



Neighborhood Association Board Member Welcome Packet

Congratulations on being elected to your neighborhood association (NA) board! Whether you are a new board member or a returning board member who has been serving with your neighborhood association for years, we want to thank you for your time and dedication!

It is volunteers like you that make Portland such a great place to live. As you venture into the coming year as a community leader, please know your efforts will help to improve the quality of your neighborhood now and for generations to come. And while these efforts may require some hard work, they are also about having a good time with your neighbors!

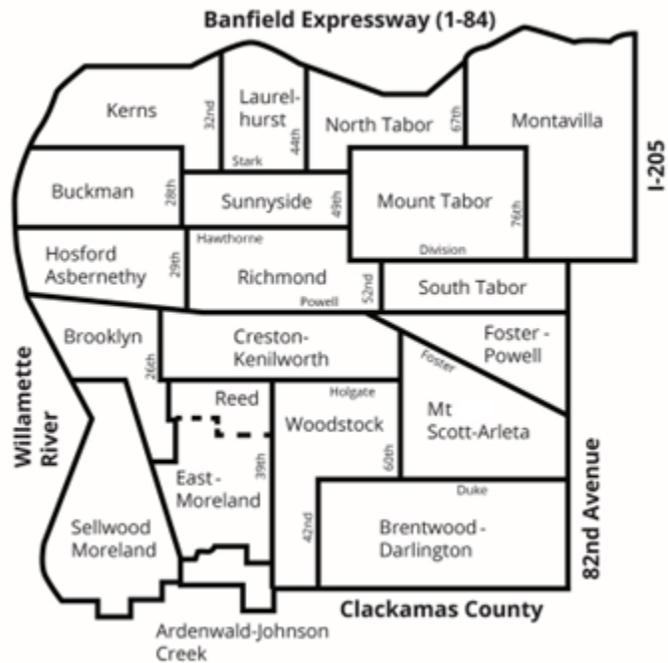
This packet is a resource to help you understand and succeed in your role as a neighborhood association board member. Inside you will find information about Portland's neighborhood system; SE Uplift, your neighborhood coalition; your responsibilities as a board member; voting and decision-making requirements; and some helpful documents outlining best practices to operate your NA board.

Your neighborhood association can lean on SE Uplift, and particularly your staff liaison, for baseline support and guidance. SE Uplift will host an annual Board Orientation for your information, and your staff liaison is happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. Please feel free to contact them for encouragement and guidance at any time. We look forward to working with you this year!

Sincerely,

What are Neighborhood Associations?

If you live in Portland, you live in one of our city's officially recognized 94 neighborhoods- each with its own association. A neighborhood association (NA) serves its residents by holding a warm and encouraging space for community action and input. These are places for neighbors to come together to address various issues and hopes for their neighborhood and that aim to create a platform from which all neighbors can effectively work to improve their communities.



What do Neighborhood Associations Do?

- **Communicate Activities and Ideas:** Organize forums, write, and distribute neighborhood newsletters and keep neighbors connected.
- **Build Community:** Plan block parties, movies and concerts in the park, festivals, clean-ups, tree plantings, foot patrols, neighborhood emergency teams, and other events.
- **Advocate for Their Community:** Represent neighborhood interests to local government, participate on policy committees, develop grassroots campaigns, and provide input for land use and planning decisions.

What is the SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition?

SE Uplift is where neighborly aspirations come to life. Since 1968, the SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition has provided critical staff and organizational support to thousands of neighborhood association volunteers fostering vibrant and diverse neighborhoods within our coalition. Work with us and discover grants and financial support, workshops, partnerships, and strategies for influencing city policy and priorities. We want to help you create and care

for the community you dream.

SE Uplift Liaison Services for Neighborhoods

Your liaison will work with you to make sure that not only the needs of your neighborhood get met, but that your needs as a volunteer are heard and supported. Below you will find a list of services you can expect each year as well as services available by request.

