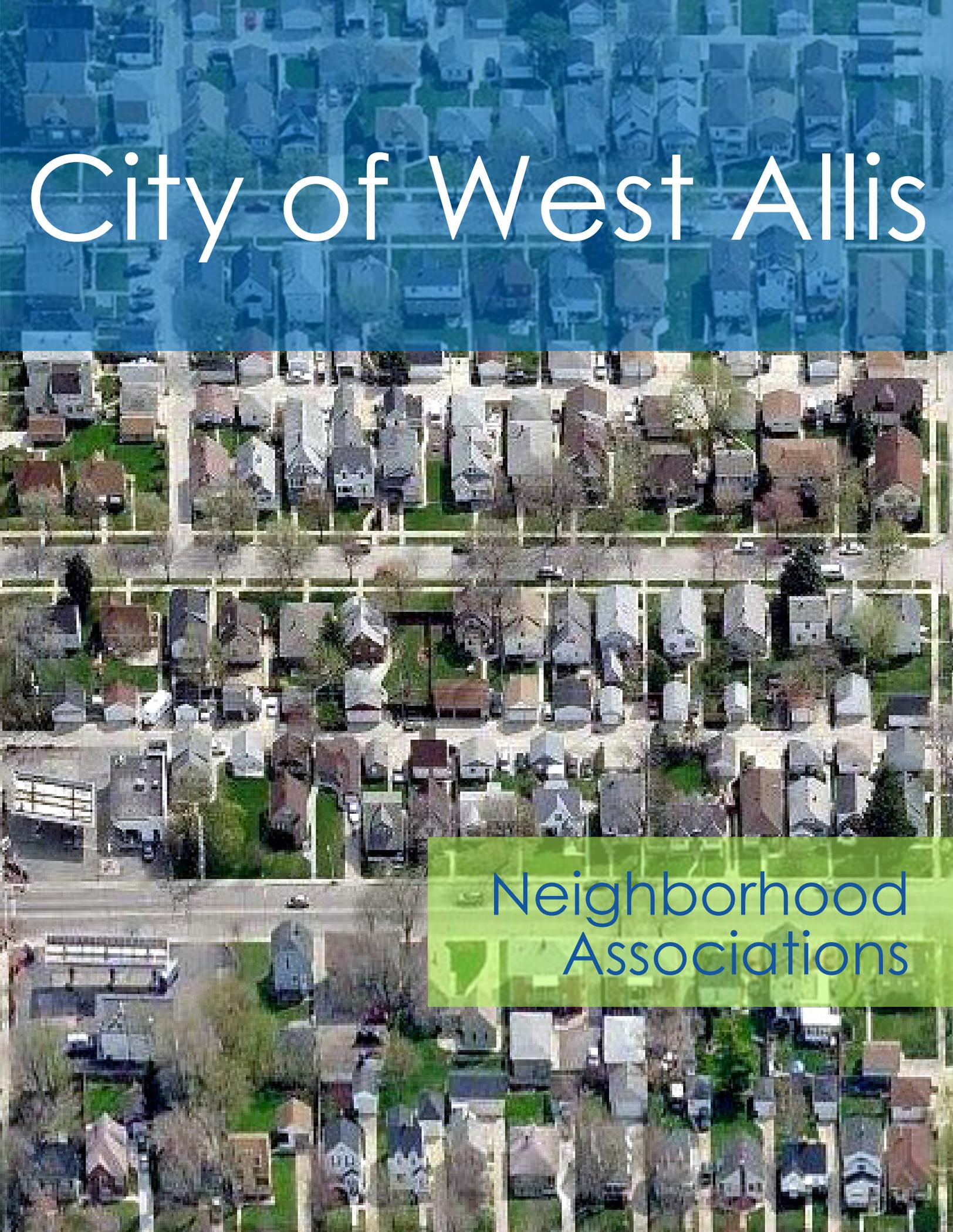
An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood, showing rows of houses with various roof colors and styles. The top portion of the image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle. The text 'City of West Allis' is written in white, sans-serif font across this blue area.

City of West Allis

An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood, showing rows of houses with various roof colors and styles. The bottom portion of the image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green rectangle. The text 'Neighborhood Associations' is written in blue, sans-serif font across this green area.

