



How To Organize Your Block

Neighborhood Stabilization Team
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Know Your Resources



The first step in organizing a block is to know what resources exist to help you.

One of the most important resources is the Neighborhood Stabilization Team and the Neighborhood Improvement Specialists.

Neighborhood Stabilization Team
657-1392

The Neighborhood Improvement Specialists aka (NSOs) are the link between your neighborhood and City government. NISs facilitate city service delivery and work with you to resolve problems. They are assigned by Ward, and work with the Aldermen, the SLMPD and city departments and agencies to deal with a wide range of programs. Their mission is to resolve the problems that have a negative impact on residents and their neighborhoods.

**Citizens' Service Bureau
(314) 622-4800**

The Citizens' Service Bureau (CSB) is the customer service department for City government. Call the CSB to make requests for City services. For example, if your trash has not been collected or you have a street light out on your block, just call the CSB and they will enter a service request for you and responsible City department will respond.

**St. Louis
Metropolitan Police Department**

**North Patrol: 444-0001
Central Patrol: 444-2500
South Patrol: 444-0100**

Learn what police district serves your block and who your Community Outreach Officers and Problem Property Officers are. They can provide your block with statistics and crime reports, ensure that a police officer attends the block meeting to act as your liaison with the police department.

Time and Place for the Meeting



Choose a convenient time and place for the meeting so it will be well attended.

Decide a time and place for your first meeting. You will want a time that is convenient for as many people on the block as possible. For instance, scheduling a Monday, 10:00 AM meeting may not be well attended if most people on your block work 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

As your meetings continue, you may want to make the time and place routine. One block unit for example, meets the second Wednesday of each month at the local library branch.

Getting the Word Out About the Meeting



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Sample Flyer

ANNOUNCING



Block Meeting for the 9900 Block of Happy People Lane

Time: 6:00 PM

Place: Good Book Branch of the Public Library

Date: July 1, 2008

Don't miss this important meeting!!!
Residents of each household are asked
to attend so you can be informed about
what is happening on your block.

Meeting Content



What will you talk about in the first meeting?

What are residents' main concerns for the block?

Decide the most important topic for the first block meeting. You may come up with the topic by talking to block residents and hearing from them what their concerns are. If there's not time to talk to a lot of residents, choose the topic according to your understanding of the block.

While there may be many issues to discuss, keep it simple. True block organization success comes from taking on only a few projects and issues at a time. If you try and address everything at once, you will spread your resources too thin and accomplish little.

The Agenda



Now that you know what to discuss, you need to let the people at the meeting know.

Your agenda will help ensure a productive and timely meeting. It should be simple, brief and informative.

Sample Agenda

1. Call Meeting to order
2. Welcome and Introduce Special Guests
3. Explain purpose of a Block Unit
4. Discuss Primary Concerns: Recent Burglaries, Graffiti, Trash and Debris on Block
5. Assign tasks
6. Plan Next Meeting
7. Adjourn/Refreshments

Information at the Meeting



Information is Power

Have information at the meeting regarding various resources, programs and services. For instance, the Citizens' Service Bureau enters requests and distributes them to the various agencies and tracks the progress. The Neighborhood Stabilization Team can assist with City service delivery, by following up on the service requests that have been entered by the CSB and other stakeholders. Resolving problem property issues and act as liaison to service agencies and elected officials. Utilizing information like this will assist you in getting things done in the neighborhood. The information is readily available.... And free.

The First Meeting



You've done all the legwork and people showed up. How can you make sure the meeting is a success?

- **Be sure to stick to the main topic on the agenda.**

Other issues will come up and people will want to talk about everything at the first meeting-but keep it simple. Prioritize the issues that come up and set aside time to address them at future meetings.

- **Be sure everyone who wants has an opportunity to talk.**

But be sure that they stick to the main agenda topics. This ensures the involvement from all residents.

- **Elect a Block Captain**

This is extremely important to the block organization. The block captain is the liaison between your block unit and City Hall, the police department and the neighborhood organization.

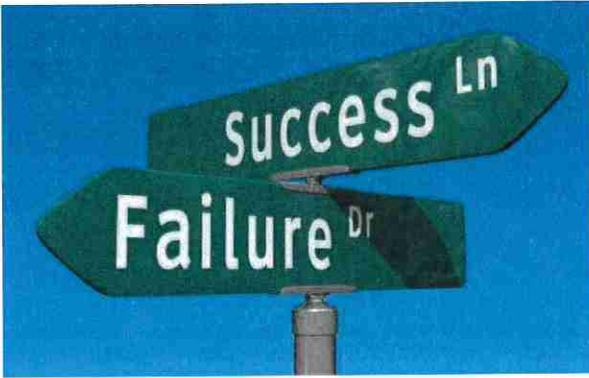
- **Begin a Phone/Address List.**

Be sure all meeting attendees sign their names, addresses and phone numbers. This is your best tool for communicating future meetings and knowing who you can contact for projects.

- **Plan Your Next Meeting**

The best audience is a captive audience. Setting the next meeting date while in your current meeting ensures good attendance.

The Future



You've made it through the first meeting.....now what?

How do you ensure your block's continued success?

By continuing the basics: Publicize the time and date

Of meetings, prioritize the concerns and issues, develop and implement projects and work with City agencies and other neighborhood organizations, such as your local neighborhood association or housing corporation.

Additionally, make sure new residents on your block or the surrounding area are told about the block meetings and activities and invite them to be part of the group. If there are rental properties on your block, make sure the property owners are invited to participate as well as the tenants. If there are multi-unit complexes, be sure the property managers or others responsible for the properties are invited to be a part of the block unit. Continually update the block's phone/address list and listen to each other so there is agreement about the main issues and concerns facing your block.

SUMMARY



Block organization is a powerful, effective tool for making positive changes where you live. By becoming organized you and your neighbors will have a unified, powerful voice that must be heard. It only takes one person to get things started. If you're reading this, then you may be that person.

HELPFUL NUMBERS



Aid for Victims of Crime.....	800-347-6881
Animal Control.....	314-657-1500
Brightside St. Louis.....	314-772-4646
Building Division.....	314-622-3313
Citizens' Service Bureau.....	314-622-4800
Crime Stoppers Tip Line.....	866-371-8477
Environmental Health.....	314-612-5300
Forestry.....	314-613-7200
Gateway Greening.....	314-588-9600
Health Department.....	314-612-5100
Human Services Department.....	314-612-5900
Mow-To-Own LRA lots.....	314-657-3757
Neighborhood Stabilization Team.....	314-657-1392

Parks Division.....	314-289-5300
Recreation.....	314-289-5320
Public Safety Department.....	314-622-3391
SLACO.....	314-361-9406
SLATE.....	314-589-8000
St. Louis Public Schools.....	314-231-3720
Street Department.....	314-647-3111
Urban League Federation of Block Units.....	314-615-3618
Victim Services.....	314-622-4373

St. Louis Police Department

Narcotics, Gang and Homicide Hotline..... 314-241-2677

Community Outreach:

North Patrol.....	314-444-0001
Central Patrol.....	314-444-2500
South Patrol.....	314-444-0100
Non-Emergency.....	314-231-1212
Emergency.....	911



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