



Bayview Foundation, Inc. Mural - 2023 Neighborhood Grant

Neighborhood Organizations

Tips and Tools Guide

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



SASY Neighborhood Association Jackson Street Plaza – 2017 Neighborhood Grant

Creating a successful neighborhood organization can be an enriching experience for the community. Here's a guide of tips and tools that can help neighborhood organizations thrive in Madison.

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STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION



Worthington Park Neighborhood Pop-Up Market- 2017 Neighborhood Grant

A neighborhood organization is a group of residents, business representatives, and/or other interested citizens that devote their time and energy to improve and enhance a defined, geographic area. Most neighborhood organizations are concerned with issues that affect the quality of life in the community. Building upon these assets of their neighborhood, residents can identify and prioritize important projects for the neighborhood to undertake. This might include starting community gardens, creating public gathering places, or installing traffic calming on a residential street. Neighborhood organizations also offer an opportunity for government officials, developers or others to solicit input from residents.

Neighborhood organizations are different than a homeowner association. Homeowner associations are groups of homeowners who live in an area built by the same developer, usually referred to as a subdivision. The associations are formed for the purpose of improving or maintaining the quality of the area. Homeowner associations usually have a formally elected body and are governed by deed restrictions – a set of rules that the buyer agreed to when they purchased the home. These rules or covenants, often govern construction regulations, membership/dues requirement, as well as a wide variety of other issues.

STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

Neighborhoods usually create organizations to:

- Bring neighbors together and build a sense of community
- Fix or improve things like zoning, traffic problems, crime, community events, or local facilities
- Keep in touch with local government officials and other important groups
- Encourage everyone to work together to improve the area

Are Neighborhood Organizations Successful?

Yes! Neighborhood organizations play a key role in making communities safer and healthier. A well-organized, diverse group of neighbors can be a powerful force in building a cohesive neighborhood where people want to become involved in neighborhood issues and neighbors' lives. They help residents address local issues and create a positive future. Their efforts are often recognized and appreciated.

Do Neighborhood Organizations Need to Have a Formal Structure?

No, but it's a good idea to consider including the following things:

- **Mission Statement:** This explains why the group exists and what it wants to achieve. It can be updated as needed.
- **Bylaws:** These are the rules that guide how the group works. This includes things like the purpose of the group, membership, officer terms, committees, voting rules, and dues.
- **Meeting Management:** Make effective use of your time, and your neighbors, by running effective meetings, sharing outcomes, and engaging and recruiting new participants from all backgrounds.

Required Standards for neighborhood organizations:

1. The neighborhood organization must occupy a geographically distinct and specific area that does not overlap with any other recognized neighborhood organization's defined boundaries.
2. The neighborhood organization should have a Board of Directors and/or Officers that is democratically elected by the general membership.
3. All meetings and elections must be open to the public. Efforts should be made to conduct meetings in an accessible, public place. Membership should be inclusive.

STARTING A NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

Startup and Registration of your Neighborhood Organization:

The Planning Division keeps a list of officially recognized neighborhood organizations. City departments may ask these groups for feedback on local development projects or changes that affect the area. There are several simple steps and standards that an organization must follow to be recognized by the City:

The Required Startup Steps

1 Contact Alder

Contact your local Alderperson (city council member) to let them know you want to start a neighborhood organization. They can give you helpful information about other neighborhood organizations in the area. Check our neighborhood organizations profiles to determine if you live in an area with an active organization.

2 Contact Urban Planners

Contact Linda Horvath, or Angela Puerta, Urban Planners at the City of Madison Planning Division, neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com. They will guide you through the steps of starting the organization, deciding on boundaries, and they will also share other helpful resources. Post a notice in local newspapers (like the Wisconsin State Journal or Capital Times) announcing the time and place for the first meeting. Also, post the notice at local spots like grocery stores or schools, or go door to door to invite neighbors. For example: "Residents of the Vilas Neighborhood are invited to attend an organizational meeting. Please join us at Monroe Street Public Library on November 10 at 7:30 p.m. to create a neighborhood organization, set boundaries, and elect officers." .

3 Public Notice

Send a copy of the public notice, a map of your neighborhood boundaries, and a contact person's details to the following address:

Linda Horvath, Neighborhood Planner
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd, P.O. Box 2985
Madison, WI 53701-2985
Tel: 608-267-1131; Fax: 608-266-6377
Email: neighborhoods@cityofmadison.com

CREATING A VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



A neighborhood group is more likely to succeed if it has a clear vision and plan with specific goals and objectives. Getting a lot of people from the neighborhood involved in creating the vision will help motivate everyone to join and stay involved. Having clear goals and objectives will help your group achieve that vision, build confidence, and ensure success.



