

South Wenatchee Subarea Planning White Paper:

Neighborhood Establishment

May 23, 2016

INTRODUCTION

Established neighborhoods are a vital component of social capital by supporting necessary bonds, bridges and links within a community. Officially recognized neighborhoods provide a platform for citizens to communicate in a prompt and organized fashion with each other, government and other important groups. Identifying neighborhoods allows local government to establish partnerships that can assist in preserving and maintaining an area's quality of life, carrying out public services in an orderly and efficient manner, and ensuring successful public engagement efforts.

Neighborhood associations can be established through grassroots efforts that lead to a request for official recognition, through partnership with a local government and community organization or through sole direction by a local government. Pinpointing common short- and long-term goals that both a government entity and a community may have for neighborhoods will most often result in the decision to work through partnership. Developing neighborhoods through partnership will require more up front efforts from both parties and will also result in a greater sense of ownership and identity for each established association.

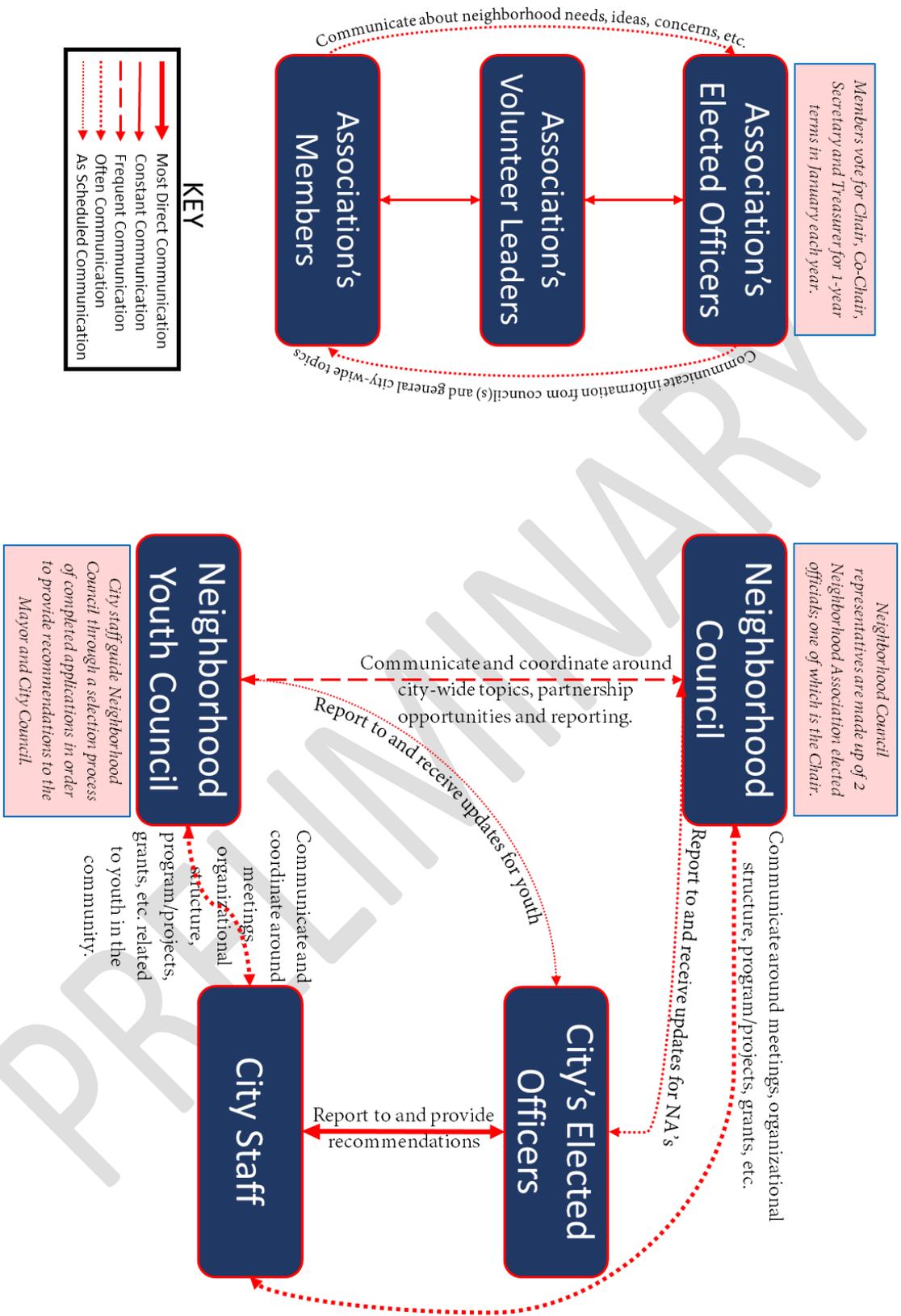
Each neighborhood association embodies the goals, concerns and needs of all citizens that reside within the identified boundaries. Benefits from recognized neighborhoods reach beyond adopted boundaries and impact far more than just those residing within them. Known benefits include:

- Improves communication between citizens, government and other important groups;
- Relationships are fostered among neighbors that cross cultural/social boundaries;
- Projects and programs that enhance quality of life are developed and sustainable;
- Work parties are organized to provide an effort towards preserving and improving;
- Ownership and identity become established for each neighborhood;
- Crime and other disturbances become a concern and priority of the whole community;
- Neighbors are empowered to be involved in the decision making process for the future;
- Structure provides a platform for workshops, social events skill-building activities;

While developing the neighborhood programs and associated policies and procedures considerations to include are membership, bylaws, officers/board representatives, tax identification, finances and the process for official recognition by the city. Adopting a formalized structure includes both relationships within the neighborhood association and between the neighborhood association and the city. Below is a diagram that demonstrates a common and recommended structure along with communication paths. It includes the following:

- Neighborhood Association Elected Officials, Volunteer Leaders and Members
- Neighborhood Council and Youth Council
- City's Elected Officers and Staff

Americans have 50% fewer meaningful contacts with neighbors today than they did 50 years ago.



Neighborhood associations established through partnerships that include all stakeholders will result in greater sustainability and impact beyond established boundaries. When officially recognized by the local jurisdiction, these associations build community, address concerns at appropriate levels, empower residents, improve neighborhoods by establishing identity and instilling pride, and preserve and cultivating quality of life for all.

It is imperative that the neighborhood associations, though supported in structure and stability by the City, are governed by the community. Elected Officers, chosen by the community members residing within the boundaries of each association, serve as the lines of communication to and from the associations and the City, as outlined in the diagram above. The key for the City is to establish structure and provide stability support in such a way that the surrounding community sees successes and challenges as their own. Balancing the importance of the association's independence and the need for the City to convene, facilitate and maintain organized and respected structure is unique to each community and will require open communication and partnerships between all parties.

PRELIMINARY

**DON'T ASK WHERE I'M FROM,
ASK WHERE I'M LOCAL.**

- Taiye Selasi