



CITY OF VACAVILLE

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD IN OUR CITY

A TOOLKIT FOR
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS



WWW.CITYOFVACAVILLE.GOV/NEIGHBORHOODS





Welcome!

Congratulations on taking the first step in starting a Neighborhood Association in the City of Vacaville, California.

Establishing a Neighborhood Association can be a great way to create connections and community within a defined geographic boundary. Forming a Neighborhood Association creates opportunities to share ideas, improve the quality of life, and work towards a common goal.

This toolkit serves as a resource for Vacaville residents, businesses, or non-profit organizations that want to form a group to connect, share ideas, and find solutions to address neighborhood interests and concerns. This guide will provide guidance on how to organize and help reach neighborhood goals.



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Definition

A Neighborhood Association is a group of people that organizes and works together to identify issues, improve conditions, and accomplish specific goals in their neighborhood.

Members can include homeowners, renters, and representatives from businesses, schools, faith-based and non-profit organizations within defined neighborhood boundaries.

Purpose

The purpose of a Neighborhood Association is to establish a vision in each neighborhood and identify its priorities, utilizing and increasing the neighborhood's capacity. Neighborhood capacity is a combination of knowledge, skills, relationships, interactions and organizational resources that enable residents, civic leaders, the public and private sectors and local organizations to transform neighborhoods into places of opportunity.

Benefits include:

- Enhance Living Conditions
- Boost Communication
- Getting to know your neighbor
- Protect Property Values
- Address Neighborhood Concerns
- Promote Cooperative Action
- A common voice to communicate with the City and other stakeholder groups





Function

A Neighborhood Association typically follows a set of rules and membership requirements such as proximity to the neighborhood, establishing bylaws, and identifying Chair/Co-Chair members.

Membership to a Neighborhood Association is voluntary and different from a Homeowners Association (HOA). HOA's are typically created by developers to help pay for the maintenance of common amenities and to maintain a standard appearance across the community.

The mission is to build effective strategies, explore existing tools and resources, and identify assets and capacities to achieve sustainable goals such as resident values, beautification, etc.





Benefits of a Neighborhood Association

Neighborhood Associations play a vital role in fostering a sense of community, organizing local events, and addressing common concerns or issues. By uniting residents, Neighborhood Associations aim to strengthen the social fabric of a community and create a sense of belonging among its members.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Neighborhood Associations encourage residents to actively participate in community affairs and provide a forum for residents to discuss and address issues effecting their neighborhood. They organize meetings, social events, and volunteer initiatives to foster relationships among neighbors and promote a sense of neighborhood unity.

ADVOCACY

One of the core functions of Neighborhood Associations is to advocate for the interests of the community. They represent residents' concerns and viewpoints by speaking collectively. In this way, these associations can have a stronger impact on decision-making processes and ensure that the voice of the community is heard.

MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT

Neighborhood Associations often take responsibility for maintaining and improving the quality of their community. They may organize clean-up campaigns, neighborhood beautification activities, or other neighborhood projects. These





Benefits of a Neighborhood Association (cont.)

efforts contribute to the overall livability and attractiveness of the neighborhood.

SAFETY & SECURITY

Many Neighborhood Associations focus on promoting safety and security within their communities. By proactively addressing safety concerns, these associations help create a secure environment for residents.

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION SHARING

Neighborhood Associations are great tools for keeping residents informed about community events, local news, and important developments that may impact the neighborhood. This communication helps foster a sense of transparency and ensures that residents are well-informed about matters concerning their community.





General Membership & Involvement

Membership of Neighborhood Associations shall consist of and be open to residents, property owners, businesses, or other stakeholders within the established boundaries of the neighborhood.

Membership cannot be denied on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, or physical or mental disability.

Standard Criteria (Bylaws)

To be recognized by the City, Neighborhood Associations:

- Must have a unique name for identification and must adhere to the following rules:
 - Does not contain inappropriate group names, photos, or descriptions such as profanity, hate speech, sexually explicit content or other content are not allowed.
 - Does not promote violence or harm.
 - Does not impersonate or misrepresent. This includes group names using registered trademarks not belonging to the Neighborhood Association, pretending to be “official” representations of people, brands, businesses, or organizations, as well as groups using false or misleading group names, photos, or descriptions with the intention of obscuring a group’s intended purpose.





Standard Criteria (cont.)

Must have a Statement of Purpose which includes the intent and objective of the organization.

Must identify a Neighborhood Association boundary (i.e. northern edge is bounded by ____; eastern edge is bounded by ____; southern edge is bounded by ____; and the western edge is bounded by ____.)

MEMBERSHIP

- Shall consist of residents, property owners or businesses within the neighborhood who have submitted their names on/for a membership list.
- Shall be open to all residents, property owners and businesses within the boundaries of the association as described.
- Shall not be denied on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, citizenship, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, or physical or mental disability, or any other state or federal protected class.

Neighborhood Associations shall consist of one (1) Chair and one (1) Co-Chair that reside within the boundaries of the Neighborhood Association.