CREATING A VISION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

VISION



A vision is a statement that describes what the neighborhood wants to look like in the future. It's a way of imagining what the neighborhood could be like if everything goes well. A good vision statement helps inspire people and can make the desired future feel more achievable.

Tips for Creating a Vision:

- Look at your mission statement to help come up with vision ideas. The mission tells what your group is trying to do.
- A vision is different from a mission. It's more focused on the future and specific goals.
- Be realistic when thinking about what your neighborhood can achieve but also set an exciting and positive goal.
- Think about things like homeownership, education, crime, and community involvement when setting your vision.
- Ask other neighborhood groups for advice.

GOALS

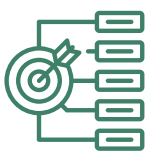


Specific goals are big ideas that help guide the neighborhood toward achieving its vision. They show the important steps your group will take to get to the future you want.

Tips for Setting Goals:

- Take stock of your neighborhood's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (a SWOT analysis).
- Ask, "What do we need to do, and in what order?"
- Be creative and come up with strategies that will help you reach your goals.
- Include everyone who is involved and invite them to a brainstorming session.

OBJECTIVES



Objectives are clear steps that make up a goal. They are specific and measurable and can be seen as milestones on the way to reaching the bigger vision.

Tips for Setting Objectives:

- Assign specific tasks to individuals or small groups.
- Set deadlines for when each task should be completed.

RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

A successful neighborhood group is inclusive, has a clear structure but stays flexible, and is led by active, engaged members. Here are some tips to help your neighborhood organization reach its goals.



Eken Park Creek Painting Project - 2019



Tips

- **Be Inclusive:** Don't focus too much on one issue or take extreme views, as this can push people away.
- **Welcome New People:** Make sure new members feel welcome, listen to their ideas, and give them chances to get involved. A simple 30-minute open discussion can help people feel more connected.
- **Involve Young People:** Activities that show the group cares about young people will help them respect the community's values.
- **Recognize Skills:** Survey the neighborhood to find out what skills residents have that can help the group.
- **Stay Focused on Big Goals:** Set clear goals each year and stay focused on them. Use smaller groups (subcommittees) to handle most of the work.
- **Have Effective Meetings:** Start meetings on time, stay on topic, and stick to a schedule. If a topic needs more time, ask if the group thinks it's worth continuing.
- **Be Flexible:** If most people want to change the direction of a meeting, let it happen. Good leaders should help guide the discussion, not fight it.
- **Anticipate Problems:** Stay aware of issues like zoning changes or crime trends so you can address them before they get harder to fix.
- **Act Quickly:** When problems arise, take action right away. People are more likely to get involved during times of crisis.
- **Set Clear Deadlines and Responsibilities:** Conflicts often happen when leaders don't clearly assign tasks or set deadlines. Ask the secretary to help summarize meetings and clarify decisions.
- **Work with Other Groups:** Use the resources of other local organizations like schools, churches, or service clubs to help your group.
- **Develop New Leaders:** Set term limits for leaders to give new people a chance to take charge. Committee chairs and project leaders are great opportunities for leadership growth.
- **Learn from Mistakes:** If things go wrong, acknowledge the mistake and learn from it.
- **Celebrate Successes:** Don't forget to celebrate even small wins. Telling people about the group's accomplishments can encourage them to get more involved and give their time.

RECRUITING AND KEEPING MEMBERS

Having active and engaged members is key to running a successful neighborhood organization. Each neighbor brings unique talents and ideas that can help improve the community. However, getting people involved can be tough. Motivating neighbors to participate and keep them interested and involved often takes time and effort. People tend to get involved for reasons like:

- Wanting recognition and respect
- Looking for a role in the community
- Wanting to build relationships
- Wanting to feel the benefits of their participation outweigh the effort
- Wanting to see the impact of their actions



There are many ways your neighborhood organization can encourage people to get involved. Understanding what motivates them can help.



