



Planning Department

Office of Neighborhood Coordination

What's the Difference Between a Neighborhood Association and a Homeowner Association?

Neighborhood Associations are voluntary organizations comprised of residents who work together to improve and maintain the quality of life in their neighborhood. Neighborhood associations can form out of concern over a particular issue or as a means of enhancing a sense of community.

Features:

- Membership is open to all property owners, residents and businesses in the neighborhood
- Participation is optional
- Boundaries are established by the association
- Dues are voluntary
- There is no legal authority to enact or enforce maintenance or design requirements beyond those established by City or County ordinances
- To ensure a visibly democratic process, the association establishes formal or informal by-laws to provide for at least one general membership meeting per year and to require an annual election of officers

Homeowner Associations are formal, legal entities created to maintain common areas and enforce private deed restrictions. Most condominium and townhouse developments, along with some single-family subdivisions have homeowner associations. These are usually created when the development is built.

Features:

- Membership is mandatory for all property owners within the boundaries of the development
- Members are usually charged mandatory dues
- Have the legal authority to enact and enforce maintenance and design standards in addition to those established by City and County ordinances
- Are corporations with formal by-laws
- Have a governing board that is elected annually

