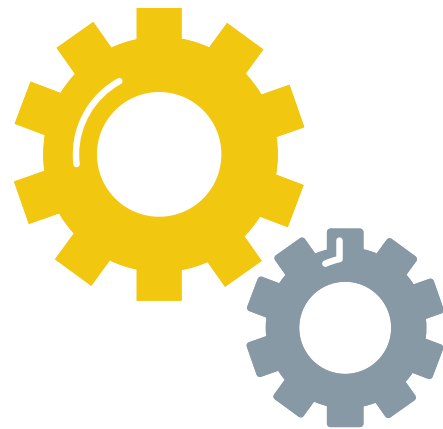
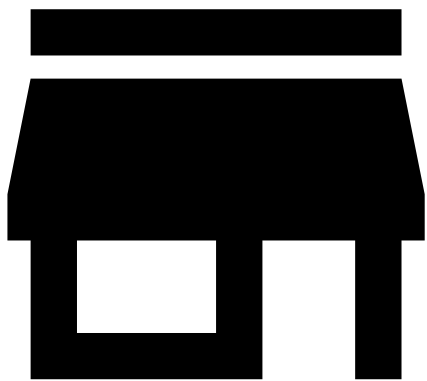


City of Amarillo

Neighborhood Association



First Year Toolkit

Table of Contents

Page 3	About Neighborhood Associations
Page 5	First Year Neighborhood Association Checklist
Page 7	Sample Bylaws
Page 11	Projects in Motion Annual Action Plan Template
Page 13	Projects in Motion Template
Page 14	Sample Meeting Agenda
Page 15	Sample Meeting Minutes
Page 17	Board Member Application
Page 19	Member Application

About Neighborhood Associations



What is a Neighborhood Association?

A neighborhood association is a group of residents who meet regularly to accomplish goals in their neighborhoods, such as crime prevention or litter control for example. The association may include homeowners and renters, apartment residents, business owners, school and church officials, and members of nonprofit organizations.

Neighborhood associations help represent neighborhood residents to elected officials, identify challenges and problems in the neighborhood, support change and improvement efforts, help resolve conflicts, provide volunteers for community projects, and find and get resources to make the neighborhood a better place to live.

Although neighborhoods are different, the motivations for organizing are often the same – bringing people together to shape change.

In Amarillo, neighborhood associations play an important role in the Neighborhood Planning Initiative by overseeing implementation of the adopted neighborhood plans. By meeting certain organizational criteria, they become recognized by the City of Amarillo as the official partner for plan implementation. Known as the Recognized Neighborhood Association Program, the partnership ensures a mutual commitment to the neighborhood plan goals.

Levels of Organization

Voluntary Informal Neighborhood Group — This is an informal gathering of neighbors that may come together to participate in getting-to-know-you activities and neighborhood crime watch groups. These groups are not incorporated with the Texas Secretary of State and do not pursue filing of 501(c)3 tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Voluntary Formal Neighborhood Association — This is a more organized group of residents. Neighborhood associations adopt bylaws, meet at regular intervals, and can collect dues on a voluntary basis. These groups file a Certificate of Formation with the Secretary of State so they can be recognized as a non-profit corporation and may apply for 501(c)3 status with the IRS. They typically manage a bank account for organization funds.

Mandatory Homeowners Associations — These groups are typically created and filed legally by the subdivision developer. Participation is mandated and the HOA generally exists to enforce rules for the properties and their residents. The HOA is managed by a Board of Directors and those who purchase property within an HOA's jurisdiction automatically become members and are required to pay dues and follow the codes, covenants and restrictions (CC&Rs) which are recorded legal documents in the county records.

Public Improvement District (PID) — PIDS are designated areas where property owners elect to pay a special assessment for improvements and services within that area. The services must benefit the PID area only and are supplemental to any City service. PIDs are created by the authority of Chapter 372 of the Texas Local Code. Projects may include entry treatments, additional city park amenities, and maintenance and improvement of common areas.

About the Recognized Neighborhood Association

What does the RNA program do?