Tips to Inspire Involvement:

- Invite a neighbor to a meeting or neighborhood event.
- Connect with other neighborhood groups to share information.
- Work with other groups to strengthen your neighborhood and support your goals.
- Include under-represented groups, such as youth, seniors, minorities, low-income families, and people with disabilities.
- Have casual discussions in informal settings like coffee or lunch.
- Share event or project details with local media.
- Make attention-grabbing flyers for events and meetings.
- Spread out tasks so no one gets overwhelmed. If members have a positive experience, they're more likely to get others involved.
- Create a website that shows your goals, projects, events, and meetings.
- Go door-to-door to personally talk to people about neighborhood projects.

RECRUITING AND KEEPING MEMBERS

Project Ideas to Get People Involved:

- Block parties
- Potlucks
- Community gardens
- Crime prevention projects
- Directories and phone trees
- Home tours
- Holiday parties or potlucks
- Leadership programs
- Art projects or murals
- Neighborhood cleanups
- Newsletters
- Home improvement projects
- Park development
- Picnics or concerts
- Scholarship programs
- School supply drives
- Security lighting
- Street improvements
- Tree plantings
- Yard-of-the-month awards
- Youth activities
- Volunteer opportunities



Key Questions to Keep People Involved:

- Are neighborhood meetings being promoted and advertised?
- Are you working with local groups that support your community, such as: the schools, centers of worship, the merchants, business associations, employers, landlords, local government, hospitals, realty companies, libraries, community centers, and other entities?
- Are meetings easy for people to attend? Are they scheduled at a time when most people are free, and held in a central location that everyone can access?



Tips

- Encourage neighbors to get involved.
- Offer rides to meetings and events by setting up a carpool system.
- Have "block captains" (people in charge of small groups) who can invite their neighbors.
- Host events like dinners or block parties that also serve as ways to get new members.
- Invite interesting speakers to meetings to attract potential volunteers.
- Show the results of your group's work. Some people may need to see the impact before they decide to get involved.
- Recognize and thank people for their efforts.
- Talk to people who leave the group to find out why.
- Try different ways to get new members, like sending letters, setting up booths at events, giving talks to other groups, hosting community meals, handing out flyers, visiting new neighbors, writing articles in local papers, and keeping your website updated.

FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

A strong neighborhood organization works for everyone in the area. When the group includes people from different cultures and backgrounds, it's more likely to be successful in solving problems, planning for the future, and building a strong community. A diverse group may include people of different races, genders, education levels, sexual orientations, religions, ages, nationalities, jobs, personalities, beliefs, and values. Working with a diverse group helps everyone learn and grow.



Key Questions:

- Does your group work well together, considering everyone's needs, interests, and skills? Are people from all backgrounds welcome to help make decisions at all stages of the planning process?
- Does your group represent the whole neighborhood? Are people from different races, religions, ages, and income levels involved?
- What things do all neighborhood residents have in common?



Tips

- Listen to everyone in the neighborhood. Learn about their interests, talents, and needs.
- Plan different activities. Not everyone will be able to come to every meeting or event, so offer a variety of options.
- Offer translation services if needed so that people who don't speak English as their first language can feel welcome and stay involved.
- Make sure event locations are accessible to people with mobility limitations.
- Value diversity. By using the skills and experiences of everyone, the group will be stronger and richer.
- Trust is important. Build trust by organizing activities that bring people together.
- Remember, people within the same race or ethnic group can be very different from each other.
- Take the time to learn more about the cultures in your group.
- Be aware of your own biases.
- Be inclusive. Don't focus too narrowly or take extreme positions, as it can push away people you want to include.
- Practice active listening. Pay attention to what people say and how they say it, especially if their views are different from yours.
- Simple activities like "icebreakers" can help make people feel comfortable and create a welcoming atmosphere.

COLLABORATING WITH OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS

Neighborhoods are made up of more than just homes. Working together with other groups like businesses, schools, and non-profits can help reach bigger goals, create a stronger sense of community, and build good relationships for everyone involved.

Getting Started:

- Identify the strengths of your neighborhood.
- Think about the businesses, places, and organizations that help make up your community.
- Make a list with contact information for where, when, who, and any follow-up details.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH BUSINESSES

Approaching Businesses:

- Introduce yourself to local business leaders and ask to attend one of their meetings to get to know them.
- Reach out directly to business owners.
- If possible, have a regular customer or another business owner make the first contact.

Communication:

- Listen to business owners' concerns; they often have the same worries as residents.
- Be flexible with meeting times, especially for small businesses.
- Work directly with the person who makes decisions at the business.
- Have one neighborhood contact person for each business to avoid confusion.

