neighborhood associations follow to keep things consistent and ensure a democratic process as members and leaders change. Bylaws address topics like the group's purpose, membership rules, neighborhood association chair(s), standing committees, and more.

Bylaws should reflect the grassroots and democratic nature of neighborhood associations. They should specify open and transparent decision-making processes. Well-crafted bylaws help prevent the perception of arbitrary decisions, which can harm the organization's legitimacy. If an association adopts bylaws, they must be taken seriously because they are essential for maintaining order and credibility. Effective bylaws will:

- Describe how the association will do business
- Establishes the rules governing the group
- The roles and responsibilities of its officers



## **Neighborhood Association Chair Elections**

Elections should be held annually to select chairs and co-chairs. Members may nominate themselves or others before the meeting, with additional nominations allowed from the floor. Residents should be notified at least 30 days in advance through channels like Nextdoor, email, Facebook, flyers, and word of mouth. Notices should include the date, time, location, and candidate list.

Elected officials serve one-year terms with no limit on re-election.

## **Roles within the Association**

These officers will oversee the neighborhood association's affairs for the coming year. Your association's bylaws should clearly define the positions and outline the overall election process. Descriptions may include the responsibilities of the board and other officer roles. Many duties are involved in setting up an organization. Having enough people on the board is crucial for delegating the various tasks that need to be done.

## **Qualities of an Effective Neighborhood Association Chair or Co-Chair**

### **Commitment**

- Dedicated to the neighborhood and its residents
- Knowledgeable and engaged with community interests
- Inclusive, collaborative, and respectful
- Open to new ideas and encourages participation
- Promotes productive, respectful discussion and consensus
- Shares information openly and models positive behavior

### **Leadership**

- Motivates collective action
- Helps set goals and drive solutions
- Follows through on commitments

### **Communication**

- Communicates clearly and listens actively
- Connects both online and in-person communities

### **Time Commitment**

- Organizes at least one formal meeting and one community event each year

*The following positions are suggestions for your association's governing board. Each role should be defined by your organization. Roles can be combined, such as the chair also serving as secretary, or a co-chair also acting as treasurer.*

## **Chair**

The chair leads the association, sets the agenda, and facilitates meetings. They should remain objective, encourage participation, and keep discussions focused and on time.

### **Key Duties:**

- Notify members of meeting details (date, time, location)
- Represent the association publicly
- Keep meetings on track and within the agenda
- Mediate conflicts and clarify decisions
- Prepare and follow a clear agenda
- Call for votes when needed
- Assign and review task
- Ensure bylaws and procedures are followed
- Recognize member contributions
- Transition records to the next chair

## **Co-Chair**

Assists the chair and provides support and input. Leads meetings and assumes duties when the chair is absent.

### **Key Duties:**

- Lead meetings in the chair's absence
- Step in if the chair cannot complete their term
- Follow up on assigned tasks

## **Secretary**

Maintains records and meeting documentation, ensuring information is accessible.

### **Key Duties:**

- Record meeting minutes
- Maintain membership records
- Manage official correspondence
- Share key updates for newsletters

## **Treasurer**

Manages the association's finances and ensures accurate recordkeeping.

### Key Duties:

- Pay expenses accurately and on time.
- Collect and deposit funds.
- Maintain financial records.
- Manage dues and/or grant funding.

### Committees

Committees help neighborhood associations achieve their goals by assigning specific tasks to smaller groups.

### Committees can be:

- Standing: Ongoing (e.g., Membership, Welcoming, Beautification, Grievance).
- Temporary: Formed for one-time events or issues and dissolved after completion. These may evolve into standing committees if needed.

Selecting the right leaders and members is essential. Choose individuals who are passionate, knowledgeable, or well-connected.



## Effective Meetings

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Effective meetings strengthen an organization, while poorly run meetings can weaken it. When meetings start late or are dominated by a few voices, members may lose interest. Well-managed meetings with a clear agenda and respectful discussion encourage participation and ongoing engagement.