The RNA program formally recognizes the partnership between the City and the neighborhood association as the one and official partner for coordination on neighborhood plan projects and other initiatives such as grants. This allows for direct communication between the City and RNAs while also helping them understand how to navigate local government and be active participants in the process.

How do neighborhoods become Recognized?

Neighborhoods must meet certain eligibility criteria that ensures that they are running transparent, organized associations that are open to all residents, business owners and property owners within their boundaries. They must demonstrate their eligibility through an application process and are then Recognized by a resolution adopted by City Council.

Is there a fee?

There is no fee to apply for Recognition.

Are neighborhoods required to participate?

If you have a neighborhood plan adopted as part of Amarillo's comprehensive plan, you will be required to meet the eligibility criteria through an application process in year one and then renew your application each year. Other neighborhoods may also become Recognized provided they meet the eligibility criteria.

What is the eligibility criteria?*

1. Be governed by a board of directors with a minimum of seven members in regular attendance. The composition of the board shall include at least one representative of each of the following types of members: resident; property owner; non-profit/institutional/educational; neighborhood business owner; and at-large providing expertise in other priority areas as identified by the organization such as finance, historic preservation, marketing, etc.
2. Maintain open membership to any person who lives, rents, or owns any real property in the neighborhood.
3. Be an organized entity through the filing of Certificate of Formation with the State of Texas and abide by adopted bylaws.
4. Establish and maintain 501 (c)(3) nonprofit status as a tax-exempt, charitable organization approved by the Internal Revenue Service.
5. Hold an annual meeting at which all members vote.
6. Hold regularly scheduled board of directors' meetings at which business is conducted in an organized manner following best practices for meeting procedures.
7. Hold regularly scheduled community meetings at which all members are invited to participate in ongoing neighborhood initiatives.
8. Post notice of all meetings in advance in public places and in readily obtained online and print publications.
9. Have clearly stated boundaries.
10. Not discriminate in policies, recommendations, or actions.
11. Follow a strategic plan of work demonstrating active engagement in projects that improve neighborhood quality of life.

**PIDs and Homeowners Associations are not eligible at this time.*

Can multiple organizations be Recognized within the same neighborhood boundary?

No. Recognition of neighborhoods with overlapping boundaries is not allowed.

Neighborhood Association First Year Checklist



- **Start with a core group of people who agree to meet regularly to begin organizing.**
 - This core group will be responsible for getting the neighborhood association on its feet and moving in the direction of being an established and official association. Interim executive positions will be decided by the group to delegate and organize responsibilities. This core group will be completing the steps to become a Recognized Neighborhood Association with the City of Amarillo.
- **Recruit board members.**
 - Minimum of seven (7) board members is required.
 - Determine interim officer positions.
 - *Sample Board Member application form attached.*
- **Create communication tools.**
 - Set-up emails for officer positions.
 - Create a logo-
 - Can use neighborhood plan funding to hire a graphic designer to create a logo. Must have three different estimates and vote as a Board on which designer to hire.
 - Create a website-
 - Can use google or other free website builders to create a website that will be updated consistently with news in the neighborhood and the association. Can post event information, meeting minutes, photos etc. on website.
 - City employee may assist in website building and then pass on information to the Communications Officer.
 - Social Media-
 - Create one or more social media accounts for the association to post about meetings, volunteer opportunities and events.
 - Facebook is a great tool and easy to manage.
- **Begin drafting bylaws and file your Certificate of Formation with the Texas Secretary of State.**
 - The bylaws, along with the Certificate of Formation, are the “governing documents” of the organization.
 - The bylaws will establish the procedures for the operation of the association which include voting procedures, financial controls, and the structure of the board of directors and membership.
 - Filing a Certificate of Formation with the Secretary of State establishes your organization as a legal entity. The form requires that you identify some items that will be established in the bylaws, but you are not required to file bylaws at the time you file the Certificate. You must list four initial directors and identify if you will have members. Note: the RNA program requires membership.
 - After the organization obtains its Certificate of Formation, it must hold an organizational meeting, called by the incorporator or a majority of the directors. At this meeting you will adopt bylaws, elect officers, and determine if you will open a bank account among other items.
 - *Sample bylaws template attached.*
- **Work on Projects in Motion Annual Action Plan**
 - Recognized Neighborhood Associations are required to work from an annual action plan. These actions plans are the high priority implementation projects that are known as Projects in Motion.
 - A Projects in Motion submittal form is required for projects that are in partnership with the City of Amarillo.
 - *Blank Projects in Motion Form attached.*

