



Create a Neighborhood Group

If you are new to your neighborhood, or your neighborhood lacks a neighborhood organization, or if you simply want to address an issue that no one else in your neighborhood seems to be acting on, then you want to identify others who are also interested in addressing it.

Types of Neighborhood Groups

There is no one right organizational structure for a neighborhood group. The key is to figure out what is best for your neighborhood. You may decide that a loosely structured group is ideal for your area. Maybe you want a strong neighborhood association. Or maybe you only want to focus on crime and public safety. Organization structure should be decided early on by the leaders of your group.

Org Type	Advantages	Disadvantages
No Formal Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Limited energy put into organizational maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Can't open bank accounts •Can't participate in City's CDBG Trash Pickup program •Must partner with another organization to apply for Mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Board grants •Less 'clout' with officials
Neighborhood Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Required phone trees are fantastic resource •Can Participate in City's CDBG Trash Pick-up •Strong focus on public safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Some organizational upkeep required: •Coordinator, Block Captains, phone tree, and annual meetings •Focus is limited to Public Safety
Neighborhood Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Can apply for Mayor's NAB grants •Can participate in City's CDBG Trash Pick-up •Can obtain EIN# from Feds for establishing a bank account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Maintenance of organization can be rather involved



Create a Neighborhood Group (ctnd.)

First Steps

Organize Neighbors: Start talking to neighbors you are acquainted with, and see if they are interested in starting a new organization. If so, have them help reach out to other neighbors.

Discuss the Issues: Talk informally to your neighbors about what are the important issues that your new organization should address.

Determine Leadership: Determine who out of the people you talked to would be good people for the dedicated core leadership of the organization.

Planning for the First Meeting

Now that you have a leadership team, invite your leadership partners to your home to help with plans and arrangements for a meeting with everyone in the neighborhood. At the leaders meeting be prepared to:

- Discuss conditions in your block and neighborhood that are of concern.
- Talk about the great things in your neighborhood and how to utilize and promote them.
- Decide if it is necessary to form an organization, and if so, how it should be structured.
- Determine the geographical boundaries of the proposed organization.
- Set a time and place for a meeting that invites all the residents within the proposed geographical boundaries to be held in a home, school, church or hall.
- Agree on a plan for inviting everyone to the meeting, and for how it shall be conducted, what shall be on the agenda, etc.

Additional Information

For more information on neighborhood organization creation, leadership and financial management, and event planning, see the [Neighborhood Resource Handbook](http://mi-lansing.civicplus.com/842/Neighborhoods), at <http://mi-lansing.civicplus.com/842/Neighborhoods>. You can also contact the Neighborhood Resource Coordinator, *Andi Crawford*, at 517-614-9695, or andi.crawford@lansingmi.gov.