### FIVE RULES FOR MEETINGS

- Time is everyone's most valuable resource - to keep the meeting on task, set a time limit for each speaker
- The purpose of holding a meeting is to plan action
- Pre-plan the meeting carefully
- Have a printed/posted agenda
- Have well-thought-out alternatives for the membership to choose from

### Three Types of Meetings

#### 1. Business Meeting:

As the meeting leader, the chair should:

- Present items or proposals for member consideration
- Share agendas in advance to help members prepare
- Guide discussions and support efficient decision-making
- Follow the agenda and keep meetings on track
- Encourage open, thorough discussion
- Help build consensus during debates
- Summarize and clarify motions before voting



#### 2. Round Table Discussion

The leader or facilitator will:

- Help the group get to know each other: Identify the problem or help the group articulate it
- Encourage and guide the discussion: Foster participation from all members. Summarize as needed
- Bring the group to a conclusion: Develop a plan of action

### 3. Brainstorming

The leader must ensure that:

- Participants understand the rules, the problem is clearly defined, and everyone is ready to share ideas. The brainstorming session is a free-flowing, fast-paced exchange of ideas; no one criticizes or comments, and all ideas are accepted or built upon by later speakers. Keep a record of everything, then review the suggestions to decide which ones to implement.

### Agendas

Every meeting should have a clear agenda or purpose. Use the time before the meeting to decide not only what will be discussed but also how long each topic will take and the order of discussion. Sometimes, it's helpful to place emotional or controversial issues at the end of the agenda. This allows you to address small but necessary decisions early in the meeting. When listing agenda items, it's good to include a time limit. While you may go over or under the limit on some items, it helps keep the meeting on track.

Do not overload the agenda. Try to stay within 1- 1.5 hours and allow some time for refreshments and mingling.

### Running a Meeting

Start the meeting on time. Do not penalize those who arrive early by making them wait for latecomers. Begin with less important agenda items. This will reinforce punctuality among those who arrive on time without excluding latecomers. Make sure someone takes notes and records the meeting so that those unable to attend can stay informed about the association's activities. If you do not have a secretary, rotate this responsibility.

### Participation

Set practical expectations for attendance. You might not need a large crowd at every meeting. Don't focus on what you see as a poor turnout. Instead, work on ways to increase participation. Create a meeting environment where everyone's ideas are welcomed and respected, and no one is ridiculed or belittled. Think about forming a membership committee to focus on recruiting new members. Be realistic about what people can contribute, considering their other responsibilities. Value all contributions, no matter how small.

### Reports and Records

Reports are essential for tracking progress and keeping members informed. They provide a summary of activities over a specific period.

A good report should include:

- Activity name
- Summary of accomplishments and key methods (briefly)
- Upcoming activities or project ideas
- Any additional notes shared separately with the chair

### **Meeting Arrangements**

The best setup for a community meeting is a circle of chairs. People sitting in a circle can communicate more effectively. Tables often create barriers and are easy to hide behind. Avoid using tables unless they are necessary for maps or handouts. Select a neutral room that will just barely fit everyone. This helps keep the group's energy within the group and boosts your feelings of enthusiasm.

### **Meeting Locations**

Choose a nearby location within the neighborhood association boundaries. Meeting spots could include a neighborhood church or community center, a member's home, a favorite local restaurant, or a park pavilion. Our Parks Department has shelters available for neighborhood associations to use if they are not already reserved. If the association wants to reserve a building ahead of time, a fee will apply. Contact the Parks Department for more details. (574) 295-7275 or visit <https://www.cityofelkhartn.gov/departments/parks-and-recreation/facilities-parks/facilities/>

### **Virtual Meetings**

Virtual meetings are another excellent way to connect with residents. Neighborhood associations can provide hybrid meetings with both in-person and online options.