- **Work on becoming an official 501 c(3) non-profit organization.**
 - Neighborhood associations are not required to be a non-profit organization; however, they are required to file a Certificate of Formation to be a recognized, legal entity in the State of Texas. Having a non-profit status is highly recommended for outside funding and grant eligibility.
 - Connect with Legal Aid of Northwest Texas for assistance on obtaining the association's non-profit status.
- **Recruit members and run monthly meetings.**
 - Members are important for a neighborhood association to succeed. Recruit members in your community by visiting different churches, stores, and small businesses in the neighborhood.
 - *Sample membership application form attached.*
- **Complete board training with the Amarillo Area Foundation.**
 - The Amarillo Area Foundation offers training and resources to area non-profits. Working with the City of Amarillo, they will sponsor a two-hour training for all new neighborhood associations with adopted plans. This training should be completed towards the end of your first year. Contact neighborhood planning staff to assist in scheduling your sponsored session.
- **File as a Recognized Neighborhood Association with the City of Amarillo.**
 - RNAs are the official neighborhood partner for plan implementation.
 - To become a Recognized Neighborhood Association, the group must meet the eligibility standards listed in the Ordinance (4-12-5) and included in the Neighborhood Association Toolkit on page 2. By the end of your first year, you should be eligible to apply for RNA status.
 - The application is provided by the Planning Department and requires the following information:
 - Official name
 - Official boundary
 - The name, email, mailing address, and telephone number of the primary contact whom the City or a member of the public may contact.
 - A roster for the board of directors including officer positions; the schedule for electing directors and officers; and board of directors' composition.
 - The number of persons the organization represents and number of dues paying members, if any.
 - Methods used to communicate with members and the neighborhood.
 - A copy of the organization's articles of incorporation and/or bylaws.
 - The time and place of the board and community meetings; and,
 - Agenda and minutes of the required annual general membership meeting.
 - A copy of a current work plan or strategic plan demonstrating active engagement in activities that improve the quality of life in the respective neighborhood.

Sample Bylaws for your Neighborhood Association

Bylaws of the _____

Article I. Name

The name of this organization shall be the _____.

Article II. Boundary

The geographic boundaries of the _____ shall be _____.

A map is provided as Appendix 1.

Article III. Purpose

The purpose of the _____ shall be to form a positive coalition to support projects and programs which promote the common good of all our members; to inform, educate and provide an open forum for the free discussion of all issues which affect our neighborhood and promote cooperative action; to build a better neighborhood by reducing and preventing crime, to develop a cleaner, safer, healthier neighborhood and improve the quality of life for its residents; to solve problems which exist or arise within our boundaries; and to enable our members to work together to determine the needs of our neighborhood and fully utilize all available resources to respond to those needs.

Article IV. Membership

Section 1. Individual membership shall be open to any person who is at least 18 years of age who resides, owns property or operates a business within the boundaries described above. Membership shall be open to a representative from any organization, government agency, nonprofit entity, business, church or school who owns property or meets within the boundaries described above.

Section 2. An individual member shall have only one vote. A representative member shall have only one vote and no organization or entity shall have more than one voting representative. The representative member must have specific authority from the governing board of entity that he / she represents. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted.

Section 3. It shall be the responsibility of the Board of Directors to maintain a current membership list of the association, which shall be open and available for inspection upon request. This list shall be comprised of persons and entities that qualify for membership who have enrolled as members by registering their attendance at any general meeting, program or event of the Association. The membership list is not to be used for business solicitation.

