



Neighborhood and Civic Association Guide Document

To help unite, educate, and promote
successful Neighborhood Associations in the
City of St. Petersburg, Florida



Introduction

The Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA) is a non-profit organization that works to improve the quality of life in St. Petersburg, Florida. It is made up of over 40 member organizations, including neighborhood, civic, and business associations. CONA works with local governments and Chambers of Commerce to address issues that affect the quality of life in the city, and provides a forum for bringing neighborhood issues to public attention. CONA also provides leadership development and training through its annual CONA Leadership program, and offers assistance to neighborhood and civic associations throughout the St. Petersburg area.

CONA is a valuable resource for residents of St. Petersburg. It provides a way for residents to have a voice in local government, and works to improve the quality of life in the city.

Author:

Megan Basnett

Contributions By:

Susan Ajoc

Sarah Lampe

With many additions based on previous versions of CONA Guide documents. More on the history can be found in Version 1 of this document: [CONA Guide Version 1.pdf](#)

The intention is to keep the document as current and relevant as possible.

- Have a question that wasn't answered?
- Do you have an experience you think would be helpful to include?
- Would you like to suggest a topic we should explore/ include?
- Did you find an error?

Please reach out with any feedback or suggestions to Megan at newsletter@stpetecon.org.

Changes and updates will be made at the end of each calendar year with the intention of an improved version available in January. Feedback will be collected throughout the year.



CONAs Vision and Mission

CONA's Vision:

CONA is committed to maintaining its stature as a leading community organization for building a safe, high quality, and seamless city in order to meet the current and future needs of our diverse community. The vital role CONA plays in strengthening and advocating for neighborhoods through our many initiatives and activities contributes to a city of neighborhoods offering quality of life, and embracing mutual respect and appreciation among all people.

CONA's Mission:

- Unite existing neighborhood organizations dedicated to protecting, improving and promoting their area and to foster the formation of such organizations
- Provide education, training and guidance for neighborhood leaders in marshaling resources to better their community
- Expand the pool of skilled and motivated neighborhood and community leaders.
- Provide a resource for sharing of information and tools for neighborhood development
- Promote communication and cooperation between member organizations and the community at large
- Provide a forum for member organizations and act as their advocate with the City of Saint Petersburg and other local, state, and federal government agencies and officials



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About This Guide

CONA is a community formed by members with a vast amount of experiences in Neighborhood Association and organizational leadership. We bring together a diverse group of neighborhood leaders for knowledge sharing, mentoring, and support in order to unite, educate, and promote.

We have worked to put together a document for anyone who wants to gain some of the insights from those in the community with long-term experience. However, we hope that you will reach out to us if you need additional information, have comments or additions, or just want to connect.

You are reading the 2024 updates. This means that the information you are reading is up-to-date as of January 1, 2024. However, the world is constantly changing, and so is the information that is relevant to it. For this reason, we will be releasing new updates every year to ensure that the advice you are getting is as accurate and helpful as possible. If you do not find the advice you are looking for in this update, please reach out to us and let us know. We will do our best to provide you with the information you need.

Aron Bryce, CONA President

president@stpeteconacona.org

and/or

Megan Basnett, Author

newsletter@stpeteconacona.org



Why Organize

- Develop a cleaner, safer, healthier neighborhood and improve the quality of life for residents.
- Empower residents to have a voice and work toward and achieve common neighborhood goals, a unified vision of who we are as a neighborhood.
- Work toward a safer neighborhood by reducing and preventing crime through block watch groups.
- Promote friendship, reduce conflict, and foster a sense of concern and caring among people in the neighborhood.
- Provide a means of communicating with neighbors.
- Encourage the discussion of ideas that affect the neighborhood and promote cooperative action.
- Organize neighborhood improvement projects, help the older residents with yard work, and assist those unable to clean up their property by themselves.
- Promote and celebrate diversity in the neighborhood.
- Preserve the unique historical heritage of the community by improving planning methods.
- Create open communication networks with government officials, businesses, and other groups. Make them partners in your neighborhood, all working towards a strong neighborhood.
- Protect youth and support and strengthen neighborhood schools.
- Develop better awareness and access to the services and agencies of the school, city, and county governments.
- Seek citywide recognition (including realtors') of the neighborhood's strengths, needs, and accomplishments.
- Fully utilize all the resources available to the neighborhood.
- Solve problems that exist/arise within the neighborhood.

