



Neighborhood Association Registration City of Asheville Neighborhood Services Benefits and Criteria

The City of Asheville Neighborhood Services is dedicated to building strong, sustainable neighborhoods by supporting neighborhood-based organizations. The Neighborhood Registration process formally recognizes organized groups in order to create a network of neighborhoods to facilitate communication between the city and residents and ensure a productive flow of information and resources between residents and their city government. This document outlines the minimum requirements to register a neighborhood association with the City of Asheville.

Definition of a Neighborhood:

A neighborhood association can be an organized group of home owners, residents and representatives from neighborhood businesses, churches and schools who are stakeholders in an area that advocates for, and/or organizes, activities to improve conditions in the neighborhood. Or it can be an organized group of property owners with compulsory membership (as in a homeowner or property owner association). An organized neighborhood group represents the interest of the residents and other stakeholders and provides for a common voice. A well-organized association can have a significant impact on the quality of life of its residents. Truly representative neighborhoods will have open meetings, inclusive communications and respect and address minority concerns.

Active neighborhood associations meet regularly to accomplish specific goals, to decide what needs to be done, and to work together to make it happen. These groups may have elected leaders and voluntary dues and typically meet at least annually. Active groups often hold monthly or quarterly business meetings and/or social events aimed at building community.

Registering your neighborhood will improve communication between citizens and government.

Benefits of Registration:

Inclusion in the Neighborhood Contact Database. This database contains contact information on registered neighborhoods and is used by the city for public outreach. In addition, it is used by all city departments to keep the community informed of changes in public services and policies.

Inclusion in the official Neighborhood Organization Map: The Neighborhood Map documents the boundaries of neighborhood and homeowners' organizations and is used by the city in planning and service delivery efforts. In the future, the map will be available to the public on the city web site (www.ashevillenc.gov) as a part of the online services of MapAsheville. Information on crime and development in your neighborhood can be accessed online at <http://simplicity.ashevillenc.gov/>.

Organizational Support: Support services may include, but are not limited to, assistance navigating city services, providing direct links between neighborhood associations and city departments and services, and providing speakers for meetings. Resources are also available through Neighborhood Services and the Neighborhood Advisory Committee (NAC) to help associations in the areas of organizing their group and related issues.

Training: Registered neighborhoods will receive notice of training opportunities such as the City of Asheville Citizens Police Academy and Citizens Fire Academy.

Organizational Requirements:

Bylaws or Organizational Guidelines: To register, a group should have established bylaws or guidelines to demonstrate that the organization is inclusive and represents everyone in the neighborhood. The bylaws or guidelines should contain, at a minimum, the following provisions:

- *Boundaries:* The boundaries of the association's neighborhood or development shall be clearly stated and should not overlap any boundaries of existing Registered Associations.
- *Membership:* Membership in the association shall be open to all residents within the association's boundaries.
- *Meeting requirements:* All association meetings shall be open to all residents living within the boundaries of the association.
 - Number of meetings: A registered association shall hold at least one general membership meeting per year. Associations should document meetings with minutes or by other means.
 - Notices of meetings: Reasonable notice of meetings with clearly stated times and locations shall be provided to association members.
 - Reasonable notice means residents will be notified at least 72 hours before meetings are held by visible means – yard signs, flyers or other means of specified notification.
 - Reasonable notice may also include the establishment of a regularly scheduled meeting day, time and location.
 - Organizations are encouraged to adopt a clear process for running meetings. Examples: Robert's Rules of Order, Consensus, Circle Forward.
- *Selection of Leadership:* The selection process for officers or other leadership or spokesperson of the association shall be clearly stated in the bylaws or guidelines. Associations are encouraged to conduct selection of their leadership according to their established meeting process and document the process and outcome. Bylaws or guidelines should be reviewed regularly and made available to the members of the association if changed or amended.

Notification of Changes: Neighborhood Associations will keep the Neighborhood Services office informed of changes in boundaries, officers/leadership and contact information. These changes can be mailed or emailed to the Neighborhood Coordinator within 60 days of changes. Updates can be made on the Registration form, which will be available on Neighborhood Services website. Associations who are not on email will be mailed a copy of the form to the last contact.

Neighborhood Update: Each year a reminder will be sent for associations to update their contact information with Neighborhood Services. Forms will be sent by email (mailed to those organizations who do not use email) and be available on the Neighborhood Services Web page.