



GUIDE TO FORMING

# NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS



[www.planoplanning.org](http://www.planoplanning.org)

# NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS

## What is a Neighborhood Association

A neighborhood association is a voluntary association of homeowners, renters, apartment dwellers, and representatives from businesses, churches and schools who work together to improve and maintain the quality of life in their neighborhood.

Membership is open to all residents, but participation is optional; the association determines its boundaries.

Dues are voluntary.

There is no legal authority to enact or enforce maintenance or design requirements beyond those established by city ordinance.

To ensure a visibly democratic process, the organization has bylaws that provide for at least one general membership meeting each year and require the annual election of officers.

Association 'position statements' are reached through consensus.

## What are the differences between Neighborhood Associations and Homeowners Associations?

A homeowners association (HOA), unlike a neighborhood association, is a formal legal entity created to maintain common areas and enforce private deed restrictions and covenants.

In an HOA, membership is usually mandatory for all property owners within the boundaries of the association.

HOA Members are typically required to pay established maintenance and carrying fees.

Homeowners associations have the legal authority to enact and enforce maintenance and design standards above and beyond those required by City ordinance.

Homeowners associations are corporations with formal bylaws and a governing board. Typically, homeowners associations hire a property management company to handle maintenance and enforcement issues.

## GETTING STARTED

Host a meeting for this core group in a comfortable neutral setting. To establish a foundation for creating a neighborhood association, the group leader should ask a few basic questions such as:

- *Why do you think we should organize?*
- *What are the issues that need to be addressed?*
- *How do we want to improve the neighborhood?*
- *What resources are available in the neighborhood?*

Once the Neighborhood Association has established its purpose and a set of issues to focus on, it is time to prepare for the first Neighborhood Association meeting.



# RULES AND REGULATIONS

## Bylaws

Bylaws provide the framework for your organization by outlining the rules that will govern the operation of the group. They should clearly state the organization's purpose, mission, and structure. Bylaws are just an instruction manual for how your group will operate; when you write the bylaws use language that everyone can understand.

### **Article 1 - Name**

Clearly state the name of your organization.

### **Article 2 - Purpose**

State the purpose of the organization.

(i.e. why was the organization formed?)

Identify who you will serve.

(what are the boundaries of the organization)

What is the association's function?

(community building, education, crime prevention, advocacy etc.)

### **Article 3 - Membership**

Who can be a member of the association?

Define types of membership (active/ non-active/ honorary etc.)

Will there be any dues charged for membership?

### **Article 4 - Voting**

Who is eligible to vote?

How many members have to be present to hold a vote?

Define quorum.

### **Article 5 - Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors will define the following:

- The positions that make up the board
- The terms of office
- The duties of the officers
- The powers of the board
- How the board will be elected
- Resignations
- Vacancies
- Suspensions or removals
- Compensation



### ***Article 6 - Meeting and Organization***

When does the association meet?

What rules will govern the meetings?

How will meetings be publicized?

Can special meeting be called? If so, what is the procedure?

Can the board act without meeting?

How is the fiscal year of the association defined?

### ***Article 7 - Committees***

List standing/permanent committees.

Who can serve on committees?

How are committees appointed/formed?

What are the powers of committees?

When do committees meet?

### ***Article 8 - Contracts, Checks, Deposits, and Funds***

Who can execute contracts on behalf of the association?

Who may write checks on behalf of the association? How are they approved?

When and where are funds be deposited? Who is to be responsible for depositing them?

What records are permanently kept, and who keeps them?

### ***Article 9 - Amendment of Bylaws***

When are bylaws reviewed?

How can the bylaws be amended?

How are changes to the bylaws communicated to the association?

### ***Article 10 - Dissolution***

What will happen to the assets of the association?