Homeowners Associations are separate legal entities from Neighborhood Associations, which are voluntary. Homeowners Associations are responsible for maintaining common areas and enforcing deed restrictions, and membership is mandatory for all property owners within the development. They can enact and enforce maintenance and design standards.

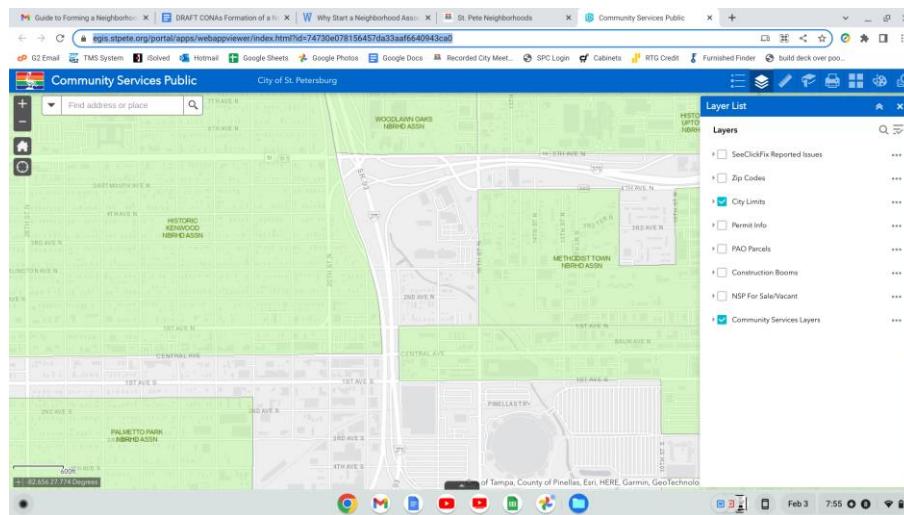


Where to Begin

You already have. If you are currently doing your research, you are on the right path. So let's start with basics, have you confirmed there is not currently an active association?

1. Do not look at google maps to designate boundaries and neighborhoods. It is highly inaccurate. To search for your house on the GIS map of official neighborhood boundaries, follow the link to the Community Services site:

<https://egis.stpete.org/portal/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=74730e078156457da33aaf6640943ca0>



2. If it turns out you are already within a neighborhood association boundary, don't stop there! Look them up and contact the president to see if you can get more involved... if you didn't know they existed, they could likely use some help!
3. If it turns out you found an association had existed at one point, but is currently inactive, see our section on ["Reestablishing your Neighborhood Association."](#)
4. If it looks like you are surrounded by an association but for some reason the block you live on is not included. Please visit our ["Redrawing Boundaries"](#) section.
5. Finally, you learn that your area had never organized. You know the benefits of organizing and now have an opportunity to create an association, brand your area, and build the character that is created by your neighborhood association. Please visit the ["Organizing an Association"](#) section.



Organizing an Association

Starting from scratch? You already went through the steps of 'Where to Begin' and you feel pretty confident there's no active or semi-recent associations. Let's get started!!

1. First and foremost, email Susan P. Ajoc at susan.ajoc@stpete.org (Director, Community Services Department, City of St Pete) and let her know your address and your intentions. The reason this is so important is not only because the City is a vital part of your journey, but she will also connect you with anyone else that has reached out with similar intentions in your area. The Community Services department will be a source of history, encourage connections and support you in understanding the technicalities of forming.
2. Begin gathering other interested parties. Do not limit this to 'friends.' We will discuss the complications with that approach in the [Board Complications](#) section.
3. Go electronic. You will be able to leave door hangers at the houses, free of charge, in the future, but start with the most efficient approach. Create a 'group' on Facebook, same on Instagram and link the accounts, create a dedicated email account and direct people who are interested in getting involved to email you so you will have a collection to build from. Talk to neighbors, post on your personal page, post to NextDoor if you would like. Be open to information gathering, put out your reasons for wanting to organize. What is your goal? A healthy and committed 4-5 people. You are looking for a diverse group of talents and commitment who may not be best friends, but share a vision and a respectful dynamic. Groups on Facebook allow for better communication, vetting, and interaction versus a Page.
4. Once you have 4-5 neighbors with a very clear vision of how they will operate together and are willing to be the initial officers. Don't move forward on official business just yet.... Come up with some basics like a possible name. The name may come from the platted subdivision within the proposed boundaries of the future association. The City or the Property Appraiser can help identify the subdivisions within your community. Put out a survey and ask for feedback on the name, this helps people get engaged and you will need to show these efforts for official recognition of your Association. Later, use the same approach for a logo creating contest for your neighborhood.
5. The city will provide you with free door hangers so put information on a meeting announced as a get together to discuss forming an association. Community Services may also be able to steer you towards a mini-grant to throw a party/ social/ event to stir up more attendees.
6. If it is time to move forward and you have confirmed your boundaries, have collected a solid group that will likely act as your 'interim officers,' then your next step will be to organize a meeting with all residents invited to formalize your intent to establish. Send the meeting time/ location/ intent to the Community Services office with a request for