Section 4. There shall be no mandatory dues or fees required for membership in the Association.

Section 5. The organization shall hold they shall hold regularly scheduled community meetings and/or events at which all members are invited to participate in ongoing neighborhood initiatives.

Article V. Directors and Officers

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall be composed of not less than _____ nor more than _____ members to be elected by the membership at a general meeting of the Association. The directors shall be elected for a two-year term and at least one-half shall rotate off each year to be replaced or re-elected. No director shall serve more than six (6) consecutive years. Those members serving on the board at the time of these bylaws being approved shall choose numbers to determine who shall serve a full two-year term or a one-year term to begin the rotation. Members who choose even numbers will serve only a one-year term.

Section 2. Each year, the Board of Directors shall choose from its membership the following officers:

- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Section 3. Directors and officers shall serve the term for which they are elected or until replaced. The Board of Directors may combine two or more officers' positions for convenience and ease of operations or may designate other officers, as it deems necessary and appropriate. No officer shall serve more than three (3) consecutive years in the same office.

Section 4. Duties of Officers are as follows:

Chairperson: The Chairperson shall preside at general membership meetings of the Association and meetings of its Board of Directors.

Vice-Chairperson: The Vice-Chairperson shall act as the aide to the Chairperson and shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

Secretary: The Secretary shall maintain accurate minutes of meetings of the general membership and meetings of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall be the custodian of all official records of the Association.

Treasurer: The Treasurer shall have custody of all funds and shall keep a full and accurate account of all receipts, disbursements and expenditures of the Association. The Treasurer shall present a financial report at each general membership meeting of the Association and meetings of its Board of Directors.

Section 5. The business and affairs of the Association shall be managed by its Board of Directors. The Directors shall in all cases act as a board and may adopt such rules and regulations for the conduct of meetings and management of the Association, as they may deem proper.

Section 6. The Association or its Board of Directors shall not enter into any contract in the name of the Association, except as recommended by the Board and approved by the general membership.

Section 7. At any meeting of the Board of Directors, a simple majority shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Section 8. Any or all members of the Board of Directors may be removed for cause by a majority vote of the members attending at general membership meeting of the Association.

Section 9. In the event that a vacancy occurs in the Board of Directors, such vacancy shall be filled by a majority vote of the Directors.

Section 10. No members of the Board of Directors of the Association shall receive any form of compensation from any source in connection with the discharge of his / her duty as an officer.

Section 11. The Board of Directors shall meet at least _____ times each year.

Article VI. Meetings

Section 1. There shall be an annual membership meeting of the Association during the month of _____ at a time and place designated by the Board of the Directors. At the annual meeting, members will receive reports on the association from leadership, elect their officers, and vote on the Annual Projects in Motion Action Plan .The election of the Board of Directors and the presentation of annual reports should be held in the first half of the calendar year, before renewing as a Recognized Neighborhood Association.

Section 2. A meeting of the general membership may be called at any time by any one of the following:

- A. The Chairperson;
- B. A majority of the Board of Directors; or,
- C. A petition signed by no less than the number of members required for a quorum.

Section 3. Notice of any meeting of the general membership or meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given in accordance with procedures established so as to assure reasonable and sufficient notice. Notice shall state the place, date and time of the meeting and the general purpose for which the meeting is held.

Section 4. At any meeting of the general membership for which proper notice has been given, a quorum shall not be less than one more than twice the number of total voting members of the Board of Directors (Example: 12 voting board members X 2 + 1 = 25).

Article VII. Proceedings

Section 1. All proceeding of meetings of the Association and its Board of Directors shall be conducted according to generally accepted practices of parliamentary procedure.

Section 2. The resolution of any internal dispute or any grievance against the Association or its Board of Directors shall be the responsibility of a mediation committee comprised of three persons elected from the general membership.

Article VIII. Committees

The Board of Directors may create and appoint standing or temporary committees with such authority and responsibilities, as it deems necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of the Association. Chairpersons of standing or temporary committees shall be non-voting, ex-officio members of the

Board of Directors, unless otherwise elected as a regular Board member and shall report directly to the Board of Directors.