Working Together:

- Plan events and meetings together.
- Businesses can help lobby for the community's needs.
- Businesses can donate products or services for neighborhood events or even give time instead of money. This benefits the business-neighborhood relationship.
- Let businesses know about local resources like neighborhood newsletters or advertising opportunities.

COLLABORATING WITH OTHER COMMUNITY GROUPS

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOLS

Working Through Adults:

- Attend parent-teacher conferences, join the parent-teacher group, volunteer, or etc.
- Get involved in school events to show the neighborhood supports the school.

Programs with Schools:

- Set up programs where community members mentor students.
- Work with schools to create after-school clubs or activities.
- Ask volunteers (like seniors or college students) to help out in schools.

Extend Schools into the Community:

- Build partnerships between schools and businesses.
- Encourage people in the community to use school facilities like playgrounds or meeting rooms.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS





- Make a list of important organizations in your community.
- Work together with non-profit organizations because they can provide useful services and help. Some groups can also help with things like websites or education.

Remember to:

- Thank and recognize businesses that help.
- Shop at local businesses and encourage others to do the same.
- Acknowledge organizations and people who have a positive impact on the community.
- Match strengths and needs to create win-win relationships.
- Promote experiences that bring together different generations (like mentoring).
- Be inclusive, fair, and democratic in your approach.
- Get support from important community leaders.

INNOVATE AND COMMUNICATE

There are many new and affordable ways to communicate and involve people in your community that didn't exist before. Your neighborhood group can use these tools to help spread the word, get people involved, make your organization stronger, and save resources and money. Here are some ideas to share information and connect with your neighborhood and beyond.

	<h2>Build a Website</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a website to share your group's mission, goals, meeting times, locations, events, and other important info. • Use an online calendar and interactive maps. • Add a discussion forum where neighbors can talk and share ideas. • Create a virtual tour of your neighborhood. • Link to other local community groups and resources. • Make a printable brochure for visitors and residents with info on local businesses, parks, and cultural spots. • Provide links to local businesses so people can support them.
	<h2>Meetings</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use PowerPoint slides or videos at meetings and consider posting them online for others to view later. • Use social media like Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, or X (formerly known as Twitter) to keep everyone informed and expand communication. • Post video or slideshow presentations on your website through YouTube or other video-sharing platforms.
	<h2>Community Events</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post videos about ongoing projects or success stories on YouTube. • Share photos of neighborhood events and success stories using platforms like Flickr. • Use social media to advertise upcoming events and encourage people to participate.
	<h2>Email</h2>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect email addresses from neighbors at meetings or events. • Create an email group to send announcements, using tools like Yahoo Groups or Google Groups.

MANAGING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

Whether you're organizing a trash cleanup, crime-prevention efforts, or a block party, staying organized and communicating well is key to making the project successful. To do this, you need to plan by figuring out what you want to achieve, who will be involved, what you need, and when and how things will happen. It helps to break the project into these steps: planning, developing, carrying out, and finishing.



Planning

- Gather information, figure out what's needed, and set clear goals.
- Agree on the project idea as a group.
- Plan key activities, budget, and dates.



Development

- Set up teams or committees to take on tasks and do any needed research.
- Figure out how much work is needed and the type of work required.
- Break the project into phases and assign tasks.
- Consider any risks that could cause problems and create backup plans if necessary.



Carrying Out

- Focus on completing specific tasks to meet your project's goals.
- Stay organized, motivated, and communicate well.
- Stick to a schedule to achieve the final results.
- Keep an eye on the project's quality, timing, and costs.



Finishing Up

- Complete any final tasks.
- Review and approve the results.
- Evaluate how the project went.
- Celebrate what went well and make note of lessons learned.

MAKING PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

The way your neighborhood looks affects how people live in it. When residents and business owners work together, they can improve the neighborhood and make it match the community's goals. Taking shared responsibility for your environment will make it more enjoyable for everyone.

Beautifying the Neighborhood

Work with your neighbors, local leaders, and the city to:

- Organize clean-up events or "adopt" a part of the neighborhood to maintain regularly.
- Add landscaping, public art, and things like benches or walking paths.
- Improve buildings and ask for improvements to public spaces.
- Set up a welcome sign with landscaping at the entrance to your neighborhood (you can apply for a grant to help fund it).

Adding Landscaping

Plant trees, flowers, and shrubs in parks, traffic islands, and other areas.

