

City of Lawrence
Lawrence Neighborhood HUB
Neighborhood Association Bylaws Template Guide

Purpose of Bylaws

Bylaws are the internal rules that guide how a neighborhood association operates. They serve two key purposes:

1. **Governance:** Define the structure, roles, and responsibilities of the board and outline how decisions are made.
2. **Management:** Provide guidance for handling other aspects of the association’s operations.

Well-written bylaws reflect the association’s values and purpose, support the neighborhood, and help the association achieve its goals. Your association’s focus should be on governance—how decisions are made and implemented—rather than addressing every activity or issue the association may encounter.

Lawrence Neighborhood HUB New Application or Renewal
Review & Approval Authority: City of Lawrence

- **Text in RED:** These are required elements of the bylaws for recognition by the City of Lawrence. During the submitting process, if your organization does not have the required elements, your application will be given to option to revise your bylaws and application
- **Text in *italics (parentheses)*:** Editorial notes from the City to provide context and clarification for your organization.
- **Text in PURPLE:** Optional elements for your organization. These are not required for recognition but may enhance your bylaws or operations.

For additional questions regarding neighborhood associations, bylaws, or the recognition process, please contact:

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NeighborhoodHUB@CityofLawrence.org
317-542-4544

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of the organization shall be the **[Name] Neighborhood Association**, or an acceptable alternative such as **[Name] Neighborhood Coalition**, **[Name] Neighborhood Alliance**, or **[Name] Community** (hereinafter referred to as "the [Name] Neighborhood Association" and recognized by its abbreviation, if applicable).

ARTICLE II: Purpose

(Your association can edit or change this section. This section is a suggestion, but not a requirement for recognition)

The Association is established to:

- Foster a sense of community and address neighborhood concerns collaboratively.
 - Improve livability by promoting open communication between the neighborhood, local government, businesses, and other neighborhoods.
 - Provide an open and inclusive platform for residents to engage in neighborhood activities and decision-making.
 - Encourage neighborhood pride and participation through events, programs, and advocacy efforts.
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ARTICLE III: Neighborhood Boundaries

*(Neighborhood Association must establish clear boundaries that encompass the geographical area of the neighborhood. Please utilize the **City's GIS Beacon Guidelines** for greater clarification on your neighborhood boundaries. Our team can be available to assist with GIS Beacon support. You may generalize your neighborhood with the North, South, East, and West boundaries)*

The boundaries of the Association shall be defined as follows:

- **North:** [Boundary Description]
- **South:** [Boundary Description]
- **East:** [Boundary Description]
- **West:** [Boundary Description]

The Association will work with city officials to create an official map representing these boundaries.

ARTICLE IV: Membership

1. Membership in the Association is open to all neighbors within the defined boundaries.

- **Neighbors:** Residents, businesses, or legal entities owning or occupying property within the neighborhood boundaries.
 - **Residents:** Individuals living within the neighborhood boundaries.
2. Membership is strictly voluntary.
 3. Membership fees, if any when established, shall be optional and cannot bar anyone from membership or participating.

ARTICLE V: Voting & Quorum

(All required for City recognition. Additional non-confliction language or requirements can be added. Associations may choose whether or not non-paying members will be allowed voting privileges)

Voting

- A voting member must be at least 18 years old and present at the meeting.
- Each member is entitled to one (1) vote.

Leadership Quorum

- A quorum for leadership decisions requires a minimum of [number or formula].

Membership Quorum

- Decisions by the general membership require a simple majority of members present, this is no minimum quorum.

ARTICLE VI: Leadership

(Neighborhood Associations are required to provide procedures for election and removal of leadership. Leadership is a broad term and may be met with a multitude of organizational options (for example an executive board or steering committee). Below is designed with a steering committee and executive offices. You are not required to keep this leadership structure but must have a leadership section of your bylaws. You are required to describe how leadership will be nominated, leadership's terms, and removal of a leadership member.)

Executive Board / Steering Committee

- The Association shall be governed by an Executive Board or Steering Committee consisting of at least [number] members.
- Members of the Steering Committee must live, own property, or operate a business within the neighborhood boundaries.
- In the event of a vacancy, the Steering Committee may appoint a replacement.

Executive Officers

(Define their roles and responsibilities)

1. The Steering Committee shall appoint the following officers from its members:
 - President/Chair
 - Vice President or Co-Chairs
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
2. Officers shall serve a term of one (1) year or until successors are elected.

Nomination & Election

- Leadership nominations and elections will occur during the Annual Meeting, with prior notification to all members before the meeting.
- Leadership terms begin immediately after the Annual Meeting.

Removal

- A leadership member may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of voting members present.

ARTICLE VII: Committees

- Committees may be established by the Steering Committee based on neighborhood interests and volunteer availability.
- Committees shall report their activities to the Steering Committee regularly.

ARTICLE VIII: Meetings

(Neighborhood Associations are required to hold an annual meeting with notice to all addresses within the geographic boundaries. Regular and Special Meetings may be edited)

(Robert's Rules of Order are not a requirement for neighborhood associations to use, but are recommended due to their transparency and familiarity. Having an established process of meeting governance is highly recommended)

Regular and Special Meetings

- Steering Committee meetings shall be held as needed.
- Special meetings may be called by the Executive Officers with notice to members.

Annual Meeting

- An Annual Meeting shall be held in [month] to elect leadership and review the Association's activities.
 - A copy of meeting minutes and any updated bylaws will be submitted to the City's Mayor's Office or via email.
 - The Association must re-register annually with the City to ensure updated information is accurate with the neighborhood.
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ARTICLE IX: AGENDA

(This section may be customized, altered, or removed by your association. It is a suggestion and not a requirement for City recognition.)

- The agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by a member of the Executive Board/Steering Committee or an appointed officer.
 - Members may request agenda items by submitting them in writing to the Executive Officers at least [insert number] days prior to the meeting.
 - The finalized agenda should be shared with members in advance of the meeting to ensure transparency and adequate preparation.
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ARTICLE X: Amendment of Bylaws

(Neighborhood Associations are required to provide changes or amendments to bylaws to the City of Lawrence Mayor's Office via email)

- These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of neighbors present at the Annual Meeting, a general meeting, or a meeting specifically called for amendments.
 - All amendments must be submitted to the City for record-keeping.
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ARTICLE XI: Non-Discrimination

(Neighborhood Associations seeking recognition are required to include a non-discrimination clause in their bylaw)

- The [NAME] Neighborhood Association shall not discriminate based on race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, citizenship, national origin, ancestry, income, or political affiliation.

- All residents, regardless of property ownership, are welcome to participate in the Association's meetings and activities.
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ARTICLE XII: FINANCES

- **EXPENDITURES.** Expenditures of funds amounting to over “_____” in any month must be approved by a majority vote of the Membership present at any properly announced meeting of the Membership.

(The figure you choose to insert here will depend on the amount of your budget and your anticipated monthly expenditures.)

- **FINANCIAL REPORTS.** Quarterly and Annual Financial Reports shall be prepared by the Treasurer and presented to the Members at the quarterly and annual meetings.

- **NON -PROFIT & Incorporated Status: (Optional)**

(Articles of Incorporation do not make an association a nonprofit organization. Nonprofit status is given by the Internal Revenue Service. The decision to apply for nonprofit or 501(c)3 status with the IRS is a big step for a neighborhood association and should be considered carefully. Applying for and maintaining nonprofit status requires a great deal of paperwork and record keeping.)

Adopted on: [Date]

Approved by: [List of initial leadership or membership representatives]