Baseline Services Provided by Your Liaison or Other SE Uplift Staff

We provide the following base level of support to NAs and other groups who meet eligibility criteria:

- Attend neighborhood meetings twice a year to support the annual elections process and share information.
- Conducts board member orientation by providing resource materials at elections, invitations to trainings, and hosting bi-annual new board member orientations.
- Support annual election preparation by providing process and communication resources.
- Send reminders on, and aid with, submitting communication funds proposals and reimbursement requests.
- Send reminders and aid ensure compliance with annual filings requirements.
- Connect members with appropriate bureaus, organizations, resources, other SE Uplift program staff, and other volunteers when a need is identified.
- Help answer organizational process, structural, policy, or procedural questions and share best practices in areas we have knowledge/expertise.

Upon request, and depending on availability, liaisons may also be able to do the following additional support:

- Lead or assist with an annual visioning or goal setting session.
- Promote neighborhood events through SE Uplift's communication channels.
- Consult on strategy and planning for various events or trainings.
- Connect you and your board with other NA leaders for resource and information sharing; trainings and resources offered by the City and partner organizations; and advocacy

Board Member General Welcome Packet

efforts and resources at the coalition and city-level.

- Attend additional neighborhood association meetings when a need is present.
- Brainstorm and/or support: community building efforts; communication strategies; diversity, equity, inclusion efforts, and other efforts to increase civic engagement, leadership development, and community building.
- Work with neighborhoods to capture information and data to use in: reports, best practices, toolkits, and more.
- Help with trouble-shooting other organizational issues or barriers the NA comes across.

Funding and Support Available for Neighborhood Associations

SE Uplift has several programs managed by SE Uplift staff aimed at providing our NAs access to funding and support. This page provides a brief overview. Go to our [SE Uplift staff page](#) for the point person or connect with your staff liaison.

Communication Funds

Communications Funds are intended to support NA with communication efforts. This includes to generate awareness of, and participation in neighborhood activities and events, provide residents with information about local issues, and to build relationships between neighbors.

Neighborhood Associations are eligible to apply for \$500.00* in funding for communications-related expenses. Neighborhood Associations are required to fill out a short fund application with required documents, if they want to receive the funds. Should you choose to apply for this funding, we expect neighborhood associations to prioritize the use of these funds to meet a minimum standard, or baseline, of communication.

**Note: these funds are not a guarantee.*

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility (DEIA) Capacity Building Grants

DEIA Capacity Building Grants provide community groups with a small amount of funding to be used for communication and outreach efforts. Our priority for communication and outreach funding is to make funds available to the diverse southeast Portland community and to

ensure funds support strategies and best practices for effective, accessible outreach and community engagement.

Community Small Grants

Community Small Grants program offers the opportunity to engage community members across the city. By offering seed-money, training, and technical support, the program enables people and organizations to identify community needs, develop collaborative projects, and see ideas through to completion. The Community Small Grants program builds the skills and capacity of project leaders to shape the place where they live. Increased capacity creates confidence and from confidence grows ongoing engagement of new community leaders.

The goals of the Community Small Grants Program are to increase the number and diversity of people who are **involved and engaged** in the broader community; strengthen **community capacity** to create change by building community leadership, identity, skills, relationships, and partnerships; and increase community **impact on public decisions** and community life.

Fiscal Sponsorship

SE Uplift can provide your NA with fiscal sponsorship, which will allow you to apply for grants and solicit tax-deductible donations under SE Uplift's 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. NAs must first apply and be approved for each specific project or event. To simplify this process, NAs can submit one application for all expected projects and events for the year. Agreements exist for one year with the option for renewal. Addendums are required anytime a grant is applied for.

Once approved, **ALL** financial donations generated using SE Uplift's tax-ID must be deposited into your NA's designated account at SE Uplift. **ALL** in-kind donations generated using SE Uplift's tax-ID must be tracked and reported to SE Uplift. To find out which of your NA's projects currently have fiscal sponsorship, get assistance with the application process, or discuss the reimbursement process, please contact our Fiscal Sponsorship Program Manager.