the free door hangers. Electronic notice is great, as an 'addition' but the door hangers not only help to reach every house, they allow for another opportunity to show you have organized a group of active and committed neighbors. Take a map of the neighborhood, assign sections and seek volunteers to cover sections.

7. At the gathering you advertised, introduce yourself, the interim core team and ask if anyone else would like to be involved or have any committee ideas. Share your goals and let them know before voting next year on the new board members, that you will all review and fine-tune the mission together. This is where patience, perseverance and consistency will need to play out. Susan's feedback is necessary because there may be a plethora of scenarios like a separate group ALSO wanting to re-establish or you may even encounter burned bridges and resistance.
 - a. Identify the City Community Services Officer (CSO) and Councilperson for your neighborhood. See <https://egis.stpete.org/citymain/> and <https://police.stpete.org/community-service-section/> invite them both to stop by the meeting/ event. Please reach out to the CONA President president@stpetecon.org and Vice President vicepresident@stpetecon.org. If they can not be in attendance, they will want the opportunity to find an Executive Committee Member that can be.
8. Perform as much outreach as possible electronically and in-person prompting questions such as if anyone has future committee ideas. Share your goals and let them know before voting next year on the new board members, that you will all review and fine-tune the mission together.
9. Communicate your progress with Susan Ajoc/ Community Services. This continues to be a step due to the essential nature of keeping this communication open.
10. Set goals. An objective in forming and a mission for the organization.
11. Establish 'Interim Team' Officers: They must include President, Vice President, and Secretary. Ideally also a Treasurer and one Member-at-Large for an odd number essential for voting. It is not a bad thing to start small. You will find even if you grow to 7 Members-at-Large, smaller groups move just as efficiently... sometimes more so than boards that went for quantity versus quality. Come up with a date you can all meet, this will be your 'unofficial' board meeting.
12. This is where it is important to email Susan Ajoc/ Community Services with the information on your interim team and when you have established your first 'un-official' board meeting. Along with that communication, this is an important step to ask what, if anything, is remaining for you to be officially recognized and added to the map of the city's recognized associations.
13. Create by-laws. We have a draft copy for your review and edit. So much of what you need to know is explained in your by-laws and you will feel a lot more comfortable with board operations by reading them. There are many drafts found online, but we have



included an editable version for your convenience in making simple changes to term lengths, dates, dues, etc. This is your document. Structure it how you want the board to run. [Click Here for Draft](#)

14. Incorporate your organization with nonprofit status. This is an optional step that should be reviewed with your board. Being a non-profit allows you to qualify for many free or reduced programs, but will also require following the basic guidelines and filing annually. See more details about those specifics in our section on [How to Incorporate with a Nonprofit Status](#). There will be nominal fees for set up. Would focus on just having a couple hundred for initial startup. You can either fundraise donations or you can loan the startup money with a request for reimbursement when membership fees come in.
15. Open your bank account. Please see [When Opening a Bank Account](#).
16. From there you schedule your first official board meeting and general meeting.
17. Please click on the following for more information on [Setting Up a Successful Board](#) and [Helpful Tips for General Meetings](#).



Re-Establishing Your Neighborhood Association

You did your research and found that there was an association but it fell apart 2... 6... 15 years ago. It is great to start by being a detective. Do as much fact finding as possible, you learn so much in this process.

Suggested research:

1. Are you able to find the previous association name? If so, look on Sunbiz.org for the information on who were the officers when the organization fell out of active status.