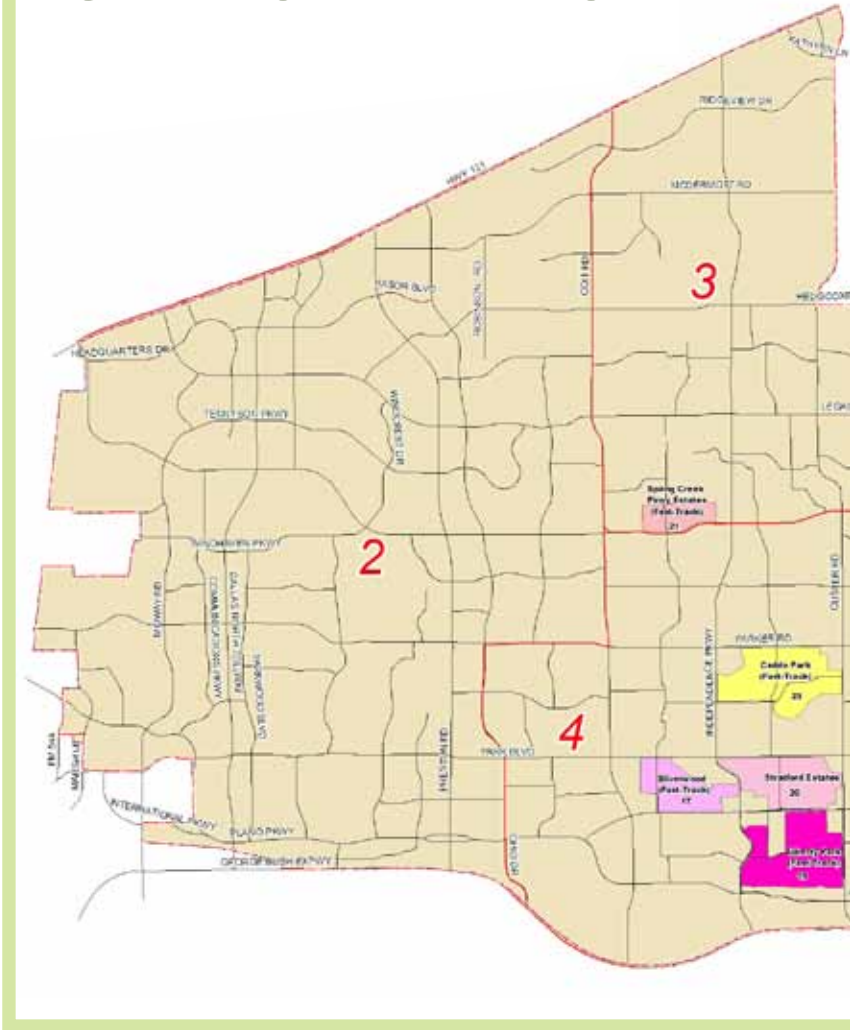
### ***Article 11- Prohibitions***

Is there anything you want to explicitly prohibit the association from doing?

NOTE: This information is provided only as a guide for drafting your neighborhood association bylaws. The City of Plano recommends that you consult with an attorney to review your organization's bylaws prior to adoption.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLANS MAP