**Zoom:** Zoom has free meetings for up to 40 minutes. Sign up for a free account at [zoom.com](https://zoom.us)



### **Ending the Meeting**

It's surprising how many meetings are allowed to fizzle out. Meetings should end with a clear plan of action. Have committees research issues and report back to the group. Summarize the decisions made. Then, set the date, time, and location for the next meeting before members leave. Most importantly, in addition to addressing neighborhood concerns, plan enjoyable activities that foster community, like a block party, neighborhood garden, or card club. When residents see engaging activities happening around them, they'll be more likely to want to get involved with your neighborhood association.

## Communications

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What can you do to inform your community? Being able to connect with neighbors and association members is key to providing relevant and timely information regarding meetings and events. Maintaining open lines of communication also offers mechanisms for community members to express their concerns. Often, one person's voice at a city council meeting is less impactful when numerous voices support the same issue. These are some ideas to keep communication channels open and accessible to all members and residents.



### Utilize Social Media

- Stay active on Nextdoor, invite neighbors to join, and maintain a presence on other social media platforms like Facebook
- Create a Facebook group or page to highlight your neighborhood
- Sponsor ads on Facebook to notify those closest to your neighborhood that you exist.
- Facebook live your meetings!

### Create relevant papers and email newsletters

Send event emails quarterly or biannually to keep residents informed. If you have an email list, newsletters are the most direct way to share updates, though flyers and posters can also help.

### Knock on Doors

A simple, effective way to meet neighbors and recruit members.

### Post information at local hotspots

Share flyers at coffee shops, grocery stores, and other businesses.

### Find ways to engage with different populations and organizations

Use creative outreach and brainstorming to connect with diverse groups and interests, increasing visibility and participation.

### Neighborhood Projects

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Focusing on a key neighborhood issue is one of the best ways to build interest and unity. Residents are more likely to engage when projects directly benefit them. Identify needs through meetings and conversations, then prioritize them. Separate issues into short-term and long-term projects and create a plan to address each. Start with one visible issue to show results and build credibility but avoid losing momentum by working on multiple projects over time. As issues are resolved, shift focus to new priorities. Plan activities on a calendar to maintain steady progress without overwhelming members. Keep people engaged by assigning clear tasks and sharing responsibilities across the group.

### Possible Neighborhood Projects (Short & Long-Term)

- Community garden, tree planting, flower planting.
- Neighborhood Cleanups
- School supply drives or back-to-school events
- Murals or neighborhood art projects
- Scrapbooks or community videos
- Crime watch programs
- Skill-sharing or youth programs
- Block parties, festivals, or cookouts
- Entrance signs and security lighting
- Tool lending libraries
- Tutoring programs
- Home tours
- Holiday or National Night Out events
- Neighborhood merchandise (e.g., t-shirts)
- Yard of the Month awards
- Newsletters, websites, or contact directories
- Home improvement or painting projects



## Neighborhood Watch

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The Neighborhood Watch program partners with the Elkhart City Police Department to help neighborhoods prevent and deter crime while strengthening collaboration between residents and law enforcement. It focuses on common issues such as burglary, auto theft, and identity theft, while also offering tailored presentations on topics like personal safety, crime-fighting technology, and neighborhood networking based on each community's needs.

The program is community-driven and led by neighborhood associations, with support from police staff who provide insights, crime trends, and guidance. Ongoing participation helps build strong relationships with local officers and creates a visible commitment to safety, such as posting Neighborhood Watch signs. At its core, the program brings neighbors and police together to work toward the shared goal of preventing crime and supporting one another.

### Volunteers

Recruit people for events and activities, not for business meetings. Sign-in sheets, nametags, and follow-up recruitment calls should be standard procedures in your organization. Provide new members with opportunities to get involved through activities such as distributing information at meetings, participating in neighborhood projects, delivering newsletters, stuffing envelopes, or contacting friends to invite them to the next event.

These activities should help volunteers feel useful and productive. When recruiting for an activity, consider the volunteer's needs and interests. Try to provide childcare, transportation, or a mentor if necessary. Enthusiasm is important when recruiting volunteers.

