



# Build and Sustain Partnerships

Organizations can accomplish great things when working with other organizations. This could be as small as asking for advice on a problem or as big as applying for a grant together. Lansing is full of community-focused individuals and organizations so don't pass on the opportunity to work with a group that can help to make your organization the strongest it can be.

## Potential Community Partners

**1. Neighborhood Organizations:** Talk with your fellow neighborhood leaders about events, issues, or techniques for running your organization. Oftentimes two different organizations deal with the same experiences, and can be a great resource for each other. This can include another neighborhood organization, or a community watch. See if there are any projects that you can work on together. Go to <http://lansingmi.gov/842/Neighborhoods> for information on specific neighborhood organizations.

**2. Neighborhood Roundtables:** These are monthly meetings to connect with the Neighborhood Resource Team and other community leaders who are succeeding at creating change in their neighborhoods. Contact the Director of the Department of Neighborhoods and Citizen Engagement, Andi Crawford ([Andi.Crawford@lansingmi.gov](mailto:Andi.Crawford@lansingmi.gov)) for more information.

**3. Community Organizations:** Community organizations (such as Allen Neighborhood Center) can provide a network of contacts and resources for organizations, such as financial resources, legal assistance, and volunteer recruitment. Go to <http://lansingmi.gov/1414/Community-Organizations> for information on specific community organizations

**4. Commercial Associations:** Commercial associations are focused on promoting economic development and business relations in a neighborhood. By working with your commercial association, you can bridge the gap between businesses and homes in your community.

**5. Businesses:** See if businesses want to advertise for your organization or perhaps a business in your neighborhood would be willing to provide discounts or coupons for neighborhood residents.

**6. School/Church:** Schools and churches often act as pillars of their neighborhood, so connecting your neighborhood organization with them is key. Schools and churches can be used for meeting locations, volunteer recruitment, connections to social services, or financial resources, such as acting as a fiduciary for a grant.



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## Examples of Successful Partnerships

- In Lansing, a commercial association and two neighborhood associations teamed up to administer a massive parks and trails project on the West Side. Their partnership allowed them to successfully apply for large grants, and have enough resources and manpower to successfully manage the problem.
- At least one realtor in town has a personal policy that he will donate to a neighborhood association, upon request, 10% of his retained commission from any home listed and sold through him in that neighborhood.
- A local print shop may print a newsletter for free or for a reduced fee in exchange for a banner ad acknowledging the store. Or a local business might underwrite all or a portion of the cost of the newsletter for free ad space.
- A manager at a sporting goods store included one neighborhood on her list of people who can shop (with sizable discounts) on “Friends and Family Night” at the store. Many people from the neighborhood bought sporting goods for themselves and for Christmas gifts. The manager’s sales that night not only beat the other stores, but also set a record for the event. In return, the manager donates gift certificates for raffle prizes at the neighborhood’s annual holiday dinner.
- One church hosted a back-to-school rally and donated school supplies to children in an Eastside neighborhood. They also hosted a community picnic where raffle prizes were equally divided among members of the congregation and the neighborhood.
- One resident had a problem with neighbors throwing trash and large items over her radio station’s back fence and onto her property. She met with her neighbors and cut a deal that they could use the station’s dumpster once a month to get rid of large items. This arrangement keeps her maintenance costs down and gives residents a place to put large trash items.
- At one school, signs were bought and installed with neighborhood grant money. These are used to promote neighborhood and school activities. There is also more of a trend toward integration with neighborhood schools, whereby neighborhood news is printed in the school newsletter, and updates from schools are included in neighborhood news. Also representatives attend each other’s meetings to share information.