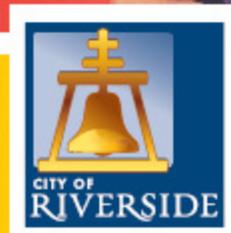


# Neighborhood Organizing Toolkit



Prepared by the  
Housing and Neighborhoods Division,  
Development Department

2009



# *Purpose*

The Neighborhood Organizing Toolkit is designed to benefit two types of neighborhood groups, the group that is about to form and for those that are a part of an existing group. The toolkit is a compilation of information derived from various community organization sources and a valuable tool for all types of community groups. Throughout the United States, many community organizations and neighborhoods follow similar organizational guidelines.

The Neighborhood Toolkit offers suggestions for planning a first meeting, starting community projects and activities, keeping residents informed through newsletters, working with local government, and much more.

Please give us your comments! We are always open to suggestions for improvement. Let us know if you like the Toolkit and find it useful. Your comments will help us continue to provide valuable information and beneficial materials to the neighborhoods in the City of Riverside.

If you have questions or comments, please contact:

Development Department- Housing & Neighborhoods Division  
3900 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
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# ***Table of Contents***

Purpose .....	1
Table of Contents .....	2
City of Riverside Mayor and Council.....	5
Riverside City and Partnership Map .....	6
City of Riverside Fact.....	7
Community Profile.....	7
Heritage .....	7
City of Riverside Raincross Symbol .....	8
City of Riverside Neighborhood Programs.....	9
What is the Housing and Neighborhoods Division .....	9
Neighborhood Program Goals .....	9
Neighborhood Program Mission.....	9
City of Riverside Neighborhood Programs .....	9
Mobilizing Neighborhoods – Building Social Capital .....	16
Neighborhood Organizing 101 .....	17
What is a neighborhood group? .....	17
Why is neighborhood organizing important? .....	17
What are the various types of neighborhood groups? .....	17
<i>Neighborhood Groups</i> .....	17
<i>Special Neighborhood Interest Groups</i> .....	18
<i>Homeowners’ Association</i> .....	18
Getting Started .....	19
How is neighborhood group established? .....	19
Organization bylaws.....	19
Ideas for setting goals .....	19
Advantages of goal setting .....	20
Recruiting new members? .....	20
Roles of neighborhood organization committees .....	21
Roles of a neighborhood organization Executive Board.....	21
Tips to maintaining active and productive committees .....	22



Registering a neighborhood group or report changes .....	22
Incorporation and Tax Exempt Status.....	23
Incorporating a group to a non-profit status .....	23
Effective Meetings .....	24
Planning an effective meeting .....	24
Tips for running an effective meeting .....	25
Taking good meeting minutes .....	26
Neighborhood Events and Volunteers .....	27
Organizing a successful neighborhood event .....	27
Planning a neighborhood block party .....	27
Working with volunteers .....	28
Preventing volunteer burnout and innovative ways to reward .....	28
Neighborhoodly Communication.....	30
Neighborhood newsletters .....	30
Ideal length for a newsletter .....	31
Newsletter production .....	31
Newsletter distribution.....	32
Preparing fliers, posters, and meeting notices .....	32
Surveying your neighborhood .....	33
Working with Local Government.....	34
Benefits with partnering with the local government .....	34
Presenting before a government board.....	35
Neighborhood Beautification.....	36
Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful (KRCB) .....	36
Community clean-ups .....	36
311 Call Center .....	36
Clean Up Riverside’s Environment (CURE) .....	37
“Notice of Code Violation” .....	37
Code Enforcement Community Volunteer Program .....	37
Graffiti removal.....	37
Animal Control.....	37
Neighborhood Grants & Fundraising .....	38
Neighborhood Matching Grant .....	38



Neighborhood Newsletter Mini-Grant .....	39
Tips for successful fundraising .....	40
Neighborhood Streets.....	41
Reporting street problems .....	41
Stop Signs.....	41
Potholes .....	41
Trees .....	41
Sidewalks .....	41
Neighborhood Safety .....	42
Forming a Neighborhood Watch Group .....	42
Disposing of hazardous household waste .....	42
Other Useful Information.....	43
When is a building permit needed? .....	43
Conflict resolution between neighbors .....	43
I still have questions .....	43
Samples.....	44
Neighborhood Organization By-Laws.....	44
Making It Happen Worksheet.....	47
Sample Agendas.....	48
Neighborhood Registration Form.....	51



# ***City of Riverside Mayor and Council***

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# Riverside City and Partnership Map

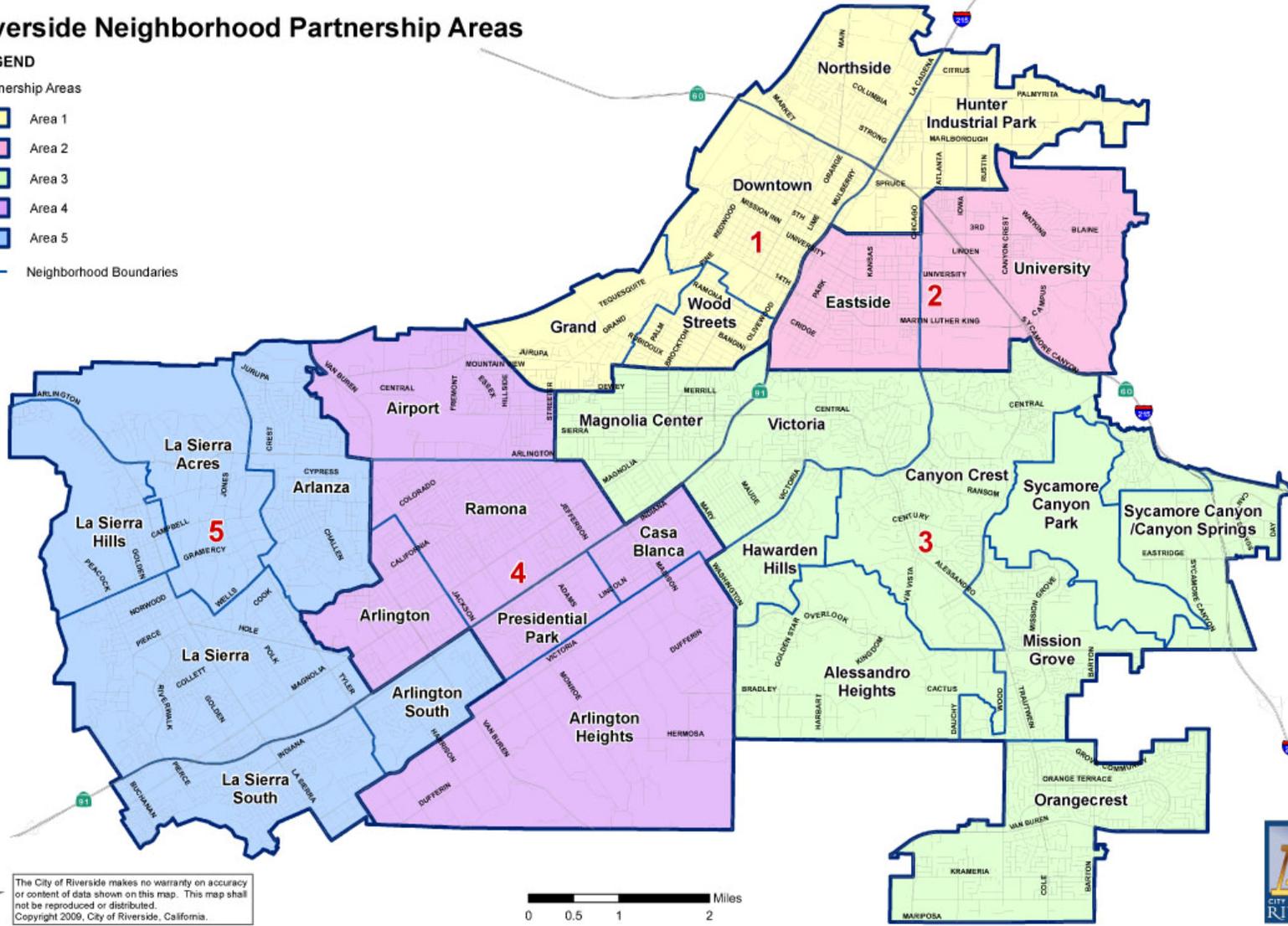
## Riverside Neighborhood Partnership Areas

### LEGEND

Partnership Areas

- Area 1
- Area 2
- Area 3
- Area 4
- Area 5

Neighborhood Boundaries



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# ***City of Riverside Fact***

## **Community Profile**

Designated as one of “America’s Most Livable Communities”, the City of Riverside offers a highly educated and skilled workforce, lower land and facility costs for businesses, reliable City-owned municipal utilities, exceptional quality of life, affordable housing, and ease of access to transportation. The City is a rapidly growing urban center with 291,398 residents, currently ranked as the twelfth largest city in California and the sixth largest city in Southern California. Riverside is the largest city in, and is at the center of, the region known as the “Inland Empire”. With a population of over four million, the Inland Empire is ranked between Phoenix and Dallas as the 19th largest metropolitan statistical area in the United States by the U.S. Census Bureau, and is one of the fastest growing regions in the country. Rich in history and possessing a clear vision of the future, Riverside will continue to lead in the social and economic growth of the Inland Empire.