Show confidence by knowing what you want the volunteer to do and being excited about the task. Practice explaining your request clearly and positively. In a few sentences, convey the organization's purpose, the goal of the task, and how it benefits the organization and the neighborhood.





### **Six Steps to Successful Recruitment:**

- Be prepared: Have a clear goal and understand the person's interests and background
- Build credibility: Find common ground and explain why their involvement matters
- Listen: Ask questions, stay engaged, and identify skills or connections
- Challenge: Encourage them to support the organization's goals
- Get commitment: Set clear next steps with a deadline
- Follow up: Stay engaged, welcome new members, and maintain communication

Maintaining volunteers is just as vital as recruiting them. Recruitment should be supported by an organizational plan with clear goals and expectations for what volunteers will achieve. Establish a committee or program specifically for volunteer and membership issues. This program should include training, supervision, recognition, and leadership development. Always explain the organizational importance of each task and assign tasks based on the time volunteers can offer. Recognize volunteers and help them feel part of the team.

Recruiting and retaining volunteers is a skill that develops through practice and experience. Have fact sheets for each recruiter that cover topics such as how to overcome objections to volunteering, the purpose of the task they are recruiting for, organizational information, and a brief description of the task. Growing and thriving organizations must train leaders on how to recruit others and incorporate recruitment strategies into their ongoing programs.

## Marketing Your Neighborhood

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The establishment of a good communications and publicity network is essential to any group. Whether it is a simple flyer, a newspaper announcement when advertising a meeting, a brief telephone call, or an email, groups must utilize all available media (including word of mouth) to inform people about their activities.

Using the internet for your neighborhood association is crucial. Not only does it keep residents informed about events, but it also provides a way for leaders to communicate with each other and with city officials. As groups establish their own online communities, the neighborhood associations section on the city's website will be updated with accurate URLs to help organizations and community members connect.

One of the most effective ways to establish a manageable and affordable network is by using the following forms of communication:

- **Flyers** - Any activity, project, or goal of the group can be announced in a flyer. When designing a flyer, be sure the wording is bold enough to be read from a distance of 10 feet. If possible, arrange to use a church or school copying machine. Or better still, have them quick copied as a donation by a local print shop. Post flyers in markets, laundromats, schools, beauty shops, and other places frequented by the people you want to reach. **[A free resource to create artist flyers and marketing material is canva.com. Canva has free templates from posters to social media posts.](#)**
- **Walk-through** - This is one of the most effective ways to start a relationship with your neighbors and get them interested in your association. Organize a group of at least four to six people to cover a specific part of your neighborhood. Assign pairs to go door-to-door, introducing the association and its goals. Ask about their concerns and explain how your association can help them make a change. Invite them to the next meeting to share their concerns. Also, request that they bring some neighbors. Be sure to leave a flyer with



information about the upcoming meeting. If no one is home, leave a flyer in a visible but secure spot (do not place flyers in mailboxes, as it's against federal law).

- **Surveys** - Surveys are a vital tool for attracting new members to the association. Use a survey when you're just beginning. During your first general meeting, distribute a survey to residents to identify what issues matter most to them and which direction they want the group to take. When creating a survey, keep in mind the information you want to gather from community residents.
  - What are the most important issues in the neighborhood?
  - What are the issues people are willing to work on?
  - What kinds of skills do people have?
  - What are the best meeting times and locations?
  - What is the family structure and occupation make-up of the neighborhood?

These are just suggested questions. Brainstorm and come up with questions that fit your neighborhood.

- **Telephone tree/email list** - People who want to help but have limited time can volunteer for a telephone tree or email list. Assign each person to contact at least six others by phone with a brief message. Alternatively, assign a neighborhood member to set up an email database. Information can then be distributed as needed. These methods are simple ways to create a quick and efficient communication network.
- **Block representatives** - Select one or two people from each side of a street or block to act as a liaison with your association. They can inform neighbors about your association's activities and how to get involved. They can also encourage neighbors to support your association and communicate with them through word of mouth or phone calls. This approach is especially helpful when your neighborhood association covers a large area.
- **Newsletters** - A monthly or quarterly newsletter can be a powerful way to connect with your members. Short, informative articles that interest the entire neighborhood will keep neighbors informed. Newsletters can be funded through association dues or advertising and can be produced quite affordably.