Neighborhood
Associations

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



MAYOR

Dan Devine

“As we continue to move West Allis forward, active neighborhood associations will be a vital component in developing a safe and vibrant community.”

COMMON COUNCIL

Michael Czaplewski, Alderperson – First Aldermanic District
Vincent Vitale, Alderperson – First Aldermanic District

Cathleen Probst, Alderperson – Second Aldermanic District
Martin Weigel, Alderperson – Second Aldermanic District

Gary Barczak, Alderperson – Third Aldermanic District
Michael May, Alderperson – Third Aldermanic District

Daniel Roadt, Alderperson – Fourth Aldermanic District
Thomas Lajsic, Alderperson – Fourth Aldermanic District

Rosalie Reinke, Alderperson – Fifth Aldermanic District
Kevin Haass, Alderperson – Fifth Aldermanic District

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Active citizens are important to the health and spirit of a community. Dedicated citizens help shape the quality of life in a neighborhood. Neighbors can work together on topics like an upcoming road construction project, organizing a neighborhood picnic, planning a neighborhood clean-up day and much more! As a resident, homeowner or business partner, your enthusiasm for an area can significantly impact and enhance the quality of life and economic value of a neighborhood – in a positive way!

Neighborhood associations are a great venue to capture the positive momentum of individuals and have proven successful in a number of communities across the nation. This document outlines how dedicated time and energy can make a difference in West Allis through the establishment of neighborhood associations. The City believes that increasing citizen participation benefits the whole community by creating a positive environment of shared responsibility and collaboration.

I. WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION?

A neighborhood association is a group of individuals who identify with a common area and share common goals and concerns, and are organized as a member-based group open to everybody within the neighborhood. Members collaborate on issues and identify creative solutions to address concerns. Through their collective energy and planning, members develop the stability, credibility, and political influence necessary to be an effective force in building a stronger place in which to live, work and play.

II. WHY DEVELOP A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION?

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Build new relationships between neighbors
- Create a forum for discussion of local issues
- Provide an opportunity for people to work together and make a difference
- Enhance neighborhood through effective planning
- Grow the neighborhood through organized social activities

- Attract and retain home owners and businesses, thus increasing the value of the neighborhood
- Encourage progress towards common neighborhood goals
- Increase awareness of policies and programs impacting the neighborhood
- Prevent neighborhood decline and apathy
- Provide a platform to build consensus

III. WHAT DO NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS DO?

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Bring neighbors together
- Help identify challenges and concerns
- Support change and improvement efforts
- Resolve conflicts
- Provide volunteers for community initiatives
- Represent the neighborhood as a whole to elected officials
- Find resources to make the neighborhood a better place to live

IV. BENEFITS OF NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS:

Neighborhood Associations . . .

- Have real and lasting impacts on neighborhood programs (crime, traffic, parking, public space improvements)
- Grow demand for future home buyers
- Foster an effective communication link with City Departments
- Solicit funding for neighborhood improvement projects



Start Up/Organization

V. START UP / ORGANIZING

Neighborhood associations often expand from existing, informal connections that naturally occur around the kitchen table, sidewalk or other neighborhood gathering spots. Formal neighborhood associations attract additional neighbors to join the conversation.

There is no standard procedure for starting up a neighborhood association, but a suggested first step often involves communication and a simple handshake.

Examples of early communication methods include:

- word-of-mouth
- door-to-door conversations
- letters
- social media
- neighborhood gatherings

Early conversations can involve discussion about neighborhood issues, goals, activities and the potential benefits of forming a Neighborhood Association.

REMEMBER: Getting your neighbors together doesn't need to be difficult. Keep in mind some important tips as you begin to organize.

- Building an association is a process. It cannot be done overnight. Be patient. Identify your priorities and attain them step-by-step.
- Set realistic goals. Start small and build upward. As your organizational capacity grows, your organization can expand from year to year.
- How you treat people is crucial to your success. By treating people with respect and integrity, people will be more likely to get involved in the association.
- Communication is critical. Open, transparent and frequent communication is important.
- As you build your association, **BE SURE TO HAVE FUN!**

Interested groups are highly encouraged to contact the **City of West Allis Department of Development, Community Development Division** at (414) 302-8460 or neighborhoods@westalliswi.gov to set up an appointment to discuss further strategies and requirements for developing a formal Neighborhood Association.