Neighborhood Planning

SE Uplift's Neighborhood Planning program supports residents in playing an active role in land use and transportation issues in their neighborhoods. Whether it is advocating for a new

Board Member General Welcome Packet

crosswalk, examining ways to improve an unimproved street, or advice on how to negotiate transportation decision making at the city, SE Uplift can support you and your neighborhood. For support with land use, transportation, or development issues contact the SE Uplift Neighborhood Planning Program Manager.

Board Responsibilities

As a NA board member, you are on a board of a State Non Profit or, in some cases, a 501(c)(3). It is your responsibility to comply with applicable state laws and governing best practices. It is your responsibility to create an environment where all neighbors can be heard and follow the rules and processes outlined in your bylaws. Additional responsibilities for all board members and for office positions include:

All Board Members

- Attend NA meetings and events; Notify the Chair/President In advance If unable to attend
- Review and follow your NA's bylaws
- Review minutes and financial reports
- Foster participation and an inclusive environment
- Take on an officer position or get involved with a committee, project or event of interest

Chair / President

- Sets the agenda for each meeting, and adds any requests approved for the agenda
- Facilitates all board and general meetings
- Calls special and emergency meetings, when necessary, as outlined in the bylaws
- Receives and replies to phone calls, email, mail, and other correspondence, notifying other board members and delegating requests as needed
- Recruits new members and encourages participation in the association

Vice-Chair / Vice-President

- Acts in the absence of the President/Chair, with the same responsibilities

Board Member General Welcome Packet

- Handles other tasks as requested by the Chair or other board members
- Recruits new members and encourages participation in the association

Secretary

- Maintains an up-to-date board roster and provides updates to SE Uplift*
- Ensures that 7 days' notice (date, time, location, agenda) is provided to the public prior to all board, general, and special meetings. We recommend you post them on your website and email your membership.
- Ensures that sign-in sheets are accessible to all in-person attendees and utilized
- Records accurate minutes of all meetings of the Neighborhood Association and makes draft minutes available to the board and membership for review prior to the next meeting
- Ensures that board meeting minutes are posted on the website
- Provides a copy of all minutes to the board and upon request, other members, each month after minutes have been approved
- For archiving purposes, submits to SE Uplift monthly a copy of the sign-in sheet, approved agenda, and approved minutes from each Neighborhood Association meeting*
- Submits an electronic copy of the Neighborhood Association's updated bylaws to SE Uplift as needed any time changes are adopted*
- Recruits new members and encourages participation in the association

** SE Uplift will archive your meeting records and update the City's Civic Life Bureau with key contacts for your NA and your most current bylaws.*

Treasurer

- Accounts for and deposits all revenue and income received
- Complies with the terms of the Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement if your Neighborhood Association is fiscally sponsored by SE Uplift
- Tracks any in-kind or financial donations received by the Neighborhood Association
- Annually:
 - Files the annual financial report with the Oregon Department of Justice, Charitable

Board Member General Welcome Packet

Activities section, and provides the records to SE Uplift for reimbursement of the associated fee and archival in coalition records

- Files the annual report with the Secretary of State, Corporate Division, and provides records to SE Uplift for reimbursement of associated fee and archival in coalition records
- If applicable, files an annual tax return with the IRS
- Tracks SE Uplift's \$500 communication grant funds and submits an annual report to SE Uplift
- Pays all association expenses, as needed
- Keeps complete financial records and regularly reports the status of funds at meetings
- Recruit new members and encourages participation in the association

Neighborhood Land Use & Transportation Chair

- Receives land use notices and provides a summary report of notifications at monthly meetings, suggesting actions to be taken by the neighborhood
- Responds to land use notices on behalf of the neighborhood association
- Acts as a land use resource for their neighborhood association. Trains others in land use processes and procedures
- Serves as the neighborhood's representative on the SE Uplift Land Use and Transportation Committee which serves as a forum for connection and collaboration and meets monthly on the third Monday at 7pm
- Recruits new members and encourages participation in the association

Nominated Representative to the SE Uplift Neighborhood Coalition Board

SE Uplift is a separate federally recognized 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has worked since 1968 to build informed, inclusive, and participatory neighborhoods that support the social and ecological wellbeing of 20 neighborhoods in SE and NE Portland. SE Uplift provides training, resources, and capacity-building support that uplifts the aspirations of individuals, organizations and businesses that call this district home. We convene leaders throughout the district to collaborate on solutions to community challenges, and we connect neighbors to opportunities to become more civically engaged in the decision-making

Board Member General Welcome Packet

processes that impact their lives.