A good newsletter might contain the following information:

- Notices of important meeting dates and group events
- Information about city services
- Recent accomplishments of your group
- Notification of special events
- Recognition of volunteers
- Information about the schools in the neighborhood
- Profiles of neighbors
- Crime/safety information
- Birth/death announcements
- Graduation announcements
- Anniversaries
- A welcome to new neighbors
- Articles of community interest

The newsletter editor will write articles, review submissions from others, and set deadlines. The newsletter committee should help with typing, soliciting advertising, and organizing printing. Decisions must be made about the newsletter's title, number of pages, paper quality, and layout of the copy. Consider asking a local printer to donate printing services. Decide how to distribute the newsletter, whether by sending it home with students, delivering it by Boy or Girl Scout troops, or using block captains. If mailing the newsletter, contact the US Post Office about obtaining a bulk mail permit.

- **Nextdoor App** - It is where communities come together to greet newcomers, exchange recommendations, and read the latest local news. Where neighbors support local businesses and get updates from public agencies. Where neighbors borrow tools and sell couches. It's about maximizing the potential of everything nearby. Sign up at [www.Nextdoor.com](http://www.Nextdoor.com) or download the app.
- **G Suite** – Managing projects and your organization can be simple and free with Google tools like Sheets, Docs, Drive, Calendar, and Slides, which can all be used in various ways to meet the needs of your neighborhood association. The G Suite is designed for live sharing of these documents. The leadership team in your neighborhood association will be able to edit, view, and share project plans, create Gantt charts to manage projects, and communicate instantly with each other. When you need to share information with your team, you can create a Groups email list to include everyone, then send updates and resources at once using a single email address. G Suite can be used on its own or in conjunction with a professional website, Facebook page, blog, or other online platforms.



**Neighborhood Garage Sales**  
 WHEN: Thursday-Saturday, June 6-8, 2018

The Eastridge Neighborhood Association will be advertising for you, putting signs at main intersections, and providing maps with all the sales in the neighborhood for shoppers at no cost.

Follow this event on Facebook.

**Membership Raffle Winners**

Thanks to everyone who paid their neighborhood association dues. These allow us to host events for the whole neighborhood to enjoy and to make Eastridge a better community. The winners are:

- 500 HV-YEE GIFT CARDS
  - Mark Duggan
  - Sheri Marie
- POOL MEMBERSHIP
  - Michelle Butler

Congratulations to all!

**Keep Eastridge Safe, Clean**

School is out and summer near, so let's keep our neighborhood a safe place to live and play. Please slow down and watch for pedestrians, especially children, pets, and seniors.

- The majority of speeders on your street live right in the neighborhood.
- A person hit by a vehicle traveling 30 mph is three times more likely to die than one traveling 25 mph.\*

Also, please be sure and pick up after your pets. Speaking of another kind of waste, it is a city ordinance that residents are required to clean up curb side. That means no grass clippings, dead plant material or free floating garbage. Clean up -- your neighbors will appreciate it and our neighborhood will look better for it!



**Eastridge Presbyterian Playground**

Thanks for new input! The playground may be for neighborhood churches welcome the public to use their playgrounds, including the Eastridge Presbyterian Playground and other sites.

\* Statistics courtesy of KEEP KIDS ALIVE DRIVE 2014

- **Professional Website** - Tap the resources of those members who may be well versed and willing to put a little bit of time into developing a website for your organization. This is where identifying the strengths and opportunities of your membership base comes into play. The website does not need to be anything flashy or showy, but a basic communication tool with links and potentially photo displays of people in the neighborhood at events. Utilizing a website also gives your organization more autonomy over content and management.

Several free website resources are available for non-profit groups, including neighborhood organizations.

