

## WHY NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS?

Middleton is home to great neighborhoods comprised of our abundance of 'good neighbors.' The city recognizes the importance of forming partnerships with neighborhood groups to enhance the livability of these great neighborhoods. Participation in neighborhood associations provides engaged citizens their ability to come together and organize the concerns and materialize a vision for neighborhoods, while also enhancing social networks.

Most neighborhood associations are focused on issues that affect the quality of life for those that live in the community. Associations provide communication channels between City officials regarding plans, policies, and projects pertaining to the neighborhood. Associations may be concerned public safety, property maintenance and zoning issues, improvements to public infrastructure, or organizing events to strengthen the sense of community. Specific organizational concerns that associations organize around include:

- Block parties
- Community gardens
- Crime prevention initiatives
- Directories and telephone trees
- Home tours
- Holiday celebrations/potluck dinners
- Leadership projects
- Murals/art projects
- Neighborhood cleanups
- Newsletters
- Paint/fix-up projects
- Park developments
- Picnics/concerts
- Scholarship programs
- School supply drives
- Security lighting projects
- Street improvements
- Tree plantings
- Yard-of-the-month programs
- Youth activities
- Information sharing about volunteer opportunities within the community

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Abby Attoun-Tucker**  
Assistant Community Development Director  
aattoun@ci.middleton.wi.us  
(608) 821-8343



## MIDDLETON NEIGHBORHOODS



**Neighborhood Association  
Informational Guide**

## HOW TO START A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

**Start Small.** Talk with 2-4 neighbors to identify issues that are of common concern, and are realistically able to be addressed.

- Communicating openly with people and treating every individual with respect is crucial to getting more people involved and keeping them engaged in the organization.
- As your organization grows you can increase your focus, so it is important to start

**Define your Neighborhood.** Identify the geographic boundaries of the neighborhood. Contact staff or consult map to determine if there is overlap with an existing association.

- Start with human-made boundaries such as major roads, and natural boundaries such as nature preserves, or bodies of water.

**Refine your focus.** Identify organizing issues or concerns that will encourage the creation of the association, and participation going forward.

- Issues that associations commonly organize around include:
  - New streetlights in needed locations,
  - Neighborhood identification signage or other placemaking public art structures,
  - Or events such as block parties or ice cream socials, etc.

**Bring Neighbors Together.** Get enough neighbor support to hold a meeting to discuss forming an association.

- There is no need to get too technical initially; there is plenty of time to establish association structure, governing rules, and goals.
- Focus on goals, projects, events and growing and maintaining the association.

**Engage City Community Development staff for association recognition and for guidance on association development.**



## STANDARDS FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

In order to be recognized by the City of Middleton as a neighborhood association, an association must:

1. Establish a documented organizational structure.
2. Occupy a geographically defined area that does not cross into any other association's boundaries.
3. Consists of a Board, Committee Members, and/or Officers democratically elected by the general membership.
4. All meetings and elections must be open to the public at an accessible, public place. Membership should be inclusive.

## TIPS FOR WRITING A MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement explains why a group exists and what it hopes to accomplish. A group can revise and clarify its mission statement whenever it is deemed appropriate.

Mission statements often include the following information:

- Aim(s) of the organization
- The organization's primary stakeholders: i.e. neighborhood residents and/or wider community.
- How the organization provides value to these stakeholders, for example by engaging in certain activities.
- An affirmation of an organization's central purpose. Mission statements answer the question, "Why does the organization exist?"

## TIPS FOR CONDUCTING A MEETING

**Find a Location.** Many public and semi-public institutions have public meeting space available for neighborhood associations. These include:

- The Middleton Public Library
- The Willy Street Co-op Community Room
- Civic or Municipal Buildings
- Some religious and financial institutions also offer free public meeting space.

At a minimum be sure to make the meeting space accessible for all those wanting to attend.

**Select a Time and Date.** Make sure to set the meeting at a time and date when attendees will realistically be available.

**Have an Agenda.** Distribute the agenda to attendees before the meeting takes place to insure an optimized flow of items covered.

**Stick to the Agenda.** An hour should be an adequate amount of time. Try not to let a meeting drag-on.

**Communicate** before, during and after the meeting. Be sure to notify all stakeholders regarding the meeting. Give opportunity for everyone who desires to speak. Be sure to record minutes of the meeting to distribute to attendees and non-attendees.