2. First and foremost, email Susan P. Ajoc at susan.ajoc@stpete.org (Director, Community Services Department, City of St Pete) and let her know your address and your intentions. The reason this is so important is not only because the City is a vital part of your journey, but she will also connect you with anyone else that has reached out with similar intentions in your area. The Community Services department will be a source of history, encourage connections and support you in understanding technicalities of forming.
3. If you find contacts connected to the dissolved board and are able to reach them via FB, phone, email? Reach out because it doesn't hurt to learn what happened and grow from that. But it is important to note, if the name you would like to use (likely the one you just researched) is listed as 'inactive' you will be able to use that name. You would want to do so as a 'new' entity because if you try to reinstate the previous one, you will have to pay hefty fees.
4. Now you are certain there is no active association. But there is a lingering Facebook/ Social Media page... again... reach out. See if anyone answers. Figuring out to get added to the established page is your best way to reach neighbors, so do your best to make friends.



5. If there was not an established page/group, it is time to open one. They are free so it will be your most budget friendly advertising. Groups on Facebook allow for better communication and vetting.

6. If it is time to move forward and you have confirmed your boundaries, have collected a solid group that will likely act as your ‘interim officers,’ then your next step will be to organize a meeting with all residents invited to formalize your intent to establish. Send the meeting time/ location/ intent to the Community Services office with a request for the free door hangers. Electronic notice is great, as an ‘addition’ but the door hangers not only help to reach every house, they allow for another opportunity to show you have organized a group of active and committed neighbors. Take a map of the neighborhood, assign sections and seek volunteers to cover sections.
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Additional considerations:

You do not need to collect dues initially or begin financial involvement by opening bank accounts/ managing funds until you are established.

It may be helpful to have free membership at first, to get buy in and vote on the board and bylaws.

You do not need to incorporate since they will not be collecting money. If an association just applies for grants from the city and collects dues from members, and not donations from businesses, they would not have to incorporate at all.

Incorporate your organization with nonprofit status. This is an optional step that should be reviewed with your board. Being a non-profit allows you to qualify for many free or reduced programs, but will also require following the basic guidelines and filing annually. See more details about those specifics in our section on [How to Incorporate with a Nonprofit Status](#). There will be nominal fees for set up. Would focus on just having a couple hundred for initial startup. You can either fundraise donations or you can loan the startup money with a request for reimbursement when membership fees come in.



How to Incorporate with a Nonprofit Status

Becoming a Tax-Exempt Organization

Not-for-Profit organization, while not a requirement there are many benefits for a neighborhood association. The benefits include protection against liabilities, federal and state tax exemption, discounts, and the ability to legally solicit donations from residents. There are a few drawbacks including the expense and paperwork involved in obtaining the Not-for-Profit status, as well as maintaining the status. Once you become a 501(c)3 organization you can apply for tax-exempt status with the state of Florida.

The steps to becoming a 501(c)3 organization are as follows

1. Write your purpose/mission statement, this will also be included in your by-laws and used to qualify for not-for-profit tax exemption.
2. If not already established, name the organization.
3. Appoint a Board of Directors – at least 3 non-related officers
4. Establish your by-laws (see our by-laws section)
5. File paperwork to establish the corporation (Sunbiz) fee \$70.00 (add link to Sunbiz)
6. Apply for EIN through the IRS using SS-4. This can be done online at <https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/apply-for-an-employer-identification-number-ein-online>.
7. Apply for 501(c)3 status using IRS form 1023 or 1023EZ (filing fee ranges from \$250 - \$600)
8. Apply for Tax Exemption (DR-5) (Department of Revenue) https://floridarevenue.com/Forms_library/current/dr5.pdf
9. Register with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) <https://www.fdacs.gov/Forms>

CONA is here to assist you with these steps. A neighborhood association does not have to be incorporated in the State of Florida, but it is recommended as a best practice. By incorporating the association, it becomes an entity recognized by the State of Florida and can conduct business in its name, such as enter into contracts or open up a checking account. Also note, you can start your association while going through these steps.