The City is also home to four internationally recognized colleges and universities with a current student population of approximately 47,000, including the prestigious University of California, Riverside. The City is located approximately 60 miles east of Downtown Los Angeles and is centrally placed within a short distance from the Coachella Valley, San Bernardino Mountains, Southern California beaches, and Ontario International Airport.

## **Heritage**

Founded in 1870 by John North and a group of Easterners, Riverside was built on land that was once a Spanish rancho. The first orange trees were planted in 1871, but the citrus industry in Riverside began two years later when Eliza Tibbets received two Brazilian navel orange trees from the Department of Agriculture in Washington. The trees thrived in the Southern California climate and the navel orange industry grew rapidly.

Within a few years, the successful cultivation of the newly discovered navel orange led to a California Gold Rush of a different kind: the establishment of the citrus industry. By 1882, there were more than half a million citrus trees in California, almost half of which were in Riverside. The development of refrigerated railroad cars and innovative irrigation systems established Riverside as the wealthiest city per capita by 1895.



As the city prospered, a small guest hotel, designed in the popular Mission Revival style, grew to become the world famous Mission Inn. This location has been favored by presidents, royalty, and movie stars. Postcards of lush orange groves, swimming pools, and magnificent homes have attracted vacationers and entrepreneurs throughout the years. Victoria Avenue and its landmark homes serve as a reminder of European investors who settled here.

Riverside's citizens are proud of the City's unique character. From its carefully laid out historic Mile Square to its 1924 Civic Center, designed by the same planner responsible for San Francisco's Civic Center (Charles Cheney), Riverside is born from a tradition of careful planning. Through the City's Historic Resources Division, Riverside is committed to preserving the past as a firm foundation for the future. The City Council and other agencies have designated over 110 City Landmarks, 20 National Register Sites, and two National Historic Landmarks throughout the City.

(City of Riverside (2008), 2007/2008 City of Riverside Annual Budget Report- Community Profile. Prepared by the City of Riverside. Riverside, CA)

### **City of Riverside Raincross Symbol**

The unique City Raincross Symbol is derived from combining a replica of the mass bell used by Father Junipero Serra, missionary priest and founder of the California Missions, and the cross to which the Navajo and Central American Indians prayed for rain. Called the "Raincross" symbol, it was designed for the Mission Inn and given to the city by Frank Miller owner of the Inn. The Raincross symbol has been identified with Riverside since 1907. A variation of the symbol is used extensively throughout Riverside in architecture, street signs and lighting standards, and is used on the City flag. Playing on the nostalgia for the state's Spanish heritage and the romanticized images of the missions and the Indians portrayed by Helen Hunt Jackson in her novels, Miller, Matthew Gage, the Sunkist Cooperative, the Santa Fe Railroad and other city boosters worked together to market Riverside as a Spanish Mediterranean Mecca. Riverside's climate and landscapes continue to evoke this Mediterranean paradise. There is a strong community support for historic preservation for a city that reveres its past and has built on that firm foundation.



# ***City of Riverside Neighborhood Programs***

## **What is the Housing and Neighborhoods Division**

The City of Riverside Housing and Neighborhoods Division facilitates the establishment and maintenance of community organizations and serves as a neighborhood resource. The Division also develops strategies for addressing community issues and other programs that educate citizens about techniques to improve the quality of life in all communities.

## **Neighborhood Program Goals**

The Mayor and City council have placed a high priority on Neighborhoods and Community Livability. The Development Department's Housing and Neighborhoods Division is charged with engaging and mobilizing our City's greatest resource – our residents – to enhance and preserve neighborhood livability!

## **Neighborhood Program Mission**

*The mission of the Neighborhood Program is to be an advocate/liaison for neighborhoods at city hall and to provide support to the Riverside Neighborhood Partnership. The Division provides neighborhood organizing support and a direct link between neighborhood groups and the services and resources available to them in addressing quality of life issues at the neighborhood level.*

## **City of Riverside Neighborhood Programs**

The Neighborhood Program is molded around four key principles: Community Revitalization, Community Preservation, Community Awareness, and Community Resources. Within each principle are various programs and services dedicated to improving the overall quality of life in Riverside. Below are samples of key programs and services offered by the City of Riverside:

### ***Riverside Neighborhood Partnership***

The Riverside Neighborhood Partnership (RNP) was established in 1994 as a forum for neighborhood collaboration and networking in the City of Riverside. The all-volunteer board assists neighborhoods with free support in neighborhood



organizing and problem solving. All neighborhood representatives are leaders of neighborhood association currently registered with the City's Housing and Neighborhoods Division.

The Neighborhood Program provides staff support to the Riverside Neighborhood Partnership (RNP), a coalition of neighborhood associations and groups registered with the division. The board is composed of neighborhood leaders, business or chamber representatives, non-profit organizations, education, and city government working together to improve the quality of Riverside. The group meets monthly to discuss neighborhood issues and advocate for neighborhood concerns.

The RNP is a coalition of neighborhood associations and groups registered with the City's Housing and Neighborhoods Division. They are represented by a board composed of neighborhood leaders, business or chamber representatives, non-profit organizations, education, and city government working together to improve the quality of life in Riverside.

*The RNP board's goals are to:*

- Encourage and facilitate the formation of neighborhood associations citywide
- Provide a monthly forum for the communication between neighborhoods and the City
- Offer assistance and education to neighborhood groups in solving problems and accessing resources
- Provide neighborhood leadership training
- Act as an advocate for neighborhood interests in City Hall

The mission of the RNP is to support neighborhoods in organizing to protect and maintain neighborhood quality of life. It is the Partnership's belief that:

- Organized neighborhoods are better equipped to tackle problems that periodically emerge
- Organized neighborhoods are proactive in addressing crime, disaster preparedness, beautification, information sharing, and helping each other
- There is power in numbers! Organized neighborhoods create a unified voice at City Hall which can accomplish more than individuals working alone
- Organized neighborhoods are fun and improve quality of life for all!



The RNP board consists of 24 community volunteers and one City Council Member for a total of 25. There are 15 residential members, three from each of the five RNP areas. Three business members, three non-profit/community of faith members, three education members, and one council member.

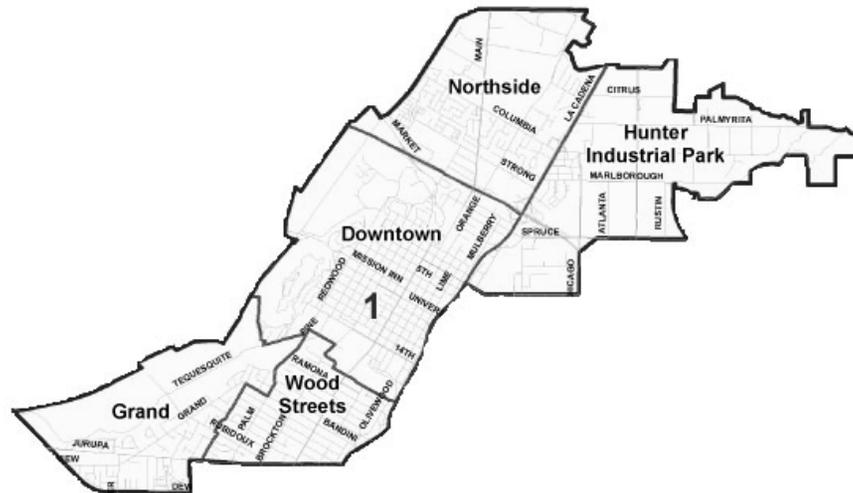
Five new residential representatives are elected each year. The City Council Representative is the Chair of the City Council Community Services and Youth Committee. The Mayor's Nominating and Screening Committee select all other board members.

The RNP meets every first Monday of the month at 6:30pm, in the Mayor's Ceremonial Room, 7<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall, 3900 Main St., Riverside CA 92522.

### *Partnership Areas*

The 26 neighborhoods are divided into five partnership areas. The partnership areas are based on the old policing service areas.