Development/Formal Recognition

VI. DEVELOPMENT STAGE

After a core group of people is ready to move into the development stage of an organized association, the group should work to address the following **Minimum Standards for a Neighborhood Association**:

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. An agreed upon name2. A mission and statement of purpose3. Clearly defined geographical boundaries4. Contact person(s) |
|--|

Once the **Minimum Standards for a Neighborhood Association** have been met, the next stage involves contacting the City of West Allis Department of Development for assistance to apply for official recognition of your association.

VII. NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION FORMAL RECOGNITION

A successful neighborhood association is supported by endless hours of volunteer group efforts. The City would like to applaud this investment of time, and support the efforts of neighbors to improve and promote their neighborhood.

The **benefits** of formal City recognition include the following:

- direct correspondence on neighborhood and city-wide issues
- influence in local decision-making
- eligibility for project funding
- celebration of association achievements

The Department of Development, Community Development Division will facilitate the formal recognition via the following process, which includes:

1. Contacting the Alderpersons of the area to state your intent of formal recognition.
2. Completing the **West Allis Neighborhood Association Application Form**.
3. Scheduling a public meeting through the Department of Development to discuss the proposed neighborhood association. The notification for this meeting shall include the following:

- a. Date, Time and Place of proposed meeting
 - b. Proposed Neighborhood Association Name
 - c. Proposed Neighborhood Association boundaries
 - d. Neighborhood Association Contact Person and Contact Information
4. Convening the public meeting, with the aid of the Department of Development, to solicit feedback regarding proposed neighborhood association, including discussion of adopting organizational structure and policies, and electing association leadership.
 5. Compiling supporting documentation, to include the following:
 - a. Association Bylaws
 - b. Leadership structure and description (e.g. Board of Directors, Committees)
 - c. Membership Policy - State the requirements for membership in the organization, including any fees. Membership should be available to all residents, landowners, and business people who represent the social, economic and ethnic make-up of the neighborhood.
 - d. Membership listing (Name and Address)
 - e. Meetings Policy - State the location, time and number of neighborhood meetings held during each year. The suggested minimum standard is four (4) meetings per year. All meetings shall be advertised and open to all interested persons, which shall be reflected in the by-laws.
 6. Submit application and final supporting documentation to the Department of Development for the purpose of adopting the Neighborhood Association via Common Council resolution.

Once formally recognized, the Mayor will present the neighborhood with a Proclamation of Recognition. Press releases announcing recognition will include the following information:

1. Neighborhood boundaries;
2. Names and telephone numbers of the neighborhood's contact persons;
3. A statement encouraging all residents, landowners, and business people within the neighborhood to participate in meetings, and other activities providing direction to the City.



Maintaining a Neighborhood Association

VIII. MAINTAINING A NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Recognized neighborhoods must establish and maintain the capacity to represent the views of the neighborhood. Recognized neighborhoods shall:

- Fulfill the minimum standards for meetings
- Conduct ongoing outreach to all residents at least twice a year
 - This outreach can include newspaper announcements, public service announcements, mailings, and meeting notices posted in public or neighborhood places.
- Maintain regular communication with members of the organization
 - This communication may take place via e-mail, newsletters or social media.
- Submit an Annual Report to the City

Submission of Annual Report

The Department of Development, Community Development Division will request that all recognized neighborhoods submit the following information on an annual basis for continued formal recognition:

1. Any changes in neighborhood boundaries
2. Names, telephone numbers, and addresses of officers
3. Sign-in sheets and minutes of neighborhood meetings held during the previous calendar year
4. Any changes to the approved by-laws
5. Completed annual neighborhood survey (provided by the City)

The Department of Development will maintain this information for the benefit of City departments and the public.

If any neighborhood association's update is significantly different from the neighborhood's original information, the Common Council will receive the changes for their review, comment, and re-evaluation of recognition status.

Department of Development
Community Development Division
7525 W. Greenfield Ave.
West Allis, WI 53214

Phone: (414) 302-8460
Website: <http://www.westalliswi.gov>
Email: neighborhoods@westalliswi.gov