Once established as a 501(c)3 organization the association are required to do the following each year:

1. File an annual report (Sunbiz) Fee \$61.25 yearly
2. File a 990 with IRS



3. File Solicitation of Contributions Annual Financial Reporting Form (FDACS)



By-Law Basics

It is shocking how many people serve on a neighborhood association board without ever reading the bylaws. The bylaws are a short document that outlines how the association is supposed to operate. It took me two years to read them, but it was worth it. I can now tell when I am speaking to a president of an association who has not read them, because they will ask me basic questions that are answered in the bylaws. I highly recommend that everyone on a neighborhood association board read the bylaws. If you are not comfortable reading legal documents, Robert's Rules of Order is a good resource. It is a set of rules that are used by many organizations, including neighborhood associations. By default, any debate about the functionality of a board will defer to Robert's Rules if it is not covered in the bylaws.

While we do have a basic draft available ([Click Here for Draft](#)), this document is meant to be tailored to the specific needs of your board. Please consider the following questions as you review the draft:

- How often do you want to meet? Quarterly? Monthly? Bi-monthly?
- When do you want membership to begin? The first of the year? Annually from when you join?
- Who can be a member? Is membership by household or individual?
- How long should board terms be? One year? Two years? Staggered terms?
- When is a member no longer in good standing? (there have been issues in neighborhoods where the association / board have had to remove people and there were provisions in the by-laws when that would occur.)
- Requirements for revisions to by-laws? % of support by membership?
- Once you have had a chance to review the draft, please discuss any changes you would like to make. By the end of this discussion, you should feel like you own these by-laws.



City Staff - Contacts Introduced in CONA Leadership

First Name	Last Name	Department	Email
Susan	Ajoc		susan.ajoc@stpete.org
Amy	Foster	Neighborhood Affairs	amy.foster@stpete.org
Willie	Joseph	Sanitation Director	Willie.Joseph@stpete.org
Joe	Waugh	Codes Compliance	joe.waugh@stpete.org
Don	Putnam	N-Team	donald.putnam@stpete.org
Pat	DePlasco	Keep Pinellas Beautiful	pdeplasco@kpbcares.org
Evan	Mory	Transportation Director	evan.mory@stpete.org
Cheryl	Stacks	Transportation Manager	cheryl.stacks@stpete.org
Brian	Pessaro	Transportation Coordinator	Brian.Pessaro@stpete.org
Elizabeth	Abernethy	Director of Planning and Dev	elizabeth.abernethy@stpete.org
Corey	Malyszka	Zoning Official	corey.malyszka@stpete.org
Claude	Tankersley	Director of Public Works	claudetankersley@stpete.org
Allison	Mihalich	Sustainability and Resiliency	allison.mihalich@stpete.org
Antonio	Gilliam	Assistant Chief of PD	antonio.gilliam@stpete.org
Mike	Jeffers	Leisure Services Admin	Michael.JefferisII@stpete.org
Kim	Lehto	Healthy St. Pete Coordinator	kim.lehto@stpete.org
Megan	Young	Healthy St. Pete	megan.young@stpete.org
Bryan	Eichler	Superintendent of Parks	bryan.eichler@stpete.org



Setting Up a Successful Board

The most important factor in a successful board is a shared mission. The size of a board or how close the board members are as friends will not determine success. The ideal board would have members with different personalities and skills who all share a common goal. For this reason, the mission of the organization/association should be taken seriously. The organizations we have seen that really debated and fine-tuned their mission, ultimately having multiple votes on a couple of short sentences, were the ones that began operating from a clear objective. We have also seen the ones that felt the mission was more of a "joke" or formality. The focus and direction of those organizations reflected that approach.

Since we have already touched on ways to do outreach via email, Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, door hanger, word-of-mouth, (these methods will be further referred to as 'contact methods'), we are going to focus on the components to look for.

When looking for people to join your outreach team, you want to find people who are:

- **Motivated and passionate about the cause.** They should be excited about the work you're doing and be willing to put in the time and effort to make a difference.
- **Organized and efficient.** They should be able to manage their time well and be able to follow through on tasks.
- **Good communicators.** They should be able to clearly articulate the cause and the work you're doing, as well as build relationships with potential supporters.
- **Tech-savvy.** They should be comfortable using social media and other online tools to reach out to people and promote your cause.
- **People person.** Should be an individual that enjoys being and comfortable around other people.

You can find these people by using contact methods such as email, Facebook, Instagram, NextDoor, door hanger, and word-of-mouth. You can also use simple surveys using a google form or emailed questionnaire to get people thinking along the way.