As a member of the SE Uplift Board of Directors, you would fulfill the roles of responsibilities of governing a separate nonprofit organization in collaboration with community leaders from Neighborhood Associations, Business District Associations, other nonprofits, and at-large board members from throughout the district.

SE Uplift Board of Director Responsibilities include:

- Attending 10 SE Uplift board meetings annually (first Mondays, 7-9pm, except Aug. and Dec.)
- Upholding the mission and values of SE Uplift's policies, programs, and practices
- Complying with state law regarding the legal duties required of nonprofit board members
- Ensuring that coalition services and programs are responsive to community interests
- Serving as a conduit between your neighborhood and SE Uplift by communicating your neighborhood's activities and concerns to SE Uplift and by engaging your Neighborhood Association members in SE Uplift's programs and projects, and opportunities to engage in the civic activities with the City
- Building a relationship with your SE Uplift staff liaison to ensure that both our organization's needs are met
- Collaborating with other coalition neighborhoods on big picture vision, goals, and projects to strengthen our community (usually through participation in SE Uplift committees)
- Serving as an advocate in the public policy arena concerning land use, transportation, and other livability issues
- Overseeing the coalition's finances and organizational management

NEXT STEPS:

SE Uplift will provide your Neighborhood Association board chair with a Nomination Form that verifies that your Neighborhood Association has followed its bylaws and policies for selecting you as its nominee to the SE Uplift board. You will then be provided with a comprehensive welcome packet that includes materials to read, sign and return to SE

Uplift. Once submitted, SE Uplift staff can arrange for you to be seated by its Board of Directors at a future board meeting. An orientation for new board members is provided by SE Uplift periodically throughout the year.

**Every Neighborhood Association in the district may have a seat on the SE Uplift Board of Directors. As a separate nonprofit organization, SE Uplift reserves the right to reject a nomination to its Board of Directors. If a Nominee is rejected, your Neighborhood Association may select another delegate.*

At-Large

There are often several at-large members of a Neighborhood Association board. At-large members serve as committee chairs or take on specific tasks. Projects may include things such as coordinating a neighborhood event, serving on a committee, and newsletter creation. Each neighborhood has different needs, and everyone has different interests. Determine your match and then work with the board to define your role.

Discussions and Voting: The Dos and Don'ts

Neighborhood associations must follow open meeting laws for discussions and decision-making as defined in the Office of Community & Civic Life regulations within its [ONI Standards](#). Following these requirements can protect you and the board from challenges, legal or otherwise.

Please keep in mind that all NA correspondence must be made available upon request according to the Freedom of Information Act. While this situation is unlikely, consider your communications to be public.

Voting

All voting done at NA meetings must be done at meetings open to the public, where a quorum of board members is present (see your NA bylaws for quorum requirements). Only elected board members are permitted to vote at board meetings. Matters such as bylaw amendments, annual board elections, and dissolution of the board can only be voted on during General Membership Meetings at which all members who have consented to

Board Member General Welcome Packet

membership in your NA are eligible to vote (see your NA bylaws for General Meeting requirements).

Board and general members must physically be present to vote (which includes virtual video or audio presence). Voting by email, mail or by proxy is prohibited. Voting can be done orally, by show of hands or by written ballot. Check your bylaws to see if there are specific procedures in place for the general membership vote on elections.

Decisions that Require a Vote

- Approval of meeting minutes
- Election of board members
- Bylaw amendments
- Letters of support
- Budgets and the approval of expenses
- Organizing projects or events
- Any positions taken or policy recommendations (land use issues, city budget positions, city policy recommendations, etc.)