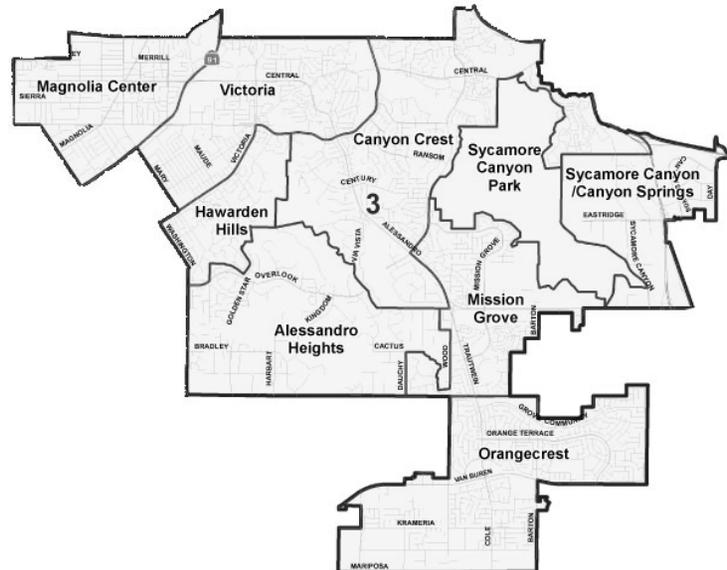
#### Area 1: Downtown, Grand, Northside, and Wood Streets Neighborhoods



Area 2: Eastside and University Neighborhoods



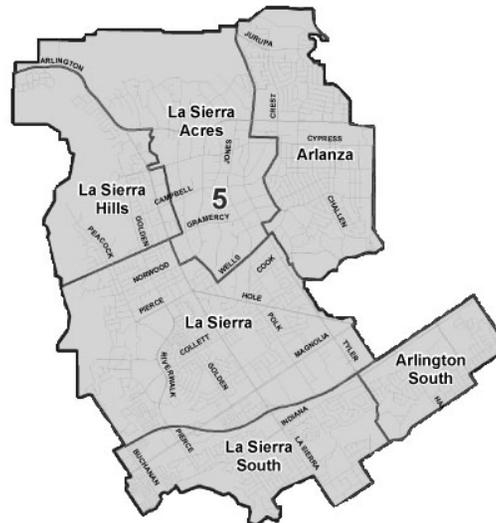
Area 3: Alessandro Heights, Canyon Crest, Sycamore Canyon/Canyon Springs, Hawarden Hills, Magnolia Center, Mission Grove, Organgecrest, and Victoria Neighborhoods



Area 4: Arlington, Arlington Heights, Airport, Casa Blanca, Ramona, and Presidential Park Neighborhoods



Area 5: La Sierra, La Sierra South, La Sierra Acres, La Sierra Hills, Arlanza, and Arlington South Neighborhoods



### *Annual Neighborhood Conference*

The Development Department's Housing and Neighborhoods Division, along with the Riverside Neighborhood Partnership, recaptures a part of that old-fashioned sense of community by offering the City's Annual Riverside Neighborhood Conference. The inspiration for the conference is to build capacity and leadership in Riverside's unique neighborhoods and to engage residents in building partnerships with each other and the City. Conference workshop topics include neighborhood safety and community aesthetics, developing effective communications with neighbors, and learning how to work with government to improve neighborhood quality of life. Over 30 exhibit booths are featured hosted by City departments and local agencies. The annual Neighborhood Conference is free and includes breakfast, lunch, and children's activities.

### *Neighborhood Sprit Awards*

The Neighborhood Spirit Award recognizes and celebrates the extraordinary commitment, accomplishments, creativity, and resourcefulness of organized neighborhood groups in building neighborhood spirit in their community. This award is presented during the annual neighborhood conference

### *Jack B. Clarke Good Neighbor Award*

The Mayor and the Riverside Neighborhood Partnership established the Jack B. Clarke Good Neighbor Award in 1996. This award is in memory of the late Council Member Jack B. Clarke who represented Ward 2. The award commemorates Mr. Clarke's vision of improving the community by building neighborhood ties and working together for the betterment of the entire city. This award is presented during the annual neighborhood conference

### *Neighborhood Leadership Academy*

Critical to the success of the neighborhood improvement effort is the effective leadership of key residents who can guide their neighbors in community-wide decision-making. The City of Riverside's Neighborhood Leadership Academy trains neighborhood leaders and provides them with the skills and information that will assist them in leading their neighborhoods. The City provides professional trainers to facilitate interactive workshops on any of the following:

- Communication Skills
- Managing Conflict and Personality Styles
- Presentation Skills and Meeting Management
- Systematic Problem-solving
- Team-building
- Cultural Diversity



*Neighborhood Matching Grant Program – **Program is currently suspended***

The Neighborhood Matching Grant provides cash to match community contributions of volunteer labor, donated professional services or materials, or cash donations in support of neighborhood-based self-help projects. Projects can be funded up to \$1,000 per year to established neighborhood organizations registered with the Housing & Neighborhoods Division.

*Newsletter Mini-Grant Program – **Program is currently suspended***

Neighborhood organizations can apply for \$100 in grant funds to offset the cost of neighborhood newsletters, neighborhood organization meeting flyers, agendas, and other relevant print costs.

*Neighborhood Problem-Solving*

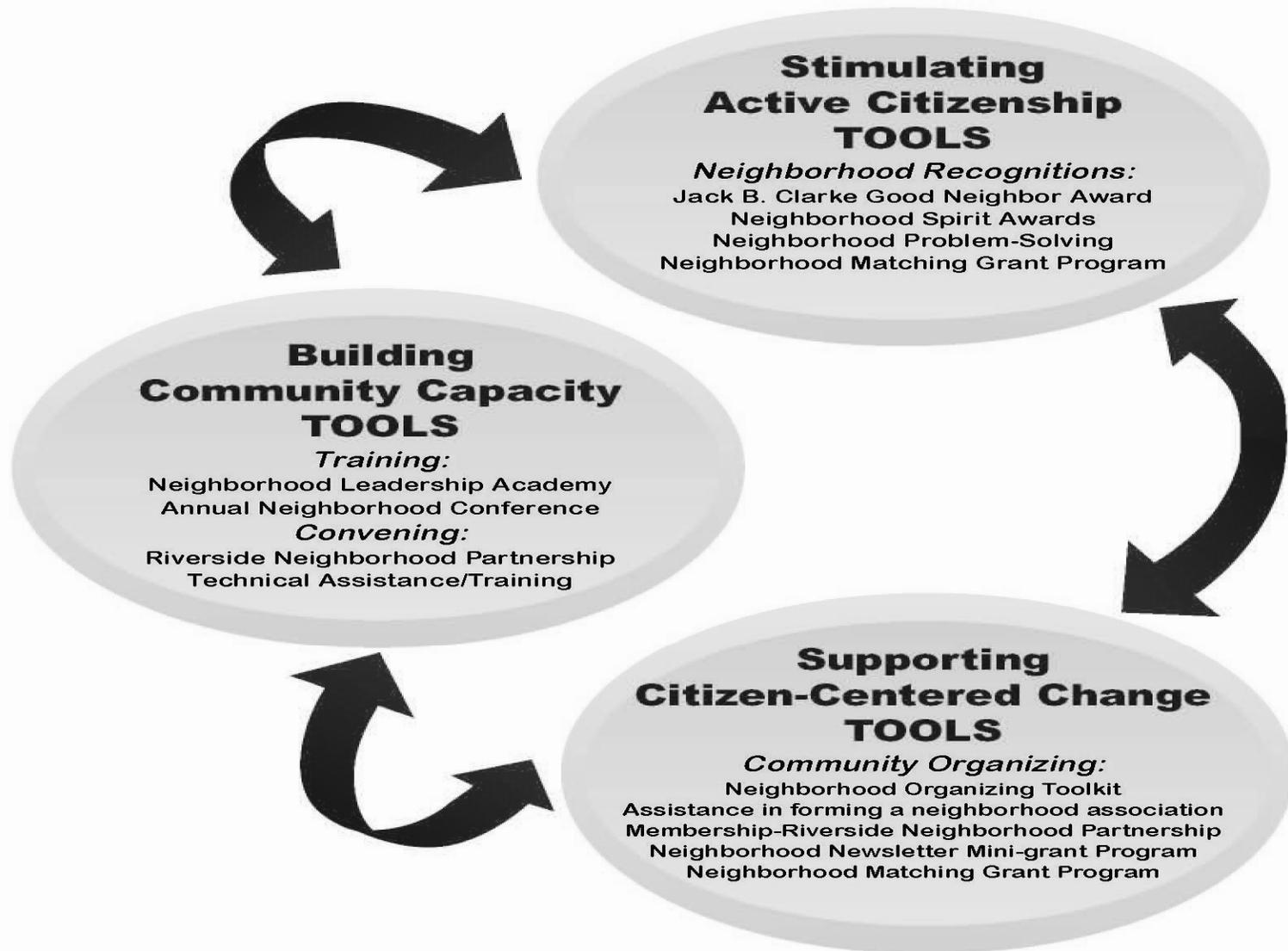
The Neighborhoods Division sponsors workshops in the City to help problem solve and address concerns of the community.

*Advocacy*

The Housing and Neighborhoods Division serves as an advocate on behalf of citizens regarding issues that affect neighborhoods (collectively and individually).



Mobilizing Neighborhoods – Building Social Capital



# ***Neighborhood Organizing 101***

## **What is a neighborhood group?**

A neighborhood organization is group of two or more neighbors working together for the good of their neighborhood. Neighborhood organizations make decisions on common problems within a community by sharing ideas and solutions. Neighborhood organizations are vehicles for communities to revitalize and preserve neighborhoods and enhance property values.