Here's how to get started:

- Plan the project with your neighbors and local leaders and get approval from the city.
- Some landscaping projects can be funded through the city's capital budget if they will last 10 years or more.



Emerson East Neighborhood Association - 2023

Improving and Maintaining Buildings

Work with your neighbors, local leaders, and the city to:

- If you see building code violations, first contact the property owner, and then the city's Building Inspection Division if needed.
- If graffiti is an issue, the city offers a program to help remove it. You can also report graffiti on public property by reporting the graffiti.
- If you want to improve homes, there are loans and financial assistance programs available.
- For commercial properties, there are grants and funding options to help with improvements.

MAKING PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS

Improving the Streetscape

Adding features like benches, lighting, signs, and bike lanes can make your neighborhood safer and more enjoyable. Work with your neighbors and local leaders to decide what to add and how to fund it.

- Get approval from the city before installing furniture like benches or bike racks on public streets.
- Adding public art, like murals or sculptures, can improve your neighborhood's look and feel. Contact the Arts Coordinator for help.
- Installing neighborhood signs will need approval from the city, especially if they are in public spaces.
- If needed, traffic signs or signals can be added in your neighborhood with help from your local leaders and the Traffic Engineering Division.
- To add or improve bus stops, contact Madison Metro and your district alderperson.
- You can request additional streetlights by working with residents in the area, your district alderperson, and the Traffic Engineering Division.
- To add sidewalks, work with your neighbors and local leaders to get approval.

Maintaining Neighborhood Parks

- You can volunteer for clean-ups, such as picking up trash, leaves, and recyclables.

Waste Collection

- For information about trash, recycling, and yard waste, check out the Streets and Recycling [website](#).

Street Maintenance

- The city handles street cleaning, snow removal, repairs, and resurfacing. If you need street improvements, work with your neighbors, district alderperson, and the Streets Division.

Sidewalk Maintenance

- To repair or improve sidewalks, work with your neighbors, district alderperson, and the Engineering Division.

CREATING A GREENER NEIGHBORHOOD

Everyday decisions affect our environment. Things like what we eat, what we buy, how much waste we create, how we travel, and how we spend our free time all impact the planet. These choices affect the quality of the air, water, and soil, which are essential for life. Being aware of how our actions affect the earth can help us create healthier neighborhoods and a more sustainable world.

Here are some ideas to encourage your neighborhood to work together to help the environment:



Neighborhood Activities:

- Hold workshops on how to make rain barrels, compost bins, or improve home insulation.
- Organize a rideshare or carpool to work or school and have a “bike to work” week.
- Host a community garage sale, stuff exchange, or a book and magazine swap.
- Take part in restoring streams, rivers, or other natural habitats in your neighborhood.
- Share information about city environmental programs, such as MadiSun, water conservation and rain gardens, in neighborhood newsletters and on websites.
- Create an e-newsletter that shares info about farmers markets, recycling, and environmental news or updates.

Neighborhood Plan Suggestions:

- Consider using the standards of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development.
- Look into the Natural Step Framework and pay attention to the city’s environmental plans.
- Support mixed-use development, which includes homes, shops, and public spaces accessible by walking, biking, or public transit.
- Promote improvements for biking, walking, and public transit.
- Encourage the preservation or expansion of green spaces and natural areas.
- Support urban farming and community garden projects.
- Use landscaping techniques like rain gardens, native plants, and bioswales to help manage stormwater and create natural habitats.
- Maintain no-mow areas along shorelines to reduce water runoff.

FUNDING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS

Neighborhood projects take time, effort, and materials. The best projects are the result of good planning and a mix of public and private funding.

GET ORGANIZED

- Create a project plan and budget.
- Find out what the project will cost and be clear about why you need funding.

BUILD COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR YOUR PROJECT

- Work with other local groups or projects. Teaming up can help you achieve more.
- Look for chances to apply for funding with another organization.
- Remember, communities need both social connections and financial support.
- Don't start from scratch—check what others are already doing in the community.

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

- Research potential funding sources and know their rules.
- Seek funding from different sources, like the government, private companies, and nonprofits.
- Funding options can include grants, loans, tax credits, fundraisers, and donations. (Keep in mind that you need a permit for fundraising on public or private property.)

