



NEIGHBORHOOD  
ENGAGEMENT  
PROGRAM

## Getting Started: Planning your First Neighborhood Event

*Here are some basics for planning and implementing a neighborhood event or block party from scratch. Although this overview specifically deals with community gatherings, the same format can easily be applied to other neighborhood projects. You'll no doubt have your own ideas and procedures to add, but this should help to get you started!*

1. Distribute and collect contact sheet for all neighbors
2. Recruit at least one other neighbor to help, and send a flyer or email inviting neighbors to attend an initial planning meeting
  - a. Serve some light snacks at your planning meeting and make it fun!
3. At the planning meeting:
  - a. Determine event date and time, or several possible dates for consideration
  - b. Brainstorm and list the types of activities for your event
  - c. Make assignments/volunteers for the various planning and event activities
  - d. Based on the level of volunteer involvement in the planning, you can narrow down your brainstorm list of activities to the final list
4. Prepare and send out a "save the date" or date selection flyer/email, or if the date is set, create and send out an event flyer/invitation
5. Hold another planning meeting (serve some light snacks? Of course!) to finalize details and assignments, including:
  - a. Barricade street/permit
  - b. Food/BBQs
  - c. Drinks, coolers, ice
  - d. Rentals—tables, chairs, etc.
  - e. Theme, decorations
  - f. Name tags
  - g. Entertainment
  - h. Activities, games, sports, icebreakers, arts and crafts, etc.
  - i. Schedule for the day – include the schedule of events and activities; consider distributing a schedule of activities to all neighbors, and/or create a large poster with the schedule
  - j. Specific assignments for individuals, before and during the event - tasks and volunteer assignments
  - k. Garbage/recycling containers

- l. Electricity needs
  - m. Budget/funding
  - n. ***Get a Neighborhood Engagement Matching Grant to help offset the costs!***
  - o. ***And, don't forget - schedule the Police Department to make a crime prevention presentation during your event to get your barricade permit fee waved!***
6. It may be a good idea to hold at least one more planning meeting a week or so prior to the event, in order to check in on all the elements and fill in any remaining blanks
- a. Make sure each volunteer has the tools and information necessary to carry out their particular task or set of tasks
7. On the day of the event (or the day before if appropriate) use the schedule you prepared, with assignments and activities, to implement your block party. Once you've done a few such events, it gets easier and easier, so plan on doing it again!