

CHAPTER 157: NEIGHBORHOOD POLICY

SECTION

157.20	Definitions
157.30	Purposes
157.40	City/Neighborhood Relations
157.50	Neighborhood Services Clearing-house
157.60	Resources

(Ord. 40-1993)

157.20 DEFINITIONS

- (a) "NEIGHBORHOOD" - A geographic area consisting of specific city blocks and bounded by distinct geographic features such as streets, rivers, and other physical characteristics. The geographic area will be determined by the citizens who choose to form a neighborhood association. It is not the intent of the City to arbitrarily determine the boundaries of a neighborhood.
- (b) "NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENT" - A citizen who resides in or is employed by a business entity, church, school or other organization whose principal location is the neighborhood.
- (c) "NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION" - Any group of neighborhood residents which proclaims its commitment to neighborhood improvement and a willingness to identify problems and seek solutions to the problems faced by the neighborhood. This group should meet regularly and elect officers as needed.
- (d) "NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES" - Those considered necessary to ensure an adequate environment and quality of life of individual or corporate neighbors. Services may be provided by the neighborhood through its neighborhood association or the services may be made available from the City of Richmond. Neighborhood associations may seek services from other governmental or public boards, commissions, taxing units and utilities. Services may also be sought from Wayne County or Wayne Township, and from not-for-profit organizations. The City may actively support the neighborhoods in these requests even though the provision of services from such entities is not affected by the terms of this ordinance.
- (e) "NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES CENTER" - specific location within a neighborhood at which services determined by the neighborhood association will be available. A neighborhood service center will only be established at the initiative of the neighborhood association. There is no requirement or expectation that such a center be established in each neighborhood. Because the needs of neighborhoods will vary substantially one from another, there will be no predetermined list of services to be offered through the centers.
- (f) "NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES CLEARING-HOUSE" - The office funded by the Common Council to assist citizens in forming neighborhood associations and providing assistance to such associations.

157.30 PURPOSES

- (a) To acknowledge that neighborhoods and neighborhood associations are key components in the long-term effort to improve the quality of life in Richmond,

- (b) To establish and maintain a satisfying quality of life for all Richmond citizens,
- (c) To recognize neighborhood associations as the primary initiators of neighborhood improvement efforts, and
- (d) To define the role of City government in the creation and empowerment of neighborhood associations throughout the City, wherever citizens wish to create them.

157.40 CITY/NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONS

- (a) The City intends that its relationship with the neighborhoods be one of partnership. This partnership will mobilize resources within the City and seek additional resources external to the City to find and apply solutions to problems and to make other improvements identified by neighborhood associations.
- (b) The City encourages neighborhood residents to form such associations and will empower those associations once formed through the Department of Planning and Redevelopment pursuant to the recommendations of the Greater Richmond Progress Committee's Task Force on Neighborhoods. Said Department of Planning and Redevelopment will facilitate efforts to:
 - (1) Identify potential sponsors for associations and make City resources available to those sponsors for start-up purposes,
 - (2) Utilize City departments, other governmental bodies, not-for-profit organizations, and businesses to generate interest in neighborhood associations, and
 - (3) Create incentives for the establishment and maintenance of associations.
- (c) The City recognizes that the newly established associations must have the tools for achieving success. Through the Greater Richmond Progress Committee's Task Force on Neighborhoods, the Department of Planning and Redevelopment will facilitate efforts to:
 - (1) Establish a neighborhood association training program to provide emerging association leaders with communications and organizational skills as well as essential information about the community,
 - (2) Establish communication links between all governmental and non-governmental entities and the neighborhood associations to ensure a coordinated and cooperative approach to addressing neighborhood problems,
 - (3) Support, promote and recognize neighborhood associations, and
 - (4) Require consultation with neighborhood associations in the course of planning city-sponsored projects which affect the neighborhoods and encourage other governmental entities to consult with the associations prior to making decisions which significantly impact the neighborhoods.

157.50 NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES CLEARING-HOUSE

Common Council will fund the operation of a Neighborhood Services Clearing-house which will be run by a Board composed of representatives from all neighborhood associations. The Clearing-house will provide a number of services including, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Maintain a resource center which would actively gather information relating to local neighborhoods, the experiences of other communities and neighborhood issues in general and provide information to the general public upon request,
- (b) Sponsor conferences, public meetings or other events relating to neighborhood issues or designed to assist neighborhoods in addressing problems or taking advantage of opportunities,
- (c) Act as an advocacy group on behalf of neighborhood associations providing spokespersons to address public meetings, social and service clubs, governmental, corporate or not-for-profit organizations on the subject of neighborhoods and their concerns,
- (d) Provide direct assistance to individual associations in start-up and sustaining activities, identifying resources for problem-solving and conflict resolution, working to establish or to improve linkages with service providers, and generally working to strengthen local associations, and
- (e) Provide regular training programs for new and continuing association leaders to ensure the continued vitality of the associations.

157.60 RESOURCES

- (a) As long as citizens understand and take advantage of their right to express concerns within the neighborhood associations, these associations will be in the best position to understand the problems and opportunities facing the neighborhoods. The associations are expected to identify problems and possible solutions and then undertake action to address them. The associations will utilize neighborhood resources whenever possible to address these issues. In many cases, however, resources from outside the neighborhood will be essential.
- (b) Once an association has determined that it needs assistance in addressing an issue from a governmental or non-governmental office, it is encouraged to bring that request directly to the office in question. That assistance could take many forms, but may commonly be additional financial, personnel or equipment resources in excess of those available to the neighborhood. As appropriate, City offices will work with the neighborhood association in order to acquire those additional resources either from the City itself or from another entity.
- (c) The unique character of problems faced by a single neighborhood may require the establishment of a neighborhood service center which would allow for a more efficient delivery of services to a neighborhood and a more coordinated delivery when several providers are involved. The establishment of such a center would come at the request of the neighborhood association and be agreed to by the service providers involved. (Ord. 40-1993)