Do not rush this part. If you get 5 of the right personalities together, you can be looking at a well-oiled machine. If you have 4-13 of the wrong personalities together, you will be looking at arguments, split-directions, unprofessionally run meetings, a lack of productivity and unnecessary stress.

Take your time and find the right people to join your team. It will make all the difference in the world.





Here's an example of how this process can go:

Prior to organized formation, use your contact methods to begin the formation of your organizational structure. This should occur AFTER your kick-off event, yet before creating your interim team. Do not only mention the positives of formation, which are numerous in the City of St Petersburg when it comes to grants/ opportunities for improvements. It is important to be open about the realities:

Good Afternoon Interested Parties,

As we move towards holding our first meeting, we would like to fine tune our mission statement. This mission statement will be the foundation for our association, so your input is essential.

Please fill out this form prior to our unofficial board meeting of interim officers:

- Would you make any changes or additions to the mission statement? If so, what would they be?
- Would you be interested in being a part of the 'Interim Team' or would you prefer just to be kept informed of meetings/ volunteer opportunities/ other? *If 'other', please explain.*
- If interested in being a part of the Interim Team, which role would you be most interested in: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Member-at-Large?
- We have temporarily planned a monthly board meeting for *date and time*. It is important we are all able to attend. Does this meeting time work with your schedule? If not, what would be *up to 3* ideal meeting times?

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

The Interim Team

The examples provided illustrate the intention of gathering information and interests to place people in the best fit. This is an open discussion that helps to create an effective group. Here are some things that have been observed to lead to ineffectiveness, a culture of arguing, and dissolution in interim/established boards:

- Telling friends and neighbors to join because "it's fun" and "they don't have to do anything." It's not always fun, and you don't want to attract people who "don't have to do anything." However, this approach is often seen.

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- Not communicating openly and effectively. The moment you engage in gossip, especially in a leadership role, a negative environment is created. We will discuss this further in Board Complications and B3 Bad Board Behaviors.
- There will be frustrations. Volunteer work is often thankless, and you have to be confident in your mission. Practice statements like, "I know we've all had a lot on our plate. Can I understand more about what's bothering you so we can work towards a productive solution?"
- Trying to be everyone's friend or being the "yes" girl/guy. Sometimes, no matter how much due diligence you do to truly understand a need and differing opinions, it will feel like there is no best direction to go. The President and Vice President must have strong interpersonal skills and a thick skin. If you have personalities in that role that are not able to draw boundaries such as, "We have different views on the topic, so I would like to open this topic up for all comments and we may have to take it to a vote to decide."

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Board Complications and B3 [Bad Board Behaviors]

It may seem simple and easy to ignore negative board members, but the consequences of doing so can be complex, long-term, and have a negative impact on the board's culture. "Negative" does not refer to a single incident, it's the consistent approach one takes.

It is important to address disagreements with grace, but it is also important to be aware of patterns of negative behavior. In this section, we will provide examples of negative board behavior and offer suggestions on how to defuse a situation or change the board's culture.

We cannot emphasize enough that it is much easier to prevent negative board behavior by establishing a healthy culture from the outset. In interviews with presidents and directors, there is a common consensus that a toxic board member can quickly create resentment and lead to an ineffective board. It is very difficult to change a culture once it has been established, so creating a healthy one from the beginning will save a lot of grief. As a leader, you should model the behavior you expect from your board members.

Do not be afraid to establish the expectation at the beginning of each meeting to set the tone during your introduction. This offers a boundary you can circle back to, if needed, when a negative behavior arises.

Example: "Hello everyone. As you know, we can only grow through open discussion. So, please remember that all ideas are welcome during this meeting. Feel free to be as creative as you can. Ultimately, we will move towards the most practical idea. Questions and healthy debate are encouraged. However, unconstructive criticisms or putting down ideas will not be tolerated."

It's unfortunate, but based on experience, it is not uncommon to hear "that doesn't even make any sense," or "that would never work," or even, "what a dumb idea." Use that opportunity to address the negative behavior and reinforce your culture, "I just want to remind everyone that it is not only ok to share all ideas, but it's vital for a successful board. If you are not asking questions in order to understand more about the idea, then please keep negative criticisms off the table. Now, we have the following ideas before us, let's work to narrow down the list. Is there one idea that stands out to everyone as the most practical/engaging?"