## **Why is neighborhood organizing important?**

We all live in a community; as such, we share a unique collection of problems and prospects in common with our neighbors. Participation in neighborhood affairs builds on the recognition of here-we-are-together, and a desire to recapture something of the tight-knit communities of the past. Neighborhood groups can act as vehicles for making connections between people, forums for resolving local differences, and a means of looking after one another. Most importantly, neighborhood organizations create a positive social environment that can become a community's best feature.

## **What are the various types of neighborhood groups?**

There are several different types of organizations that will meet the definition of a "neighborhood group." Some of these organizations meet on a regular basis, some maintain formal membership lists, and others are more loosely organized. The common characteristic of a neighborhood group is that they provide a gathering place for people who live in a particular geographic area and share similar concerns. Types of organizations include *Neighborhood Groups*, *Special Neighborhood Interest Groups*, *Homeowners Associations*, *Block Clubs*, and *Neighborhood Watch*.

### ***Neighborhood Groups***

A neighborhood association is a group of residents, business representatives, and other interested stakeholders that work together to improve and enhance the neighborhood they live in. People come together at the association meetings to exchange ideas, propose solutions, prioritize potential projects, and generally talk about things that affect the neighborhood. Many neighborhood associations meet monthly to discuss neighborhood fundraisers, events that might enhance neighborhood pride, the publishing of directories and/or newsletters.



### *Special Neighborhood Interest Groups*

This type of organization is more focused than a general "neighborhood association". It is generally organized around a central issue or cause. The members of this organization come together to address a special issue about which they are all concerned, whether it is a school or a park or some other unifying issue. This type of organization is also organized within a definite geographic boundary.

### *Homeowners' Association*

Homeowners' associations usually represent a group of homeowners that live in homes built by the same builder. These groups meet regularly to work on issues that affect their particular housing development. Homeowners' associations usually have a formally elected body. The associations are governed by a set of rules that homeowners agree to when they purchase their home. These rules, or covenants, often govern construction regulations, membership/dues requirements, as well as a variety of other issues. Memberships to these groups are mandatory to property owners and do not qualify for a Neighborhood Matching Grant.



# Getting Started

## How is neighborhood group established?

To start a neighborhood organization, first talk with other neighbors to seek their interest. Once you have a group of two or three interested neighbors, you should contact the Neighborhoods Division to express interest in becoming a member of the Riverside Neighborhood Partnership (RNP). The Neighborhoods Program will provide residents with the information needed to create and maintain a self-sufficient, active neighborhood organization.

Important Guidelines to keep in mind as you begin to organize:

1. Building an organization is a process, it cannot be done overnight.
2. Be patient.
3. Identify your priorities and build them step-by-step.
4. Set realistic goals.
5. Start small and build upward.
6. As your organizational structure grows, start setting your goals higher.
7. *Make it Happen* worksheet helps set the first meeting. (Worksheet in the Sample section)

## Organization bylaws

Bylaws are the governing documents of any neighborhood organization and are central to establishing a successful organization. However, bylaws must provide enough guidance for officers and members to perform necessary task. When bylaws are too vague, the organization will not have adequate structure. In addition, frequent amendments often cause the organization to stray too far from its original purpose. Much literature, including *Roberts Rules of Order*, has been written for assisting residents in writing bylaws. These books are available at your local library. (Sample provided at the end of the toolkit)

## Ideas for setting goals

Your neighborhood organization needs clear direction. In order to chart that direction, it is important to determine the social and physical needs of your of neighborhood and identify goals accordingly.

A **Goal** is simply a statement of what your organization wants to accomplish over a specified period. For example, “To physically improve the neighborhood by implementing a beautification project to enhance the common areas, the main entrance and medians through out the neighborhood”.

An **Objective** is a statement that explains how your organization will reach its goal. Your objectives need to be specific, measurable, clear, and concise, realistic, and achievable within a certain timeframe.



## Advantages of goal setting

Goal setting allows a neighborhood organization to:

**Become aware of neighborhood needs.** By setting goals for your organization, the needs of your neighborhood will come into focus. These needs give your organization a purpose and meaning.

**Accomplish projects.** By setting time limits for projects completion, your organization can anticipate how much work is ahead and schedule it accordingly.

**Strive towards a mark.** Goal setting keeps your members involved and motivated. If your organization has a set target date to complete a project, then the energy level of members will increase as the target date draws near.

**Keep members active.** If your neighborhood organization has set goals, there will be plenty of projects to work on.

## Recruiting new members?

Getting new people involved in an organization is exciting. New people have enthusiasm and energy, which can be infectious, serving to motivate others in the group. The following are some volunteer recruitment strategies to bring life into your organization.

- Work with Neighborhood Watch block coordinators to identify people who care about the neighborhood.
- Use your newsletter to promote and recruit. Instead of reporting on an issue, showcase how your group has made a difference.
- Be honest about time demands. Be specific about the job and how the person could help.
- Assure new volunteers that they do not have to be experts; training and support will be provided.
- Do not be afraid to try different approaches to advertising, such as T-shirts, bumper stickers, buttons, calendars, open houses, neighborhood tours, etc.
- Contact local volunteer resource agencies for referrals.
- Door to door personal contact such as surveys and interviews.
- Adopt-a-Neighbor (each member brings a neighbor to the meeting).
- Media involvement to promote a special meeting or event.
- Post flyers announcing your meeting at neighborhood markets, Laundromats, businesses, schools, etc.
- Keep your group diversified. Healthy groups have a mix of age, gender, ethnic background, businesses, schools, etc.
- Develop a recruitment brochure explaining your neighborhood organization
- Involve other groups in the community with goals or activities similar to your groups.
- Never recruit for specific jobs until you know how you will use each volunteer.
- Personal Invitations
- Place recruitment ads in newsletters from other groups, community newspapers, etc.



## **Roles of neighborhood organization committees**

Most neighborhood organizations organize their work and accomplish their objectives through the dedicated work of committees. Many times, committees will be established for the purpose of accomplishing an organization's goal. For example, if an organization's goal is "Neighborhood Beautification", the Executive Board will establish a "Beautification Committee" to ensure the objectives and the goals of the event are realized. The following are types of neighborhood organization committees:

- Beautification Committee
- Publicity Committee
- Social Activities Committee
- Traffic Committee
- Social Concerns Committee
- Safety/Neighborhood Watch
- Code Enforcement Committee
- Fundraising/Finance Committee

## **Roles of a neighborhood organization Executive Board**

The officers of the neighborhood organization make up what is often called the Executive Board. The organization's bylaws outline the duties of the officers. Sometimes, the Executive Board also includes Committee Chairs. General duties are listed below:

### *President*

- Chief Executive officer of the organization.
- Presides over all meetings.
- Prepares meeting agendas with the Secretary.
- Acts as an ex-officio member of all committees.
- Delegates responsibilities fairly.
- Ensures effective and productive meetings.
- An impartial and fair bystander
- Promotes and interprets the Organization's goals.

### *Vice President*

- Performs duties of the President in his or her absence
- Supports the Presidents as requested.
- Organizes special committees and projects as needed.

### *Treasurer*

- Custodian of Organization's funds and financial records.
- Responsible for periodic status reports to the Executive Board.

### *Secretary*

- Maintains Organization's records.
- Prepares meeting notices.
- Takes and prepares all meeting minutes.
- Maintains membership list
- Responsible for periodic status reports to the Executive Board.



### **Tips to maintaining active and productive committees**

As with any situation involving volunteers, neighborhood organization committees need specific direction and clear objectives to accomplish their tasks effectively and efficiently. The following are general tips to ensure committee productivity:

1. Clearly define and discuss the goals and objectives of the committee.
2. Publicly recognize members and committees who have contributed to the advancement of the neighborhood organization.
3. Ensure meeting time and committee work is as productive as possible. No one wants to feel they are wasting time.
4. Ensure the work of the committee is accepted and makes a valuable contribution to the organization.
5. Consider using subcommittees to increase individual responsibilities and focus on goals.
6. Conduct yearly committee evaluations where committee members evaluate each other.

### **Registering a neighborhood group or report changes**

To register your neighborhood organization or to report a change in your organization, simply complete the registration form in the back of this publication or online at <http://www.riversideca.gov/neighborhoods/pdf/Registration.pdf>.

#### **Mail the registration form to:**

City of Riverside-Development Department  
Housing and Neighborhoods Division  
3900 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
Riverside, California 92522  
Phone: (951) 826-5195



# ***Incorporation and Tax Exempt Status***

## **Incorporating a group to a non-profit status**

Incorporating as a non-profit organization can help define a group and contribute to its credibility as a viable, working body of interested citizens. Incorporation also protects the liability of group members.

Within the State of California, the cost for filing a non-profit incorporation is \$30 plus an additional \$15 for special handling fee. Other fees may be applicable, for more information on incorporation; call (916) 657-5448 or the State Web Site: [http://www.sos.ca.gov/business/corp/pdf/articles/corp\\_artsnp.pdf](http://www.sos.ca.gov/business/corp/pdf/articles/corp_artsnp.pdf).

Tax-exempt status is often confused with incorporation. A group must usually be incorporated at the state level before it can apply for tax exemption from the federal government, Internal Revenue Service (IRS) [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). When organizing your association you may want to consider filing for tax-exempt status. This status allows contributors to deduct from their income taxes, any financial contributions donated to your organization.