## CITY OF PLANO



SOURCE: City of Plano, Community Services Division  
Revised: December 2009



**Map Legend**

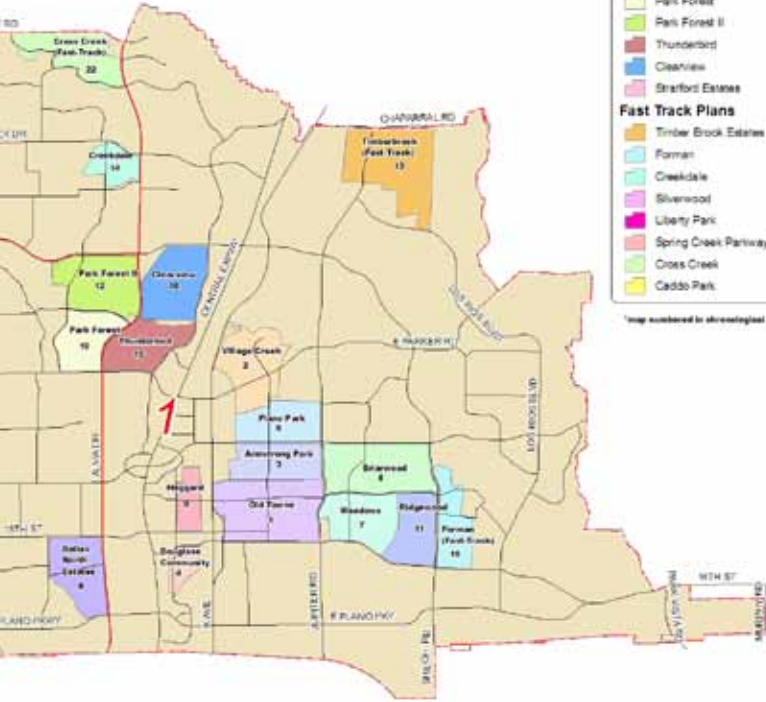
- City Council Areas
- Roads

**Neighborhood Action Plans**

- Old Towne
- Village Creek
- Armstrong Park
- Douglas Community
- Plano Park
- Dallas North Estates
- Meadows Addn.
- Briarwood
- Haggard
- Ridgewood
- Park Forest
- Park Forest II
- Thunderbird
- Clearview
- Stratford Estates

**Fast Track Plans**

- Timber Brook Estates
- Forman
- Creekdale
- Silverwood
- Liberty Park
- Spring Creek Parkway Estates
- Cross Creek
- Caddo Park



\*map numbered in chronological order

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Below is a general guide to the typical duties of a Board of Directors. The makeup and duties of your particular board may vary, but the minimum essential officers should be a president and a secretary.

## **President**

The president should be well versed in parliamentary procedure and willing to perform duties such as calling the meeting to order, announcing the business that comes before the group, recognizing members to take the floor, providing guidance to the group, helping discussions stay on topic, and declaring the meeting adjourned.

## **Vice President**

If the president for any reason vacates their position or is absent, the vice president takes their place. They will also assume other duties as assigned.

## **Secretary**

Performs the duties of issuing meeting notices, preparing the Association newsletter and producing general correspondence as necessary.

## **Treasurer**

Receives and keeps funds of the Association, prepares a yearly finance report to be presented to the Board and the membership at the Annual Meeting; and performs other duties as assigned.

# CONDUCTING MEETINGS

Ensure that the meeting time, date and location are both acceptable and convenient for association members.

## Meeting Arrangements

Choose a time and day that is convenient for most people. Also, choose a location that will be convenient for those attending.

## Agendas

Establish an agenda (or purpose) for each meeting which provides structure for the proceedings and can serve as a guide to encourage discussion.

## Running a Meeting

Start the meeting on time. Do not penalize those who are on time by making them wait for latecomers.

## Participation

Set realistic expectations for attendance; people have a wide variety of interests. Also, consider establishing a Membership Committee to focus on recruiting new members.

## Ending the Meeting

End on time (or as close as possible) with a plan of action; summarize what has been decided.

Announce time and date of the next meeting.



# ACTIVITIES

## Goals of an Event

“Any event should be a unique expression of your neighborhood association. It should have long-term impact on your community, not just one-day of entertainment. The event should be informational, inspiring and community-building. All participants, especially volunteers, should be touched, moved and inspired by the whole experience thus producing great visions for the next event.”

- *Sutherland and Yantis* -



## Organizing Events

When organizing events or activities for your neighborhood, it is important to consider forming teams or groups charged with different tasks. Some examples of different teams include: event coordination, public relations, food and beverage, entertainment, contests & prizes, communications & documentation, equipment, volunteers, and most important the clean-up crew.

Below are a few examples of great ways to encourage community participation in your Neighborhood Association:

- Block party*
- Neighborhood crime watch*
- Holiday lights contest*
- Yard of the month*
- Holiday cookouts in the park*
- Neighborhood cleanup*
- Adopt a local park*
- Picnic / Concerts*
- Tree Planting*

Activity ideas came from ***Neighborhood Event Planning: It's More Than a Party*** by Kathleen Sutherland and Debra Yantis. To receive this packet or a handout with 50 great neighborhood event ideas, contact Monique Coleman, Neighborhood Planner, at (972) 941-5397 or [moniquec@plano.gov](mailto:moniquec@plano.gov).

## CONTACT INFORMATION



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## Neighborhood Planning Mission Statement

The Neighborhood Planning Program (NPP) is dedicated to instilling **P.R.I.D.E.** in Plano communities.

### Our goal is to:

- Provide opportunities to enhance the quality of life;***
- Revitalize neighborhoods to reflect individual character;***
- Involve stakeholders in resolving common issues;***
- Demonstrate commitment to neighborhood stability; and***
- Encourage participation in the planning process.***

For additional information, please refer to the **Resident Guide** at [www.plano.gov](http://www.plano.gov).

