

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

Why Do Neighborhood Projects?

PROMOTE YOUR ASSOCIATION

A neighborhood project or special event is an excellent opportunity to promote your association to local businesses, interest groups and even the residents in your own neighborhood.

RAISE FUNDS

Garage sales, barbecues, and bake sales are just a few examples of effective fundraisers.

IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD IMAGE

Whether a project addresses litter control, peeling paint, park clean up, weatherization, or crime prevention, improvements made to a community symbolize to residents and visitors alike that people care about their neighborhood.

MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

The social aspects of a neighborhood project can serve as the catalyst for a strong community group. Block parties, activity clubs, festivals and parades are just a few ways to meet the neighbors you have waved hello to for years but never actually met. It is also a super opportunity to welcome new neighbors into the community.

A GOOD WAY TO HAVE FUN

Neighborhood block parties, festivals and cookouts are a source of entertainment, and a fun time to bring people back to the association and the neighborhood! The more often a neighborhood gets together for fun, the more unified they will be when an issue arises.

PROMOTE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

A sense of community is developed when residents come together by working on neighborhood projects. Through the process of planning, implementing, and maintaining projects common goals a sense of belonging and being a part of your community are developed and strengthened.

TAKE OWNERSHIP OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

By taking responsibility for planning, implementing, and maintaining projects in your neighborhood, residents will take more initiative not only in preserving the integrity and quality of that project but the entire neighborhood as well. If neighborhood residents feel that they have something at stake, have some control over the outcome, and take some responsibility for the outcome of projects and issues in your neighborhood, you will have established a powerful base from which positive changes can be made.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

Starting Neighborhood Projects

Neighborhood projects are a good idea, but how do you start?

- ◆ Check with your neighbors and active members of your neighborhood group to find out what kind of projects they would support.
- ◆ If your neighborhood has established goals, make sure the project is consistent with those goals. If your neighborhood has not established goals, this might be a good first step.
- ◆ Ask the members of your association what type of activities they would like to have.
- ◆ Consult the Neighborhood Resources Coordinator or members of the Neighborhood Group Leaders Association for suggested projects and information on relevant programs and services available through the city.
- ◆ Identify the types of skills and resources that are available through your association - gardeners, good cooks, carpenters, sales people, artists, etc.
- ◆ Identify resources available through area businesses, including contributions of products, volunteers, services, technical assistance and discounts.
- ◆ Identify who will be able to work at an event and the times they will be available.
- ◆ Involve the entire community in your projects. Reach out to youth, seniors, or other members of your neighborhood that may not be involved and get their input. A project that meets the needs of all of your neighbors will help them feel part of the project and it will encourage them to become more involved.
- ◆ Determine what resources the neighborhood can contribute to the project. A neighborhood's greatest resource is its residents and the commitment and enthusiasm that they can bring to a project. A project that includes sweat-equity is a value-added project.
- ◆ Plan ahead on your neighborhood projects, if grant money is available don't wait until the last minute to plan and submit your project. Start planning now for next year's project. Preparation and careful planning will be apparent in your proposal.
- ◆ Identify others that may be of assistance in implementing your project. Boy or Girl Scout troops may be looking for community service projects. There may be an opportunity to use youth that are required to provide community service for legal reasons. By including these youth in your project you may get the manpower that you need and it can provide them with a productive and positive experience in giving back to the community.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

Suggested Neighborhood Projects and Activities

- ◆ Neighborhood garage sale
- ◆ Neighborhood festivals and block parties, art exhibits, crafts, clown face painting for children, hot dog and drink sales, games, etc.
- ◆ Friday night barbecue
- ◆ Progressive dinner
- ◆ Ice cream social
- ◆ Pancake breakfast fundraiser
- ◆ Home improvement demonstrations - wallpapering, stenciling, house painting, tile laying, landscaping, etc.
- ◆ Holiday house decorating
- ◆ Clean Up, Green Up – get involved in the annual city-wide clean up
- ◆ Neighborhood Watch - organizes the community by groups to have neighbors get acquainted, discuss common problems, and help protect their neighborhood by being aware of unusual or suspicious activity
- ◆ Adopt a local park, do a clean up and plant and maintain a flower bed
- ◆ Get to know the neighborhoods around you by having a multi-neighborhood picnic
- ◆ Create a directory of names, addresses, and phone numbers of neighborhood residents and provide a copy to everyone in the neighborhood.
- ◆ If there are elderly residents in your neighborhood, set up a group of volunteers to visit them around holidays or other times of the year. Include a small basket of goodies to leave as a reminder of your visit.
- ◆ As a neighborhood group, adopt a family for Christmas. There are many organizations that can help you find a family that needs assistance.

NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

- ◆ Are there neighborhood residents that are unable to keep up with some of the maintenance on their property? Your neighborhood might want to form a neighbor helping neighbor committee. It is amazing how fast a group of volunteers can fix a fence, put up storm windows, or even paint a house.
- ◆ Start a neighborhood garden – be sure to involve neighborhood youth
- ◆ Weekly produce exchange from neighbors’ summer gardens.
- ◆ Establish a service exchange (services might include teaching a particular skill, child care, home repairs, gardening, auto maintenance, etc).
- ◆ Establish a neighborhood tool “lending library.”
- ◆ Establish a neighborhood computer lab.
- ◆ Hold an outdoor concert or performance.