ASK FOR ADVICE AND HELP

- Talk to your District alderperson about city funding options.
- Find experts who know about the type of funding you need.
- Visit the websites of organizations offering funding, get more information, and schedule meetings if needed.
- Ask for examples of successful applications from past applicants or the organization itself.

LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCES

- If you get the funding, celebrate and keep track of how you did it.
- If your application is rejected, find out why. You can contact the organization for feedback and learn how to improve your next application.

NEIGHBORHOOD EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



Sandbag Drop off Location for City residents

While we always hope things go well, it's smart to be ready for emergencies. Natural disasters, outbreaks of disease, or other emergencies can cause confusion, injuries, and even death. Being prepared can help prevent that. When individuals, families, and neighborhoods have survival kits and emergency plans, communication and response during an emergency can be much better, especially when resources are limited.

Here are some tips to help your family and neighborhood prepare for emergencies:

- If your neighborhood doesn't have an emergency plan, creating one could be a good project for your neighborhood organization or any concerned group of neighbors.
- Create an emergency plan for your family. Make sure to have an out-of-town contact person who can help communicate between family members if you're separated.
- Emergencies can happen in many ways, such as fires, tornadoes, floods, winter storms, or disease outbreaks. Make sure your plans cover these situations.
- When making emergency plans, focus on basic needs like water, food, clean air, and warmth.
- Involve all neighbors in the emergency plan, and make sure to check on elderly neighbors or those with special needs.
- You might want to set up Community Emergency Response Teams to help during a disaster.

BENEFITS OF A TAX-EXEMPT ORGANIZATION

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF AN ORGANIZATION HAVING A TAX-EXEMPT STATUS?

Many organizations see the financial benefits of tax-exempt status. In addition to qualifying for public and private grant money, most nonprofit groups seek the status to get exemptions from federal and state income taxes and therefore can devote a larger proportion of their resources to achieving their particular goals. The status can also be beneficial to those groups who'd like special rates for services such as postage. Also, donors prefer to give contributions to these groups because they can deduct their gifts on their own taxes. On the other hand, the IRS restricts lobbying activity, political activity is prohibited, and the organization's activities must be limited to the charitable purpose. Each individual group must weigh the pros and cons of the status carefully in light of their organizational goals and values. Many of our City of Madison neighborhood grants do not require tax-exempt status, and if they do, we will work with the neighborhood organization to secure a fiscal agent that has tax-exempt status. The fiscal agent may charge an administrative fee but this might be less than the cost of obtaining/maintaining tax-exempt status for your neighborhood organization.

HOW DOES MY ORGANIZATION BECOME TAX EXEMPT?

Once you file your articles of incorporation, your organization becomes a nonprofit. To receive tax-exemption status, your organization must meet three key components under 501(c)(3) of the IRS: be organized as a corporation, trust, or unincorporated association (articles serves this purpose); be operated with stipulation (such as agreeing to refrain from participation in political campaigns); and have an exempt purpose: charitable, educational, religious, or scientific. Contact IRS and Complete Form 557. The City of Madison does not assist organization is preparing/filing the proper paperwork.

RESOURCES

<u>Contact Alder</u>	Find the Alder(s) for your area.
<u>City of Madison's Neighborhood Grant Program</u>	Neighborhood Grants provide funds to build organizational capacity, beautify public places, and create community gathering places. These grants help improve quality of life in neighborhoods, and across the city.
<u>Madison Arts Commission Grants</u>	The Madison Arts Commission (MAC) provides annual grants and public art.
<u>City of Madison's Community Development Block Grant Office</u>	The City of Madison's Community Development Division (CDD) provides funding to range of non-profit agencies. Agencies are typically selected for funding via a competitive request for proposals process.
<u>Grants.gov</u>	Federal funding opportunities published on Grants.gov are for organizations and entities supporting the development and management of government-funded programs and projects.
<u>Fundsnet Services</u>	Information on Grants and Scholarships.
<u>City of Madison Sustainability</u>	Sustainability suggestions and initiatives for the City of Madison including the MadiSun, Mpowering and Natural Step.
<u>Sustain Dane</u>	A non-profit organization that provides education and resources to communities and organizations that are trying to become more sustainable.
<u>LEED for Neighborhood Design</u>	The LEED for Neighborhood Development Rating System integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism and green building into the first national system for neighborhood design.
<u>Smart Growth Online</u>	Resources for promoting vitality in center cities through a greater mix of housing, commercial uses, pedestrian, bike and public transit access, and preservation of open space and other environmental amenities.