Shall conduct at least one (1) meeting per calendar year.

Neighborhood Associations must be registered with the City by submitting an application.



GETTING STARTED



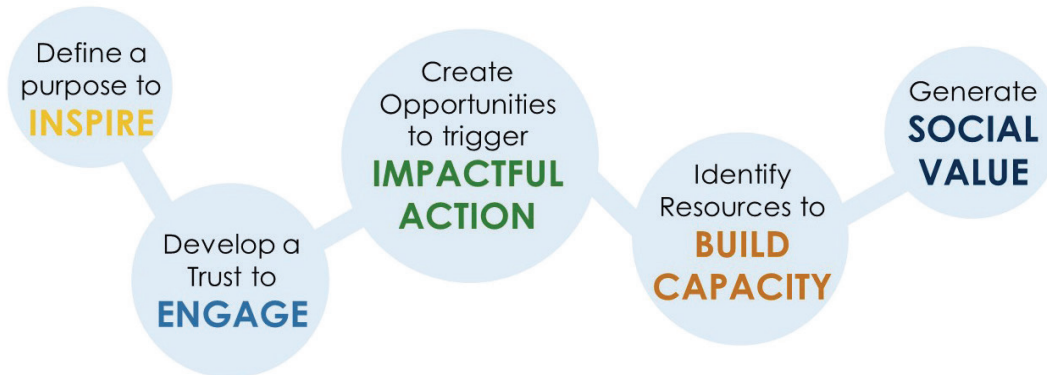
Registration

After determining geographic boundaries, register your Neighborhood Association with the City of Vacaville. Your neighborhood will be added to the City’s Neighborhood Resource Map.

Visit the City’s website below to fill out the form electronically:
CityofVacaville.com/Neighborhoods

Or simply scan the QR Code to register using your mobile phone:

Scan me!





How to Form a Neighborhood Association

Neighborhood Associations are formed through a grassroots process initiated by residents who are interested in improving their community and creating a platform for collaboration. The specific steps involved in forming a Neighborhood Association may vary depending on community preferences, but here are some common methods and considerations for forming your own:

IDENTIFY INTEREST

A few motivated residents usually take the lead in gauging interest and discussing the idea of forming a Neighborhood Association with their neighbors. This may begin with an informal gathering to determine if there is sufficient support and enthusiasm.

DEFINE BOUNDARIES

The next step is to define the geographic boundaries of the Neighborhood Association. This helps determine which residents are eligible to participate and ensures that the association represents a specific and manageable area. Boundaries may be based on geographical features or existing neighborhood divisions. Boundaries can range in size from an apartment complex to a large section of town.

CONDUCT OUTREACH

Once the boundaries are established, the organizers reach out to as many residents in the designated area as possible to





How to Form a Neighborhood Association (cont.)

inform them about the association. This can be done through various means, such as distributing flyers, creating a website or social media page, or hosting informational meetings. The goal is to raise awareness and generate interest to encourage residents to get involved.

HOLD INITIAL MEETING

During this meeting, interested residents can come together to discuss the primary purpose, goals, and potential benefits of forming a Neighborhood Association. This meeting serves as an opportunity to brainstorm ideas and gauge the level of commitment from participants.

ESTABLISH GOALS & STRUCTURE

It is important that a Neighborhood Association defines the goals, objectives, and scope of the Neighborhood Association. This may include identifying specific issues or concerns to address, outlining the desired level of formality, and deciding on the association's structure, such as electing officers or forming committees.

DEVELOP BYLAWS

The City encourages associations to adopt and adhere to bylaws. Bylaws provide a framework for the operation of the association by outlining the association's purpose, membership criteria, voting procedures, meeting frequency, and other important guidelines. These bylaws should be collaboratively created and approved by the participants to ensure transparency and inclusivity.





Setting Goals and Neighborhood Projects

One of the best ways to increase engagement and form group unity is to focus on setting goals and develop a neighborhood project that will provide clear direction. In order to document that direction and celebrate accomplishments, it is important to determine the social and physical needs of your neighborhood and identify goals that align with the neighborhood's vision.

Goals are usually achieved by setting concrete objectives set by neighborhood leadership and residents. Your objectives need to be specific, measureable, clear, concise, realistic, and attainable within a certain timeframe.

It is important to determine the needs of your neighborhood and focus on those needs until you demonstrate success. Setting goals is a way to become aware of these needs and services provided





Setting Goals and Neighborhood Projects (cont.)

to community residents. Knowing the needs and wants of your neighborhood will give your group a purpose and meaning behind it.

Structure gives members clear guidelines for how to proceed especially during decision making. A clearly established structure when setting goals gives the neighborhood a means to maintain order and resolve disagreements. The structure holds neighborhoods together and ensures that everyone is heard. It gives meaning and identity to the people who join.

In planning projects, keep the ball rolling with a list of projects and activities that will maintain participation and interest. Goals become more attainable when they are transparent and understood by all members in the group and measurable that goals can be tracked. A helpful way to track goals is to create a public facing dashboard that residents and neighborhood leaders could view and review over time.