- Designed specifically as a neighborhood organization resource, Neighborhood Link ([www.Neighborhoodlink.com](http://www.Neighborhoodlink.com)) is an Internet-based community network that enables every neighborhood in metropolitan areas to create its own free, interactive website.
- An easy-to-use platform that has a free option is ([www.Wix.com](http://www.Wix.com)). Wix offers numerous free website templates that can be customized to suit the needs of a neighborhood association, including a community calendar, a map of the association's boundaries, a gallery to showcase photos, and more.
- **Facebook** - Creating and operating a neighborhood association Facebook page is a good use of social media to promote and connect with community members.

Here are six tips for creating and managing it so it does not backfire:

- Consider whether you want a neighborhood association website that everyone can see for events and information, and/or a Facebook page that might not be accessible to all.
- Understand the issue of easy sharing on social media, as people can comment, forward, post, and do anything on social media—especially if the page is open and not restricted.
- Establish a social media policy in advance.
- Decide if you want a closed or open page. Some people outside the neighborhood may be interested in seeing the event details. Send invitations to all residents so that everyone is aware of the page's availability and encourage those who join to check it regularly to stay informed.
- Offer helpful documents by creating a tab on your Facebook page where you can post important items like bylaws, rules & regulations, meeting minutes, agendas, and more.

## Fundraising

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Neighborhood associations need to raise funds for regular operations, special events, and projects. How groups can fundraise is limitless. The group can gather funds from within itself and the community through private donations, as well as private and government grants. There are various fundraising methods, including grant writing, membership drives, admission to special events, mail solicitation, and annual donation campaigns.

Forming a fundraising committee is the first step in reaching financial goals by assigning responsibilities like preparing a budget and managing projects. Usually, community members who are well known and liked make excellent project leaders. This person should also have strong ties with local businesses. Most importantly, they need enough time to dedicate to fundraising efforts. Here are some examples of successful fundraising initiatives by neighborhood associations.

- **Donors** - Create a list of potential donors, including residents, nearby neighborhood residents, local businesses, churches, service clubs, local government programs, sympathetic businesses and companies, banks and lenders, civic groups, etc. Consider different ways to approach prospective donors and choose the method that will work best for your group. Some options to consider are telethons, direct mail appeals, door-to-door campaigns, and sales.
- **Garage Sales**
  - Form a committee of people responsible for the event.
  - Saturdays and Sundays are the best days to hold the sale. Have the sale in the garage of someone who lives on a corner or near a main street.
  - Decide in advance what percentage of the profits will go to the association and the individuals who provide items for sale.
  - Aim to have a good variety of items. Televisions, dinette sets, dressers, and beds attract large crowds. Keep junk items to a minimum, including knick-knacks, glassware, dolls, and children's clothes.
  - Advertise on Facebook Marketplace and with cardboard signs.



QUAKERTOWN BOROUGH  
*Community*  
**YARD SALE**

**MAY 12, 13, 14 | 9:00am - Dusk**  
**Fee: \$5.00**

This sale does not count toward your 2 times a year garage/yard sale limit

<b>Registration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applications are available online at <a href="http://www.Quakertown.org/YardSale">www.Quakertown.org/YardSale</a> or can be picked up at Borough Hall</li><li>• Applications should be dropped off or mailed to the Borough Hall</li><li>• Participation in the event includes your yard sale address listed in the Borough "Yard Sale Guide" that will be advertised on the Borough's website &amp; social media</li></ul>	<b>Borough Hall Parking Lot - Saturday Sale</b> <p>Residents who do not want to hold a yard sale at their property have the option to reserve a spot in the Borough Hall parking lot on Saturday, May 14 for an additional cost of \$5.00. Parking spots are limited and are on a first come first serve basis.</p> <p>The Borough Hall parking lot yard sale location will be open to bargain hunters from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Residents with a parking lot permit may begin setting up at 7:00 am.</p>
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## Sustainable Neighborhood Associations

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### Keeping Interest in the Association

Once you have tackled a few projects, how do you keep people interested? This is undoubtedly the most significant challenge for any neighborhood association. In general, members will participate if the following are present:

- Business and social events in which to participate
- Issues of importance to discuss
- Clean and visible accomplishments
- Organized, competent leaders
- Events to recognize participants

### Cultivating New Leaders

Once your neighborhood association has been active for a while, the group should consider how to find and encourage new leadership within the organization. If the group continues with the same old leadership year after year, there is a real risk of "burning out." This is difficult for both the individuals and the organization. Although nurturing new leaders takes time and effort, the results are well worth it - a healthy organization with leaders who are fresh, enthusiastic, and motivated.