### *Advantage*

- Exemption from federal, state, and local corporate income taxes, federal excise and employment taxes, and state and local usage, property and other taxes.
- Ability to accept tax-deductible charitable contributions from individuals, corporate donors, private foundations, and governmental agencies.
- Lower bulk mail postage rates for second and third class mailings.
- Exemption from the Organized Crime Control Act, which prohibits illegal gambling; i.e., bingo, lotteries, raffles, or other games of chance.
- Exemption from taxation under the Federal Insurance Contribution Act (Social Security) and Federal Unemployment Tax Act, when professionals, such as attorneys or accountants, perform services for the organization.

### *Disadvantage*

- Application is time consuming and complicated.
- Extensive annual reporting requirements.
- Observance of numerous limitations to maintain the tax-exempt status.
- Close scrutiny by the IRS and the general public.



# ***Effective Meetings***

## **Planning an effective meeting**

The success of any event is directly related to the planning and detail that was involved. As such, planning for your neighborhood organization's meetings is just as important as hosting them. Below are meeting planning tips to keep in mind:

*Meeting Location* – Find a meeting place that can accommodate the meeting. If you are expecting a small group, you may want to have your first meeting in someone's home. For a group over ten people, check the availability of your local community center, church, or school. Schools and some community centers might waive fees for neighborhood organization meetings.

*Speakers* – You may want to invite someone to speak on specific issues, concerns, and interests expressed by your neighbors. You may invite speakers from various city departments such as Police, Code Enforcement, and Neighborhood Programs.

*Meeting Announcement* – Good promotion and advance notification of the meeting are important. Give neighbors at least two weeks notice of the dates and time of meetings.

*Sign-in* – Provide a sign-in sheet for neighbors and guests. This allows you to keep track of attendance and to develop a mailing list for future notifications.

*Name Tags* – provide nametags to identify the officers/directors and neighbors. Often neighbors may recognize faces, but many not know names. The nametags help to promote friendliness.

*Agenda* – Provide an agenda to keep the meeting flowing and in order. Keep it simple and follow the agenda at all times.



## **Tips for running an effective meeting**

The ability to host effective meetings can often times be the pass or fail mark for neighborhood organizations. The success of your organization is a result of the energy, productivity, and efficiency of your monthly membership meetings, executive board meetings and even annual elections meetings. Below are some tried and true tips for hosting an effective meeting:

1. Always start meetings on time.
2. Open the meeting location at least 15 minutes early for residents to arrive, socialize, and prepare.
3. Begin meetings with an icebreaker to lighten the mood.
4. Introduce public officials at the beginning of each meeting.
5. Recognize newcomers and ask them to state what street they live on.
6. State the purpose of the meeting and proposed discussion items.
7. Be brief and keep comments relevant to each discussion. Monitor the pacing so the meeting is not too long.
8. Use visual aids. Residents will relate to something they can see.
9. Allow everyone to contribute.
10. After a concern or project is presented allow a set time limit for discussion.
11. Prepare any needed research ahead of time.
12. Make frequent summaries during the discussion so that everyone clearly understands what is being stated.
13. Promote cooperation not conflict. If conflict occurs, appoint a committee to research the concern and report findings at next meeting.
14. Assign tasks and delegate responsibility as the meeting proceeds. This gives neighbors a sense of belonging instead of just listening.
15. Guide the meeting from concerns to solutions. Always ask your neighbors how they would solve or approach a concern. Keep in mind that some solutions may take time.
16. Towards the end of the meeting, go over the agenda, giving an overview of each concern discussed or raised.
17. Before adjourning, state the next meeting date, time and place, and thank everyone for attending.
18. Consider using Roberts Rules of Order



## **Taking good meeting minutes**

Effective meeting minutes provide a history of the organization's progress as well as informing absent members of meeting discussions and outcomes.

### *Why keep minutes?*

1. To record decisions.
2. To document who participated in decisions.
3. To know how many people agreed and disagreed.
4. To understand some of the reasons leading to the decisions.
5. To register minority opinions.
6. To document citizen participation in government.

### *Helpful tips for the minute's taker.*

1. Obtain previous meeting agendas, minutes, and discussion items.
2. Focus on recording actions taken by the group.
3. Maintain a consistent format with all minutes.

### *What should minutes contain?*

1. Organization's name and type of meeting.
2. Date, time, and location of meeting.
3. Name of members present.
4. Name of presiding Officer and Secretary.
5. Quorum details.
6. Approval of previous minutes.
7. Officer and committee reports. Attach if written, briefly describe if verbal.
8. Business of the meeting in order of agenda.
9. Brief description of matter and outcome.
10. Types of motions, resolutions, and names of people who made them.
11. Record of motion and resolution outcomes.
12. Record of vote process and outcome.
13. Adjournment time.
14. Secretary's signature.



# ***Neighborhood Events and Volunteers***

## **Organizing a successful neighborhood event**

Whether you are holding a summer block party, a holiday social or any other community event, it is crucial the event is well organized. Here are some steps for organizing a successful event:

- Explore the possibilities. What will work in your neighborhood?
- What kinds of activities will your neighbors support?
- Select the appropriate event for your neighborhood.
- Get the word out via word of mouth, media, flyers, signs, or mailings.
- Appoint an event Chairperson.
- Set up an event Committee.
- Define the Committee's task and event budget
- Recruit as many event volunteers as possible. Find out people's interests and match tasks.
- Conduct a pre-event inspection to ensure everything is as planned.
- Observe the event and troubleshoot as needed along the way.
- Evaluate the event to note successes and improvements and learn from the experience.
- Clean up and give thanks to all participants.
- Develop an event timetable.

## **Planning a neighborhood block party**

There is no better way of getting together and meeting your neighbors than having a block party. Neighborhoods are better and safer places to live when there is a sense of caring and friendliness in the area. Block parties can vary from a simple gathering of a few folks in a front yard, to a highly organized event involving dozens of streets in the neighborhood. Start with a neighborhood block party committee. Assign responsibilities for the party's components. Meet as often as needed before the party. Assign responsibilities for the event and build your volunteer support. Publicize, Publicize, Publicize!

If you are thinking of having a block party and you need permit information, contact the City of Riverside Arts and Cultural Affairs at (951) 826-5193. Arts and Cultural Affairs will be able to assist you in the following permits: street closures, block parties, Downtown Mall, film and banners. The Neighborhood Matching Grant Program provides cash to match community contributions of volunteer labor, donated professional services or materials, or cash donations in support of neighborhood-based self-help projects for up to \$1,000 a year to established neighborhood organizations registered with the Housing & Neighborhoods Division



## **Working with volunteers**

Neighbors and volunteers remain active in their organization when they feel they are contributing positively to the community and when they are recognized for the effort, they make within the organization. People join community groups to meet people, to have fun, to learn new skills, to pursue an interest, and to link their lives to some higher purpose. Volunteers leave if they do not find what they are looking for. Citizens groups need to ask themselves more often: What benefits do we provide? At what cost to members? How can we increase the benefits and decrease the costs? Here are some items to keep in mind when working with volunteers:

*Most people volunteer if:*

1. They have information about the organization and its purpose.
2. They identify with the objectives of the organization.
3. They know what is expected of them in time and effort.
4. They know that their interest and abilities will be effectively utilized.

## **Preventing volunteer burnout and innovative ways to reward**

Volunteer burnout can be devastating to the productivity of a neighborhood organization. In order to keep you volunteers energetic, creative, and enthusiastic, keep the following volunteer burnout tips in mind:

1. Develop coherent operating plans.
2. Prepare job descriptions or task outlines, so people know what is expected of them.
3. Recognized different abilities and tolerance levels in handing out work assignments. Do not let one person take on everything.
4. Remind people that the quality of their work is important, not the quantity.
5. Organize fun events. This will create a social network of friends and neighbors and give people an opportunity to have a good time.
6. Set realistic objectives.

Innovative ways to reward volunteers

1. Certificate of appreciation.
2. Informal celebrations or gift presentations at meetings.
3. Thank-you notes. Send a copy to the individual's employer or family to let them know about that person's achievements.
4. Take pictures of events/achievements. Framed copies of pictures make terrific awards.



5. Recognize individual special needs. If someone in your group is ill, a get-well card affirms the volunteer is valuable and missed.
6. Consider gift certificates or a scholarship to a conference or workshop.
7. Prepare personal profiles or articles in your newsletter or other media sources.
8. Plan a formal recognition party for members and families to celebrate the group's success and acknowledge individual volunteers.
9. Do not forget the value of very simple thank you gestures.
10. Use media sources to announce achievements. Invite media photographers to recognition events.