Example Motion and Voting Procedure

- *Board Member A:* "I move that..."
- *Board Member B:* "I second that motion"
- *Chair:* "It has been moved and seconded that ... [repeat motion verbatim, rely on Secretary if necessary]"
- *Chair:* "Is there any further discussion?" ... [restate motion]."
- At this point further discussion will ensue. If no further discussion is desired, or when discussion has closed, the Chair will proceed with the vote.
- *Chair:* "All those in favor say 'Aye.' All those not in favor say 'nay,' Are there any abstentions?"
- *Provide summary declaration of vote.*

- If all board members are in favor the motion passes unanimously.

Discussion and Deliberation

All discussions and deliberations toward decisions must be made at meetings open to the public, where a quorum of board members is present. Your NA should avoid online discussions on any matter that may be on a future meeting agenda and will require a vote. It's challenging to predict what issues may arise in the future, but we encourage you to err on the side of caution and limit electronic communication when there appears to be a grey area.

Remember, sharing your opinion with the whole board on an issue that effects the public outside of an open meeting (ex: via email) is a violation of open meeting law.

This does not mean that electronic communication can't be used for anything. In general, logistical decisions and the implementation of activities that have already been approved by the board can be done electronically or by committee. Additionally, the **one-way_distribution** of factual background or reference information is allowed and encouraged.

What is and isn't Allowed Over Email?

It can be tricky to know what can and cannot be sent via email. Check out the following examples for more guidance:

Agenda Setting

- ✓ Allowed: Sending the chair an agenda item for an upcoming meeting
- ⊘ Not Allowed: Sending the board your opinion on a topic on an upcoming meeting agenda

Meeting Minutes

- ✓ Allowed: Proposing edits to draft meeting minutes
- ⊘ Not Allowed: Approving meeting minutes

Event & Project Planning

- ✓ Allowed: Coordinating logistics like who will bring snacks, what time volunteers should

Board Member General Welcome Packet

arrive, where to purchase balloons, etc.

✓ Allowed: The newsletter committee seeking advertisements (that fit within the policy approved by the board) and getting printing done (at a cost equal to or less than the amount approved by the board)

⊗ Not Allowed: Discussing and/or deciding on organizing a new project/event and what the budget for it should be

Positions and Issues

✓ Allowed: Sending the board informational handouts / background documents relating to proposed actions or requests for support (ex: Documents from a developer, land use applications, draft annual budgets, letters of support, committee proposals, etc.)

⊗ Not Allowed: Discussing and/or deciding on proposed actions or requests for support.

Annual Budget

✓ Allowed: Notifying the treasurer that they forgot to include expenses for an upcoming event in the draft annual budget they sent out for review

⊗ Not Allowed: Sending the board your opinion that the annual budget should allocate more money towards one event over another

Meeting Logistics

✓ Allowed: Deciding who should take minutes at the next meeting due to the Secretary's absence

⊗ Not Allowed: Deciding to change meeting frequency and/or structure

Board Best Practices and How to Get There

It is recommended that all board members jointly share responsibility for the many additional duties of their neighborhood association board. While not all of these are required actions, we think they are vital to a healthy neighborhood association and recommend that they be assigned to board members.

Strategic Planning

All board members should help set up a process to determine short term and long-term goals, strategies to reach those goals, and ways to evaluate progress. Consider forming a small committee to put together the initial plan, pitch it to the board, and then execute.

Get Materials and Notices out Early

It is the chair's responsibility, generally speaking, to get the notices out in compliance with open-meeting rules. However, it can be a large job and having cheerleaders, or someone to help pick up some of the tasks, goes a long way. Each board member could help by submitting background documents, contact information, dates and deadlines on any agenda items they suggest.

Provide Opportunities for Neighborhood Input

Consider having a block of time set aside (15 minutes or so) to take announcements and thoughts from residents and community members during meetings. Another way to give your membership an active role in your neighborhood association is to hold straw-polls on agenda items that are of particular interest to neighbors.