Article IX. Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any duly-convened general membership meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that notice of the proposed amendment shall have been given at the general membership meeting immediately prior to the one at which the vote will be taken.

Article X. Dissolution

This Association may be dissolved by the same procedure as that provided for amending the bylaws. All debts of the Association must be paid and provisions made for the responsible disposition of any assets.

These bylaws adopted this _____ day of _____, 20__

Chairperson _____

Secretary _____

Neighborhood Association (Name)

Projects in Motion Annual Action Plan

The Projects in Motion Annual Action Plan is an annual overview of the high priority projects that the neighborhood association would like to see implemented in the calendar year. This action plan allows the neighborhood to decide which projects are the highest priority for the community and allocate funding for projects.

Year: _____

Approved by Neighborhood Association Board of Directors on (date): _____

Project Summary – Listed in Priority Order

Project 1:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No

If no, other Funding Source:

Plan Goal or Strategy:

Committee or Project Manager:

Project 2:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No

If no, other Funding Source:

Plan Goal or Strategy:

Committee or Project Manager:

Project 3:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No

If no, other Funding Source:

Plan Goal or Strategy:

Committee or Project Manager:

Project 4:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No

If no, other Funding Source:

Plan Goal or Strategy:

Committee or Project Manager:

Project 5:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No

If no, other Funding Source:

Plan Goal or Strategy:

Committee or Project Manager:

Project 6:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No
Plan Goal or Strategy:
Committee or Project Manager:

If no, other Funding Source:

Project 7:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No
Plan Goal or Strategy:
Committee or Project Manager:

If no, other Funding Source:

Project 8:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No
Plan Goal or Strategy:
Committee or Project Manager:

If no, other Funding Source:

Project 9:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No
Plan Goal or Strategy:
Committee or Project Manager:

If no, other Funding Source:

Project 10:

Funded by Prop #1? Yes or No
Plan Goal or Strategy:
Committee or Project Manager:

If no, other Funding Source:

City of Amarillo Neighborhood Planning Projects in Motion Submittal Form



Neighborhood Association:

Project Name:

Date Approved by Board of Directors:

Submitted by:

Project Description:	.
Project Lead/Champion:	
Project Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Quick Action (Short-Term) <input type="checkbox"/> Transformative (Longer-Term)
Relationship to Plan:	Focus Area: Goal: Strategy:
Total Estimated Cost:	
City Partnership Needed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Action Steps/Summary:	
Expected Completion Date:	
Funding Source:	<input type="checkbox"/> Neighborhood Plan Implementation Funds (Formerly designated at the 2016 Proposition #1 Bond Funding) – <i>Estimated Amount</i> \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Community Investment Program (CIP) – <i>Estimated Amount</i> \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Grant – <i>Estimated Amount</i> \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Other funding source provided by neighborhood – <i>Amount</i> \$ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Undetermined – <i>Amount</i> \$ _____
Example Photos:	

Sample Neighborhood Association Agenda
Location
Date and Time

- I. Call to Order at ____.**
 - a. Attendance –
 - b. Absent –
 - c. Guests –
- II. Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings**
- III. Officer Reports**
 - a. President
 - b. Vice President –
 - c. Treasurer –
 - d. Communications –
- IV. First Year Neighborhood Association Toolkit**
 - a. Non-Profit Status Update
 - b. Vote on Association Logo
- V. Bond Project Reports**
 - a. Monthly Clean-up
 - b. Tree Planting
 - c. Street Lighting
- VI. New Business**
- VII. Adjourn at ____.**

**If reports are to be given, please have them emailed 48 hours before meeting day & time for everyone to read ahead of time. 3 min. will be given for a brief summary/update since the email & questions.*

Sample Neighborhood Association Minutes
Location
Date and Time

I. Call to Order at ____.

- a. Attendance – 6
- b. Absent – 1
- c. Guests – 11

II. Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings

- a. Motion to approve minutes made by Vice President and seconded by Treasurer. Approved by all.