# ***Neighborly Communication***

## **Neighborhood newsletters**

Newsletters can be simple or complex. No matter what format you choose, newsletters help keep everyone informed or concerns, meetings, activities, and other important issues. Here are a few things to think through before you publish:

1. Production cost can be a significant factor in what type of newsletter you produce. Check with a local print shop for ideas for less costly newsletters. You may want to contact local businesses to help sponsor the newsletter or charge a fee for advertising in the newsletter.
2. Usually, team effort works best when producing newsletters. However, someone should coordinate the efforts of the group and edit the newsletter. Your organization should appoint a committee and chairperson to be responsible for producing the newsletter.
3. By enlisting the participation of as many members as possible, you can appoint members of different committees to write articles and assign reporters to collect information from authors or research topics for the different newsletter articles.
4. Like many other community groups, neighborhood organizations find newsletters to be great tools to communicate with neighbors about current activities of the organization.
5. Identify someone who has a personal computer. You may save money by producing the layout yourselves.
6. Select committee members who are skilled in writing and editing.
7. Have clear deadlines for submitting all articles, editing, printing, and distributing each issue of the newsletter.
8. Neighborhood organizations can apply for \$100 in grant funds to offset the cost of neighborhood newsletters, neighborhood organization flyers, agendas, and other relevant print costs.



## **Ideal length for a newsletter**

The length of your neighborhood newsletter depends on both your budget and the topics your group considers important. A good newsletter can be as short as one page. After settling on a length, structure your newsletter by organizing it into regular features or columns. Some regular newsletter items may include:

- Committee Reports
- Organization meeting places and times
- Personal announcements
- Letter from the President
- Neighborhood News
- Job Listings
- Upcoming events
- Editorials
- Children's Column
- Updates on local issues
- Volunteer Acknowledgement
- Holiday Activities
- Neighborhood Watch Report

## **Newsletter production**

Explore having your newsletter printed free or at a reduced cost. Possible sources of free copying are churches, schools, community boards, and workplaces of group members. A local printer might donate the job or offer a special rate in exchange for a credit line in the newsletter that urges members to use his or her company. Another possibility is the local merchants association; try offering free ad space. You may also want to sell ads in the newsletter itself to defray your costs. Here are some possible revenue sources:

1. Talk to local merchants; they are often happy to reach out to members of the community through community newsletters.
2. Stress the interdependence of commercial and residential areas in a neighborhood – how the health of one depends on the health of the other.
3. Encourage readers to patronize your advertisers whose ad you saw in the newsletter.



## **Newsletter distribution**

Before you reproduce your newsletter, make a list of all the people who need to get it. This could include all members of your group, other members of the community, elected officials, local institutions, (such as county/city agencies, schools, community board members, local development organizations), and local press. This will tell you how many copies to print. Once printed, newsletters can be distributed door-to-door or mailed. Here are some successful distribution tips:

1. Be consistent. If the newsletter arrives the same time each month, people will begin to expect and anticipate it. Some groups issue newsletters quarterly.
2. Call a meeting of building and/or block captains. Ask them to distribute the newsletters and to make sure everyone gets a copy.
3. Rather than leave newsletters in lobbies of large apartment building, try to get residents to slip a copy under each door.
4. Some community groups hire neighborhood youth to distribute the papers on the block.
5. Ask local merchants if you can leave newsletters on the counter for people to pick up. This is a good way of reaching out to potential new members.
6. If you mail your newsletter, be sure to figure postage expenses into your budget.

## **Preparing fliers, posters, and meeting notices**

Below are some guidelines to maximize your promotional and communication efforts via flyers, meeting notices, and correspondence for your neighborhood:

1. When producing your printed information flyers and materials, be sure to answer the basics – **Who, What, When, Where** is on all printed materials.
2. Choose your words carefully – less is better when designing flyers and notices. Be sure your printed materials are easy to read and draw the reader's attention.
3. Talk with other neighborhood organizations for examples.
4. Mandatory associations have a legal responsibility to keep residents informed and must produce notices in a timely fashion. Check your articles of incorporation and bylaws for more information.



## **Surveying your neighborhood**

There are infinite reasons to conduct survey research in your neighborhood. You may need to know what issues are affecting your neighbors the most. Is it traffic, noise, or lack of recreational facilities? Survey research is one method for documenting what the concerns and needs of the neighborhood are. It is also used as method of public outreach and involvement. Survey research is a major part of neighborhood planning since it is a grassroots form of obtaining public participation and input.

There are three different types of survey questionnaires:

1. The mail survey also known as the self-administered questionnaire.
2. The interview survey that requires face-to-face reading and recording of answers.
3. The telephone survey that is administered via telephone.



# ***Working with Local Government***

## **Benefits with partnering with the local government**

A successful neighborhood organization is one, which understands the “ins and outs” of local government. Effective partnerships between neighborhood organization and local government are essential both to the success of the organization and the responsiveness of local government to the needs of its communities. Below are tips for working with local government:

1. Set your goals. What is the most important for your neighborhood organization to accomplish in order to maintain livability?
2. Know your issues and do your homework. Find out who is affected and whom the appropriate people are that can help.
3. Become familiar with the structure and purpose of your local government.
4. Become acquainted with procedure. Attend meetings of your public officials; understand how they operate and the pressures they are under.
5. Allow your officials to get to know you. The best form of contact is through meetings, phone calls, letters or emails.
6. Keep your public officials informed and do not surprise them with unexpected actions. Give your officials written copies of your concerns and follow up with letters.
7. Work on all levels. First, contact the person most directly responsible for your concern. Then work on all levels by going to your appointed and elected officials.
8. Make it clear that you represent a group. Identify the name of your group and its purpose and ensure that you have the group's authorization before acting.
9. Get solid answer. Do not be satisfied with vague responses. Talk to informed people and solicit answers you can rely on.
10. Be open to suggestions. Take them seriously and follow up. Progress occurs when everyone pushes in the same direction.
11. Follow up a discussion with a memo summarizing the items discussed and outcome. Check periodically on the status of the action to see if decisions are being made.
12. Do not work in a vacuum. Keep the neighborhood informed about proceedings with local official.



## **Presenting before a government board**

Giving public testimony before the City Council or any other City Commission can be frightening if you have never done it before. There are several things you can do to make your thoughts and presentation clear and successful:

### *How to give public testimony:*

1. Be familiar with the City Council process. Attend meetings before you testify to get familiar with the room layout and meeting procedures.
2. At the podium, state your name and neighborhood you live in. Then address the Mayor or Council as “Honorable Mayor, or “Members of Council” and then go into your issue.
3. Know your issues. Support opinions with as many facts as possible. Be knowledgeable of the opposition’s arguments and be prepared to counter.
4. Know your audience. Try to stress what you have in common and respect the differences of the Council Members.
5. Wear appropriate clothing. Men should wear a business suit with tie. Good grooming is also important for men and women making presentations.
6. Be aware of how you present yourself. Be conscious of your body language and how you may be perceived.
7. Check your feelings at the door before you speak. Do not overshadow your presentation with strong feelings.
8. Do not ask questions at the public hearing. Schedule an appointment with staff well in advance of the hearing to get your questions answered.
9. Be courteous when making your presentation. For example, avoid complaining about having to take time off from work to attend the hearing.
10. Maintain eye contact. Use notes rather than a written manuscript so you can develop good eye contact.
11. Define what you want. Make it perfectly clear what action you want the group to take.
12. Summarize important points.
13. Provide copies of your written remarks for each council member, appropriate staff, and the media.



# ***Neighborhood Beautification***

## **Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful (KRCB)**

KRCB is an award winning affiliate with Keep America Beautiful and they participate in nationally sponsored beautification events; January Litter Index Judging Tour, Great American Cleanup, Clean Campus Competition, Riverside Celebrates Trees in honor of National Arbor Day and we keep our very own Festival of Lights a litter free event.

KRCB loves volunteers of all ages and we have a very project rich calendar year round with Beautification Projects. On a monthly basis KRCB recruits volunteers to partner with on Saturday mornings to clean up litter sites, plant trees, and remove graffiti throughout the city. KRCB supplies an all day snack bar, supplies, T-Shirts, and lunch. You can contact KRCB at 951-683-7100.

Community efforts supported by the City of Riverside and The Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce.

*Keep Riverside Clean and Beautiful Mission Statement:*

*To instill a sense of community pride and leadership by creating partnership that work toward the beautification of the city.*

## **Community clean-ups**

If you would like to see trash and debris removed from your neighborhood, KRCB may be just what you are looking for. Community cleanups have been a successful tool to enhance neighborhoods and create neighborhood pride throughout the city. Following a community clean-up request, a Code Enforcement representative will conduct an inspection of the area to determine if a clean-up is feasible. If approved, a date is selected and the clean-up is coordinated. The results will make for a cleaner community and the partnerships created between citizens and local government will be priceless!

## **311 Call Center**

Dial 826-5311, and you are instantly in touch with the City's Call Center. The Call Center provides information and refers service requests to the appropriate City department. You can report issues or request information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- *Report* graffiti, illegal dumping, potholes, traffic problems, or municipal code violations.
- *Request* City tree trimming services, sidewalk, or curb repair, street sweeping, or park maintenance.
- *Get information* on City projects, or community and area events.