Recruit New Members and Foster Participation

This is one of the most important responsibilities of any board member and is a task that should receive attention to ensure the ongoing sustainability of the board. Often times the best approach is to peak people's curiosity; when you're chatting with neighbors on the sidewalk, at the park, or a neighborhood association event try and keep the conversation light and focused on their interests or passions. Rather than jumping right in with an ask to join the board, invite them to come to a meeting where there might be a presentation on an issue they have expressed interest in, or ask if you can get their email for the listserv.

Provide Signage for your Meetings

Neighborhood associations sometimes forget to provide signs directing attendees to their meetings. If meetings are not held completely virtually, it's a good idea to have a sign on the door where people would be entering the building to let them know they're in the right place

Board Member General Welcome Packet

and a sign or two in the hallways directing people to the appropriate room. Save on time and money by having a few directional signs laminated. Another approach is to use A-frame sandwich boards painted with chalkboard paint, which allows you to change the information presented as needed. Whatever option you choose, ensure your signage is accessible by using large print, easy to read font (no cursive or italics), and colors with high contrast (for example, dark print on a light background).

Have a Greeter

When meetings are held in-person, have a board member (or two) stationed at the sign-in table to greet attendees, hand out name tags, brochures, welcome packets and answer any questions they may have. This is a great task to “round-robin,” giving each board member a turn. Everyone should share in the responsibility of making sure your meeting is welcoming to all.

Provide Welcome Packets or Neighborhood Info Sheets

Welcome packets are a great way to instantly make a new person feel welcome. These can equip new attendees with all the basic information about your neighborhood association’s meetings, board members, committees, and upcoming events. Once again, ensure these materials are accessible. It is recommended to have large print copies of packets available and to make it known that other accommodations (such as providing materials in another format) are available upon request. It may be helpful to review this [further guidance on document accessibility](#).

Do Introductions at Every Meeting

Welcome new attendees at the beginning of each meeting. Make introductions a standard agenda item so that everyone will be more comfortable. If your meeting is small (10 or fewer) you could include an icebreaker question as well. At the bare minimum, be sure to ask everyone’s name and pronouns.

Address New Attendees

Don’t assume that everyone in the room knows how the meeting will run. Go over the agenda, explain ground rules, and allow time for questions to ensure that everyone

understands the process.

Allow Social Time at or in Addition to Meetings

Provide 10-15 minutes in the beginning of the meeting to allow an opportunity for neighbors to network and get to know one another. Some neighborhoods also hold quarterly and/or annual neighborhood social events.

Provide Refreshments

When meetings are in-person, have board members provide potluck snacks or get donations from local coffee shops or restaurants. If you need help soliciting donations, or if you feel the ability to offer a tax deduction for donations would be helpful, contact your SE Uplift liaison to learn about the benefits of fiscal sponsorship.

Follow up with New Attendees

Use the information gathered on the sign-in sheet to call or email new members. Check in to see how their first meeting experience went, find out if they have any particular areas of interest, and share information about projects, committees, and other opportunities for participation. This is another task that would benefit from the “round-robin” approach. Have a different board member take the responsibility each month. Establish consistency and add to the ease of the task by drafting a template email that each board member can use when their turn comes around.

Periodically Relocate Meetings

When in-person meetings are possible, change your meeting location temporarily during the summer or around holidays to reach new neighbors. Have meetings in coffee shops, restaurants, or neighborhood parks to change up the atmosphere and make your meetings more social, accessible, and festive! Just make sure to notify neighbors of the change and update your media.

Additional Online Resources

Visit SE Uplift’s website (seuplift.org) for an electronic version of this packet and additional resources including information on:

Board Member General Welcome Packet

1. [Community Capacity Building](#)
2. [Land-Use & Transportation](#)
3. [Fiscal Sponsorship](#)
4. [Insurance](#)
5. [Fundraising & Grants](#)
6. [So much more!](#)