Tools to Set You Apart

The CONA Leadership Program provides an opportunity for neighborhood leaders to learn about local government and how to effectively work with it to influence decision-making. The program covers topics such as:

- Getting to know your elected officials
- Forming coalitions
- Compromising
- Being persistent
- Working with local government and the various departments that work with neighborhoods
- Setting goals
- Knowing your issues
- Becoming acquainted with procedures that effectively communicate with City Staff.
- Available resources for neighborhoods (e.g. city codes, different programs)

The program also provides participants with the opportunity to visit city council meetings and meet with their representatives. By the end of the program, participants will have the knowledge and skills they need to effectively advocate for their neighborhood and make a difference in their community.

Here are some additional tips for working with local government:

- Be respectful and professional.
- Be prepared to provide evidence to support your claims.
- Be willing to listen to other points of view.
- Be patient. It can take time to see results.
- Be persistent. Don't give up if you don't succeed the first time.

Working with local government can be a rewarding experience. By following these tips, you can make a positive impact on your community.



Your First Year

Big ideas brought you all together, but focusing on your foundation will aid in bringing those ideas to fruition in a sustainable way. In future versions, we will go into more detail on the following:

To bring your community together, organize events and activities that will allow people to interact with each other. Some examples include porch parties, movie nights, and cleanups. It is ideal to have a mix of both social and service-oriented events. It is important to start small and avoid having too many ideas or events at once. You will learn from each event, so take your time and be patient. When someone mentions an idea, ask them if they would be willing to take the lead and provide details on how the event would be run at the next board meeting (or email them if needed sooner).

You can partner with local organizations like Keep Pinellas Beautiful to get your neighborhood excited about cleaning up their community (Community Services will schedule a roll off container for neighborhood cleanups. Ivan Fountain is the point of contact in our office.). These organizations offer workshops, training on organizing volunteers, and may even provide supplies for certain events. The City of St Pete N-Team can also offer similar bonding work as you beautify your neighborhood together. The CONA Organization and Community Services Department have many additional ideas and opportunities in this regard, so do not hesitate to reach out to them.

Here are some additional benefits of partnering with local organizations:

- You can tap into their resources and expertise.
- You can get help with planning and organizing events.
- You can reach a wider audience with your message.
- You can build relationships with other community members.
- You can make a positive impact on your community.

It is important to assemble essential teams during your first year in a new role. However, it is important to avoid the counterproductive approach of trying to convince people to take on leadership or chair positions. This is because it can hinder the proper functioning of the board. Instead, it is important to allow people to volunteer for these positions and to respect their decisions. This will help to create a more positive and productive work environment.

Here are some additional tips for assembling essential teams:



- Clearly define the purpose of each team.
- Identify the skills and experience that are needed for each team.
- Create a process for recruiting team members.
- Provide training and support for team members.
- Evaluate the performance of each team on a regular basis.

Consider the following teams for your initial focus:

- Communications (Handles Social Media, builds websites, collects email addresses/sends out emails or newsletters.)
- Events (Will lead social ideas and efforts.)

Resources:

Robert's Rules of Order (simplified):

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Robert_s_Rules_Simplified/8I9igozrT_oC?hl=en&gbpv=0

City of St. Petersburg: www.stpete.org

Street Closure Permits: <https://police.stpete.org/docs/special-events-instructions-for-applying-for-street-closure-permits.pdf>

Codes Database: https://library.municode.com/fl/st._petersburg/codes/code_of_ordinances

See Click Fix: <https://seeclickfix.com/st-petersburg>

Neighborhoods USA: [Home - Neighborhoods USA \(nusa.org\)](http://Home-NeighborhoodsUSA(nusa.org))



In Conclusion:

We hope that you have found this document to be a helpful resource on the topic of Neighborhood Associations.

As mentioned earlier, the intention is to keep the document as current and relevant as possible.

- Have a question that wasn't answered?
- Do you have an experience you think would be helpful to include?
- Would you like to suggest a topic we should explore/ include?
- Did you find an error?

Please reach out with any feedback or suggestions to Megan at newsletter@stpetecon.org. Changes will be made at the end of each calendar year with an updated version available in January.

For more information on The CONA Organization, Leadership Class, and meetings (open to the public) please visit us at <https://stpetecon.org/>