## **Clean Up Riverside's Environment (CURE)**

The City of Riverside and Keeping Riverside Clean and Beautiful have collaborated to C.U.R.E. Riverside. C.U.R.E. is a program that focuses, on promoting the value of having a clean city, raising consciousness of litter habits, and improving overall community pride and involvement. As part of the C.U.R.E. campaign, the City hosts periodic Household Hazardous Waste special collection events for items like appliances, computers, televisions, and tires. Check the website for updates on scheduled events at [www.riversideca.gov/cure](http://www.riversideca.gov/cure).

## **“Notice of Code Violation”**

Find out how to correct the problem and do so promptly. Prompt action to correct the violation will avoid fines and liens. Call the Code Enforcement Division immediately. To speak with someone from Code Enforcement you can telephone at (951) 826-5633 to inquire what remedial actions are necessary. Under certain circumstances, you may be eligible for a low-income housing and rehabilitation grant or loan. For more information, call the Housing and Neighborhoods Division at (951) 826-5195.

## **Code Enforcement Community Volunteer Program**

Community Volunteer program is designed to involve the community with sharing the responsibility of educating the public and addressing neighborhoods where common code concerns are prevalent. For information on becoming a Code Enforcement Community Volunteer, call (951) 826-5633.

## **Graffiti removal**

Studies have shown that graffiti has less chance of reappearing if it is removed quickly after the property is “tagged”. All graffiti issues must be reported immediately to the City’s Call Center at (951) 826-5311. Graffiti is a violation of the graffiti ordinance.

## **Animal Control**

The regulations governing the keeping of animals other than cats and dogs vary considerably depending on the zoning of the property. Some areas are intended for rural uses, other areas more intensely developed and the keeping of certain animals is not desirable. Crowing fowl are prohibited in most (not all) areas of the City. If in doubt about the zoning on a particular piece of property, the Planning Department can assist you at (951) 826-5371. The Code Enforcement Division will follow up on any complaints of violation of the animal keeping.

*Noise, Nuisance & Other Complaints* – Call County of Riverside Animal Control at (951) 358-7387 or online at <http://www.rcdas.org/complain.htm#complain>



# Neighborhood Grants & Fundraising

## Neighborhood Matching Grant

The Neighborhood Matching Grant (NMG) supports local grassroots projects within the 26 City neighborhoods. The NMG provides cash to match community contributions of volunteer labor, donated professional services or materials, or cash donations in support of neighborhood-based self-help projects. Projects are funded up to \$1,000 once per fiscal year (July through June) to established neighborhood organizations registered with the division. Applications will be considered on a quarterly basis in the following months: July, October, January, and April. The approval process takes approximately six to eight weeks. (Mandatory HOA's are not eligible for the NMG) – **Program Currently Suspended**

What kinds of projects are funded?

- *Neighborhood Improvement/Beautification:* A project that creates or enhances a physical improvement in a neighborhood.
- *Neighborhood Outreach:* A one-time grant that provides a membership expansion that creates, diversifies, and/or enlarges the neighborhood organization.
- *Neighborhood Social Enhancement:* A one-time grant for a community building activity such as a festival or celebration, workshop/training or educational campaign.

*Funded projects should:*

1. Improve the health & safety of residents
2. Benefit a significant number of people or a neighborhood
3. Is resident-initiated and neighborhood based
4. Encourage residents to prioritize goals and collaborate on projects
5. Build community by connecting neighbors
6. Provide residents the opportunity to tap into existing skills and resources within the neighborhood

*What cannot be funded?*

1. Projects for programs developed and delivered by an outside organization, for example, PTA, scout groups, service clubs
2. Projects for ongoing operating costs or programs
3. Projects for retro-active expenses or debt retirement
4. Projects that benefit only one person

**The NMG program is currently suspended for more information call (951) 826-5195.**



## **Neighborhood Newsletter Mini-Grant**

Neighborhood organizations can apply for \$100 in grant funds to offset the cost of neighborhood newsletters, meeting flyers, agendas, and other relevant print costs. **Program currently suspended**

### *Who may apply for the Neighborhood Newsletter Mini-Grant Program?*

Neighborhood organization may apply through a designated member for a mini-grant. (Mandatory homeowner associations are ineligible) Successful applicants will be awarded one (1) mini-grant per fiscal year, July through June.

### *When can you submit your Neighborhood Newsletter Mini-Grant Application?*

Applications are accepted any time during the year.

### *How do I apply for the Mini-Grant?*

It is Easy! Contact the division to register your neighborhood organization and request a mini-grant application form.

Mail or fax the application to:

City of Riverside

Development Department

3900 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Riverside, CA 92522

FAX: (951) 826-2233

For more information, call the division (951) 826-5195

### *What happens if the mini-grant application is approved?*

Recipients will be required to provide copies of the literature printed at six-month interval to the division during the life of the mini-grant.

**Newsletter Mini-Grant program is currently suspended for more information call (951) 826-5195.**



## **Tips for successful fundraising**

You do not need to raise funds to begin organizing your neighborhood. However, you will need money to organize large numbers of people, or to launch a large action program. If you decide to raise money, here are some suggestions:

***Individual contributions*** – Asking for contributions from local people turns fundraising into community building. People become more attached to groups, projects, and places they feel they own. Money can come from memberships, voluntary subscriptions to newsletters, collections at meetings, door-to-door canvassing, planned giving, memorial giving, and direct mail. Some groups make donations tax deductible by registering as a charity with the federal government.

***In-kind donations*** – Seek in-kind or non-monetary contributions. Examples include donations of printing, equipment, furniture, space, services, food, and time. Local businesses respond well to request for in-kind donations.

***Auctions*** – Consider an auction. Neighbors can donate babysitting on a Friday night, chocolate cake for eight, or three hours of house repairs. At a community party, your auctioneer sells every treasure to the highest bidder.

***Grants from governments & foundations*** – With so many potential sources of assistance, half the challenge is figuring out who supports what. After identifying a possible grant, find out about application procedures. Receiving a grant usually requires writing a good proposal. Look for matching grants. In many cases governments will contribute a dollar for every dollar raised by citizens. (See Neighborhood Matching Grant)

***Bake Sales*** – Bake sales can be a very effective method for raising funds for your community. Food provides a good crowd-gathering event. Bake sales can also present an opportunity for displaying culinary aptitudes for children and adults alike. Children can help with the baking and selling of the goods.

***Garage/Yard Sales*** – Consider an annual weekend community-wide garage or yard sale. The proceeds from your community-wide sale go to your organization's treasury. For further information on garage/yard sales contact Code Enforcement (951) 826-5633.

***Community Cookbook*** – Everyone needs a cookbook! Gather many different recipes from neighbors and add stories about what the recipe means to the cook, where the recipe comes from, and so forth. The cookbook does not need to be fancy, just print it up on the computer, and have it bound at a local copy shop. The first couple of pages can be dedicated to talking about your organization.

***T-shirt Sales*** – Many neighborhood organizations have their own t-shirts. T-shirt sales can be quite profitable as well as a great way to promote your group. They can be sold through a variety of ways: at every fundraising event that you hold or maybe you have friends/family who works in offices that can distribute the t-shirts.



# ***Neighborhood Streets***

## **Reporting street problems**

To report a burned out or defective streetlight, call the City's Call Center (951) 826-5311. Before calling, make sure you have the pole number or the street address closest to the streetlight.

## **Stop Signs**

Stop signs are installed as safety measures. To determine if a stop sign is needed, sites must meet several conditions, including heavy traffic, poor visibility, and a pattern of accidents or proximity to schools. Citizens may call Traffic Engineering (951) 826-5366. A representative will monitor the location before a determination is made.

## **Potholes**

Anyone may report potholes to the City Call Center at (951) 826-5311. An inspector will be sent to look at the pothole and evaluate the urgency of repair. The pothole will be placed on a list for repair in priority order.

## **Trees**

To report location where road visibility is obstructed due to plants or trees, contact the City Call Center at (951) 826-5311 with complete address. Blind corners, mid-block obstructions and weeds on the right-of-way should also be reported to the Call Center.

## **Sidewalks**

Sidewalks, which have become obstructed either by overgrowth, uprooting of trees or physical obstructions within the path can be hazardous. If you believe there is an unsafe sidewalk in your community, contact the City Call Center (951) 826-5311.



# ***Neighborhood Safety***

## **Forming a Neighborhood Watch Group**

The best crime prevention device ever invented is a good neighbor. The security steps you and your neighbors take, as a group is just as important as the things you would do individually. This joint effort is called Neighborhood Watch. It is easy to organize a Neighborhood Watch in your area. Coordinate a date, time, and location for your neighborhood's initial meeting with a Police Service Representative. During this initial meeting, the Police Service Representative (PSR) will offer tips on home security, crime awareness, and how to report suspicious activities. Find out the PSR assigned to your area by calling (951) 353-7689.

## **Disposing of hazardous household waste**

Many household products contain dangerous chemicals that require special handling. If not properly disposed of these chemicals can harm humans, animals, and the environment. The Clean Up Riverside's Environment (CURE) program provides homeowners with the opportunity to dispose of household hazardous waste safely and properly at no charge. Call (951) 826-5311 for more information.



