

Starting a Block Club/Community Association 101

Why Start a Block Club?

- Get to know your neighbors;
- Build safer and more beautiful neighborhoods;
- Address community concerns;
- Stay informed about local issues & meet with city officials;
- Host fun neighborhood events and social gatherings;
- Ensure your community has a voice downtown



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from Noun Project

What Activities Can We Do?

- Provide a space for neighbors to share information and concerns
- Organize an alley clean up
- Movie/card night
- Neighborhood safety walk
- Meet with city officials: Council Members, neighborhood police officers, etc.
- Put together a family fun day
- Adopt and beautify a vacant lot

- Create a neighborhood newsletter
- Organize a protest
- Check up on seniors
- Put together a contact list of residents
- Host a monthly potluck
- Make a time bank to share services (snow shoveling, babysitting, etc.)
- Host a book club through the Detroit Public Library's Book Club in a Bag program

Where Should I Start?

1. Pick a time, date and location (church, backyard, business) for your first meeting. Make flyers with the information and give them to your neighbors (Canva and PosterMyWall are free online tools you might use). You only need 4 members to start a club and serve as officers.
2. At every meeting or event, bring a sign in sheet where folks can write their name, address, and best way to get in touch with them. Bring an agenda to keep on track.
3. Your agenda can have whatever items you want. Here are some common agenda items for first meetings:
 - ✓ Introductions
 - ✓ Purpose: Why do you want to start a group? Talk about why you want to start the group. Do you want to clean up alleys, launch a safety patrol, etc.?
 - ✓ Boundaries of the club? This can be one block or many.
 - ✓ Name of the club?
 - ✓ When and where is the next meeting? 2nd Thursdays, etc.
4. Future agendas can have items like Announcements, New Business, Dues, etc.
5. Housekeeping:
 - ✓ Make sure people sign in. Decide how you will get in touch - email group, text group, phone tree, flyers?
 - ✓ Do any of your neighbors need information shared in other languages?
6. Use emails or calls to remind members to attend. It takes a few months for people to remember to come to meetings without reminders! Decide on officers, and what each officer will do. You will need a President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary. (This may happen at the 3rd, 4th or even 10th meeting!)
7. Fill out a [block club registration form](#) and send it to your [District Manager](#)'s office. You will receive a letter of confirmation.

CONGRATS! This means you are now an official block club.

Where Can We Find Additional Help?

Detroit City Council Member Castañeda-López has launched a program to help grow block clubs and other neighborhood groups.

Contact us at 313-224-2450 to set up an appointment and get one-on-one assistance. Habla Español? Llame a Laura al 313-224-1204 o al correo sanchezl@detroitmi.gov

Also:

- ✓ The City of Detroit's Department of Neighborhoods has an online tool for block club development: <http://www.detroitmi.gov/Detroit-Opportunities/Improve-Your-Neighborhood>. They can also give you bags and gloves for a neighborhood clean up.
- ✓ AmeriCorps' Urban Safety Program also helps residents launch block clubs and conducts home safety assessments to promote public safety. Contact amusprogram@gmail.com for more info.