Activity Ideas

Neighborhood Associations can organize a wide range of fun and engaging activities to bring the community together. These activities create opportunities for neighbors to interact, build relationships, and enjoy shared experiences. Here are some ideas of fun activities for your Neighborhood Association:

BLOCK PARTIES

Organize a neighborhood block party where neighbors can come together for food, music, games, socializing, and more. Block parties are a great way to make new connections and strengthen existing bonds among neighbors.

BEAUTIFICATION OR CLEANUP PROJECTS

Enhance the neighborhood's charm by planning a fun community beautification project. Neighbors can come together to clean up common areas that will enhance neighborhood quality of life. Living in a clean environment makes life healthier, less stressful, and more pleasant. It can improve the self-image of residents and of the neighborhood as a whole.





Activity Ideas (cont.)

COMMUNITY PICNICS

Plan a community picnic in a local park or common area. Picnics are great opportunities for potlucks where residents can bring their favorite dishes to share.

SPORTS TOURNAMENTS

Organize sports tournaments, such as soccer, basketball, or softball, for residents of all ages. Nothing brings neighbors together more than some friendly competition. These tournaments can even end up becoming ongoing leagues that last well beyond a single event. Plus, they provide the bonus of entertainment for the whole neighborhood.

ADOPT-A-PARK

Take an active role in Vacaville's park system by "Adopting a Park." This can take many forms, including establishing a presence in the park, being on the look-out for maintenance issues and reporting these to the City, providing maintenance assistance in the form of general clean-up, stream bed clean-ups, painting, weeding, and providing input to the City on park development and use.





Recruitment & Volunteers

Getting fresh faces involved in your Neighborhood Association is both exciting and beneficial. New people bring enthusiasm and energy to your neighborhood.

Welcoming new neighbors in the community is an important aspect of maintaining long-term relationships and prevents the neighborhood group from potentially disbanding. Introducing the neighborhood to new neighbors further enhances the quality of life in the community and ensures that new neighbors are comfortable and receive pertinent information from the Neighborhood Association.

Recruiting new members or volunteers can be a difficult task. Below are tips to help neighborhood leaders with the recruitment process:

- Adopt-a-Neighbor where each member brings a neighbor to a meeting.
- Create a 'Welcome Committee' for connecting the neighborhood with new neighbors which provide a small gift and important information about the community and the city.
- Be courteous and friendly when introducing yourself.
- Use a newsletter to promote and recruit. Instead of reporting an issue, showcase how your group has made a difference in your community.





Recruitment and Volunteers (cont.)

- When providing community information, make sure to also talk about upcoming social events and past events the neighborhood has done.
- Invite them to the next neighborhood meeting or event.
- Post on social media to promote a special meeting or event.
- Encourage all the members to identify people who care about the neighborhood.
- Post flyers or lawn signs announcing your meeting at neighborhood markets, businesses, schools, etc.
- Host great gatherings that will enable your neighbors to get connected with each other. Creating a space where members can socialize and collaborate is essential in enhancing the quality of life within your community.



STAYING CONNECTED



City Resources

The City of Vacaville has many resources available on the website at CityofVacaville.gov. Below are a few topics:

APPLY

Building Permit
Business License
Special Event Permit

TAXES & UTILITIES

Connect/Disconnect Utilities
Utility Services
Tax Information

REPORT

Crime
Water Leak or Blocked Drain
Dead Animal
Pot Hole or Road Hazard
Street Light Out
Graffiti

PETS & ANIMALS

Pet & Licensing Information
Rattlesnakes

CONNECT

Event Calendar
Radio 530 AM
Volunteer Opportunities
Channel 26

RECREATION

Youth & Family Guide
Service & Facility Fees
City Coach

CONTACT ELECTEDS

Mayor
Districts 1-6

OTHER SERVICES

Code Enforcement
Food Assistance
Tree Information

Scan me!



Simply scan the QR Code to view these topics using your mobile phone!





City Resources (cont.)

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM

Neighborhood Watch is your best defenses against crime. The reason why Neighborhood Watch works so well is that it trains comms relationships that keep a neighborhood strong and keeps crime at bay.

If you are interested in forming a Neighborhood Watch please call (707) 449-5432 or email the Crime Prevention Unit at crimeprevention@cityofvacaville.com.

VACAVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT DISTRICT COMMANDERS

The City of Vacaville is comprised of 6 residential districts. Each district is assigned its own member of our command staff to serve as the official point of contact for matters relating to the police department.

DISTRICT 1

Email
District1@CityofVacaville.com

DISTRICT 4

Email
District4@CityofVacaville.com

DISTRICT 2

Email
District2@CityofVacaville.com

DISTRICT 5

Email
District5@CityofVacaville.com

DISTRICT 3

Email
District3@CityofVacaville.com

DISTRICT 6

Email
District6@CityofVacaville.com





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