# ***Other Useful Information***

## **When is a building permit needed?**

If your property is located within the City limits and you are:

- Erecting
- Repairing
- Removing
- Improving
- Constructing
- Enlarging
- Altering
- Converting
- Moving
- Demolishing

Any building or structure, you are required to obtain a City of Riverside Building Permit. For more information, please call Planning (951) 826-5697.

## **Conflict resolution between neighbors**

The Dispute Resolution Center has professional community mediators that help resolve neighborhood disputes before they escalate into big problems. Contact the Community Action Partnership of Riverside County – Dispute Resolution Center for more information about resources available to residents at (951) 955-4900.

## **I still have questions**

You may call a specific City Department for answers to questions not covered in this Resource Manual. The City's Call Center is great resource to help residents obtain information. Dial 311 from your home phone or dial (951) 826-5311. If you have a question pertaining to neighborhood organizing call (951) 826-5195.



# Samples

## Neighborhood Organization By-Laws

### ARTICLE I – NAME

The parties involved shall choose the name of the organization.

### ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization is to achieve and maintain decent and wholesome living conditions in the City of Riverside; assist persons residing in the specific neighborhood to work together for the good of their neighborhood; and provide a non-partisan organization which will benefit this neighborhood and this city through worthwhile programs.

### ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Membership in this organization shall be open only to persons who reside or own property in the neighborhood boundaries.

Section 2. The neighborhood boundaries are the interior of the streets that border the neighborhood.

Section 3. The organization also may enroll honorary members, but these members may not vote on matters before this organization.

### ARTICLE IV – ANNUAL MEETINGS

During the first meeting of the calendar year, a meeting of this organization shall be convened for the purpose of electing officers. This meeting shall also be a regular meeting of the organization for other business.

### ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

Section 1. The officers of the neighborhood organization shall consist of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary/Treasurer.



Section 2. The officers shall be elected at the first annual meeting from a slate prepared by the Nominating Committee, as well as from any additional nominations from the floor. The persons receiving the highest number of votes for each office shall be elected. Those elected shall serve until the next election.

Section 3. No officer shall serve more than three (3) consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 4. In case of a vacancy in office other than that of Chairperson, the vacancy shall be filled by election at a subsequent regular meeting of the organization.

Section 5. Officers may be removed for cause, including violation of the by-laws or dereliction of duty, by a majority of two-thirds of the voters at a regular meeting of the organization, provided that the officer to be removed has been notified in writing of the proposed removal at least thirty (30) days before the meeting.

## **ARTICLE VI – DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

Section 1. The duties of the Chairperson shall be to preside over all meetings of the organization, to call special meetings, to appoint committee chairpersons and to be or appoint the spokesperson for the organization to local government, the press, or other neighborhood organizations.

Section 2. The duties of the Vice-Chairperson shall be to preside over meetings of the organization in the absence of the Chairperson, and to succeed to the office of Chairperson in the event of a vacancy in that position.

Section 3. The duties of the Secretary/Treasurer shall be to keep accurate records of all meetings, to make them available, to keep a list of all members, and to assist in preparing any correspondence which may be received by the organization, to disburse funds as directed at a regular or properly called meeting of the organization, to keep proper financial records, and to make regular reports of the organization's financial status.

## **ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS**

Section 1. The regular meeting of the organization shall be held quarterly. The time and place are to be designated by the Chairperson.

Section 2. Special meetings may be called by the Chairperson or by petition of ten (10) or more members. Such meetings may act on any business proper to the organization, provided that written notice of the meeting has gone out to all members at least ten (10) days before the meeting date.



**ARTICLE VIII – COMMITTEES AND PROGRAMS**

Section 1. Committees and programs of this organization shall be established by majority vote of members present at a meeting of the organization.

Section 2. Committee members and chairpersons shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the chairperson.

**ARTICLE IX – PROCEDURE**

Unless the meeting has adopted some other procedure, all meetings of this organization are governed by guidelines of Robert’s Rules of Order.

**ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS**

The by-laws of this organization may be amended at any meeting, provided that the proposed amendments have been sent to all members prior the meeting at which they are to be considered.

President

Vice President

Secretary/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name



## **Making It Happen Worksheet**

1. At least two neighbors I will ask to help organize a neighborhood meeting:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. What we will use as the “hook” to get the neighborhood to attend the meeting we plan.  
Ideas: \_\_\_\_\_  
Where and when will the pre-meeting take place with my two neighbors?  
Potential date and time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Location: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Agenda for the pre-meeting:
  - a. Discuss purpose of neighborhood meeting “hook”
  - b. Identify neighborhood boundaries at pre-meeting  
North: \_\_\_\_\_ South: \_\_\_\_\_ East: \_\_\_\_\_ West: \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Brainstorm possible names for neighborhood group: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Plan a larger neighborhood meeting-
  - a. Who will act as meeting leader at this first meeting? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Meeting space \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Date/Time \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Who will prep the flyer (see samples) \_\_\_\_\_
  - e. How will we distribute? (walk door to door/email, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Refreshments:  
Who: \_\_\_\_\_ What: \_\_\_\_\_  
Who: \_\_\_\_\_ What: \_\_\_\_\_  
Who: \_\_\_\_\_ What: \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Prepare/buy Meeting tools: \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Name tags: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Agenda prep (See samples): \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Sign in sheet: \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Planning your neighborhood meeting agenda  
Refer to samples. Keep it simple.
  1. Welcome
  2. Introductions
  3. Meeting Purpose
  4. Next steps (who will host the next meeting)
  5. Future agenda items
  6. SET NEXT MEETING DATE, TIME, PLACE



**Sample Agendas**



Attention Neighbors!  
Neighborhood Meeting  
Come share your concerns!

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Hosted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

RSVP by: \_\_\_\_\_

AGENDA ITEMS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.



# Neighborhood Organization Meeting

## 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting Agenda (Date)

- |    |   |                 |
|----|---|-----------------|
| 1. | Welcome   | Temporary Chair |
| 2. | Introductions   | Group           |
| 3. | What is a Neighborhood Organization?<br>Why Organize? | Temporary Chair |
| 4. | Selection of Chairperson and Recorder                 | Temporary Chair |
| 5. | Problems/Concerns<br>Identify<br>Prioritize           | Chair           |
| 6. | Suggested Name for Neighborhood Organization          | Chair           |
| 7. | *Establish 2 <sup>nd</sup> Meeting date and location  | Chair           |
| 8. | Adjournment   | Chair           |

\*Next meeting (2<sup>nd</sup>) within three weeks of the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting date.



# California Avenue Block Club

## July 17, 2009 Agenda

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS                      Mr. Bowen/members
  
2. GUEST SPEAKER
  
3. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS  
    Neighborhood Watch Committee                      Mrs. Reed  
    Hospitality Committee                                      Mrs. Conerly  
    Clean-up/Code Compliance Committee                      Mrs. Beverly  
    Neighborhood Activities Committee                      Mr. Bowen
  
- OLD BUSINESS  
    Block Party Plans  
    The Problem House: What are we going to do?
  
6. NEW BUSINESS  
    A. Block Beautification Project                      Mrs. Beverly  
    B. Safety Lighting Project                                      Mr. Young
  
7. OTHER BUSINESS
  
8. NEXT MEETING/ADJOURNMENT                      Chair

Remember we start on time! For more information please call Mr. Bowen at (310) 622-3620.



# Neighborhood Registration Form

Having your neighborhood group registered in our directory is an excellent means of keeping your organization informed of City activities and programs beneficial to neighborhoods. By completing & returning this registration form, your organization will be registered with the City's Housing and Neighborhoods Division distribution for mailings. To register, simply return this completed form via mail or fax to:

**City of Riverside**  
**Development Department – Housing & Neighborhoods Division, 3900 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Riverside, CA 92522**  
**Phone: (951) 826-5195, FAX: (951) 826-2233**

**\*\*Registering with Neighborhood Programs is voluntary – all information provided about your group is voluntary\*\***  
**\*\*City of Riverside does not endorse or legitimize any organization registered with the Neighborhoods Program\*\***

Please check the reason/s for sending in this form:  
 First-time organization registration     Update a previously registered organization

Organization Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Web Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighborhood Boundaries: Please provide the names of major streets, landmarks, or subdivisions that form the boundaries of your community. If necessary, you may include a map of the area with the boundaries marked.

North Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_ South Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_  
East Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_ West Boundary: \_\_\_\_\_

Ward: \_\_\_\_\_ Neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of households included in your group \_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION! PLEASE READ AND COMPLETE THIS NEXT PORTION!**

This document is provided as a public service through the Housing and Neighborhoods Division of the Development Department.  
**PLEASE BE AWARE THAT THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC.**

Please indicate whether it is permissible to share your group's information with individuals wishing to join a group or learn how to form a neighborhood group.  
 **Yes**, it is okay to share our information     **NO**, please do not share our information with no one.

**Group Leader Information**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Contact Information**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**Meeting Information**  
Meeting Day of Week and Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
Meeting Frequency:  Monthly  Quarterly  Bi-Annually  Annually  
Election Month (when your regularly elect new officers) \_\_\_\_\_ Person completing the form \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Please make sure that you have the permission of anyone whose personal information is included on this form.**