The first step in identifying potential officers and/or board members is reviewing your association's membership. To do this, the group needs to collect information about the members, especially those who also volunteer. For example, it would be useful to know a member's name, address, phone numbers (home, cell, and/or work), email address, and the year they became active, as well as their neighborhood interests and concerns, along with current or past projects. This requires someone who will need to consistently:

- Collect new and updated information - for example, using a sign-up sheet at each neighborhood association activity
- Record and organize the information - using a computer spreadsheet or database, or index cards - whatever technology works best for the person collecting information

Another way to recruit new leaders is to reach out directly to the member base. Members can split the membership list, contact all the members, and ask them:

- Why did you join the neighborhood association?
- Are there any projects you would like to participate in?
- Would you ever be interested in serving on the board of directors or as an officer?

## **Incorporation and Nonprofit Status**

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### **Steps for Filing Articles of Incorporation**

If your neighborhood association plans to apply for nonprofit status, you must first file Articles of Incorporation with the Secretary of State.

For more information about the incorporation process, visit the Secretary of State's website at <https://inbiz.in.gov/BOS/Home/Index>

### **Applying for non-profit status**

Articles of Incorporation do not establish an association as a nonprofit organization. Nonprofit status is granted by the Internal Revenue Service. The decision to pursue nonprofit or 501(c)(3) status with the IRS is a significant step for a neighborhood association and should be carefully considered. Applying for and maintaining nonprofit status involves a substantial amount of paperwork and recordkeeping.



The following are benefits of nonprofit status:

- Enables your neighborhood association to accept tax-deductible donations.
- Allows you to avoid paying sales tax on your purchases.
- Allows you to avoid paying income tax on interest earned in the association's bank account and on qualified non-profit income.

A neighborhood association is eligible for nonprofit status if:

- It is incorporated by the state as a non-profit corporation
- It is organized solely for charitable purposes

To apply for nonprofit status, file IRS Form 1023 to request tax-exempt recognition. Use IRS Publication 557 for guidance and submit the required fee using Form 8718. Many organizations choose to seek professional assistance when completing these forms.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

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**Neighborhood Association** - Neighborhood associations share a common purpose: neighbors working together to improve their community. These groups often sponsor events like community cleanups, public meetings, social gatherings, and crime watch programs. To register or start an association, call (574) 294-5471 ext. 1049.

**Water and Sewer** - If you experience problems with your water or sewer service, call (574) 293-2572.

**Street Tree Planting** - The city sponsors spring and fall tree planting programs to plant shade and ornamental trees within the public right-of-way at no cost to homeowners. Call the Forestry Division at (574) 970-0542.

**Sidewalks** - The city offers a sidewalk program designed to provide you with savings as you repair your sidewalk. Call the Street Department at (574) 293-5518.

**Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program** - If you qualify, based on income and location, you may obtain a direct or forgivable loan from the city. The program lends money to cover the cost of improvements necessary to ensure a property meets public standards for health and safety. Interested? Call (574) 294-5471 ext. 3104

**Fair Housing Assistance Program**- The City Human Relations Commission investigates housing discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sex, and familial status. If you feel like you have been discriminated against or would like landlord-tenant assistance, please call (574) 522-4855



## CONTACT US

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For questions, comments, or concerns please reach out to [neighborhoods@cityofelkhartin.gov](mailto:neighborhoods@cityofelkhartin.gov) or call (574) 294-5471 ext. 1049.