III. Officer Reports

- a. President
 - i. Gave updates regarding news with City Council and how it affects the neighborhoods.
- b. Vice President –
 - i. Presented updates on applied grants for extra funding of implementation projects.
- c. Treasurer –
 - i. Gave a quarterly review of the neighborhood allocation funds, what they have currently spent and how much money they have left over to spend.
- d. Communications –
 - i. No updates. Reminded everyone to share the Facebook page so other residents may find it and stay up to date with association activities and meetings.

IV. First Year Neighborhood Association Toolkit

- a. Non-Profit Status Update
 - i. Paperwork has been submitted and waiting on approval.
- b. Vote on Association Logo
 - i. Logo was presented by communications officer. The group agreed the logo fairly represented the association and neighborhood. President made a motion to vote on logo, Board Member 2 seconded the motion. Vote passed 6-0.

V. Bond Project Reports

- a. Monthly Clean-up
 - i. Committee leader reported the amount of trash picked up at last months clean-up and shared pictures of the filled containers.

- b. Tree Planting
 - i. Committee Leader shared they are working with the City on finding entities to donate tree seedlings to plant in the neighborhood. Reported that they have 50 volunteers for their annual neighborhood tree planting event.
- c. Street Lighting
 - i. Committee leader reported that lighting installation will begin in two weeks and the project would be complete in 4 months.

VI. New Business

- a. Discuss future projects to start.

VII. Adjourn at ____.

**If reports are to be given, please have them emailed 48 hours before meeting day & time for everyone to read ahead of time. 3 min. will be given for a brief summary/update since the email & questions.*

Neighborhood Association Board Member Application Form

Full Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone #: _____

What role on the Neighborhood Association Board would you like to represent?

- Resident
- Business Owner
- Property Owner
- Faith-Based/Non-Profit/Education
- At Large Community Member

Are you interested in an officer position (e.g. President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc.)?

Briefly describe below why you are interested in serving on the Neighborhood Association Board and what do you hope to accomplish?

What strengths, skills, and insights do you believe you could bring to the Neighborhood Association Board?

Please list your affiliations with other organizations or boards in the neighborhood.

If your neighborhood has an adopted neighborhood plan, please indicate the plan priorities that are of most interest to you:

Do you have any potential conflicts of interest with serving on the Neighborhood Association Board? Yes No

If yes, please describe:

Neighborhood Association Board Member Agreement

I _____, understand that as a member of the Neighborhood Association Board, I have an ethical responsibility to ensure that the Association does the best work possible in pursuit of improving the conditions in our neighborhood.

As part of my responsibilities as a Board member,

- I will interpret the association's work and values to the community, represent the Association, and act as a spokesperson.*
- I will annually attend at least 75 percent of the board meetings, committee meetings, and special events sponsored by the Association.*
- I will serve in a leadership role in one or more projects.*
- I will act in the best interests of the Association, and excuse myself from discussions and votes where I have a conflict of interest.*
- I will stay informed about what is going on in the Association. I will ask questions and request information. I will participate in and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies, and other Board matters.*
- I will work in good faith with other Board members as partners toward achieving our goals.*

Signature

Date

Neighborhood Association Membership Form

Thank you for your interest in our neighborhood!

There are no dues for membership. You will receive communication about events, projects, and other important neighborhood information. Your participation helps us build community to shape change.

Full Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Circle One: Cell Home Work Other

If you provided a cell number, do we have permission to use text as a form of communication? Yes No

I am a (circle all that apply): Commercial Property Owner Homeowner Renter Business

Owner Employee of a Neighborhood Business/Organization

Comments/Other _____

My hobbies and skills include:

I am interested in:

Neighborhood Clean-Up Events

Neighborhood Watch Programs

Neighborhood Beautification Projects (landscaping, painting, murals, tree planting)

Volunteering for a Committee

Volunteering as a Board Member

Additional ideas and concerns I have for my neighborhood:

Signature

Date

I agree to be contacted regarding my membership, community meetings, volunteer opportunities, and updates about ongoing project.