

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN WORKBOOK



RICHLAND COUNTY  
NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



# WRITE THE VISION. MISSION

The first order of business for an effective neighborhood organization should be to establish a mission and vision. Not only does this help to focus your core group of participants but it aids in getting more buy-in from your community. Your neighbors are more likely to join your organization if they know what they will be expected to contribute and work toward. The Neighborhood Improvement Program suggests taking the following steps to establish an effective mission and/or vision for your

**organization:**

## [ STEPS FOR SUCCESS ]

- Create an Executive Board – these are the individuals who will act as guides for and caretakers of the organization. Choose individuals who are passionate about serving but each have different strengths so that your Executive Board is well-rounded, efficient and poised to have maximum impact.
- Note: Your Executive Board should include, at a minimum, President, Secretary and Treasurer positions.
- Arrange a special called Visioning Meeting for your Executive Board.
- Have each Executive Board member draft a short list of what is most important to them as pertains to the organization; limit each member to 2-3 items each.
- Have a member of your Executive Board write all of the items on a large piece of paper or somewhere that everyone can see them.
- Facilitate a group discussion with the purpose of narrowing down your list to the top 3 driving factors for your organization.
- Draft your mission and/or vision around the 3 critical items you all have discussed.

## [ EXAMPLES ]

Below find Neighborhood Improvement's 2015 update to our mission and vision for an example of how a finished product might read:

The purpose of the Neighborhood Improvement Program is to achieve and sustain wellness in Richland County Neighborhoods through the implementation of projects that establish and enhance overall health socially, economically and physically.

The vision of the Neighborhood Improvement Program is to cultivate a healthy and happy community composed of quality infrastructure, which connects viable, thriving neighborhoods with essential businesses, services and amenities. NIP strives to execute this vision through projects focused on:

- establishing neighborhood character,
- improving civic infrastructure and
- empowering communities for effective leadership.

**A more neighborhood focused example of a mission and vision might read like the below:**

### **Vision**

We envision a community of neighbors working together to achieve a higher quality of life and increasing property values. We envision a neighborhood that is considered by residents and non-residents alike to be a desirable place in which to live and enjoy the benefits of community.

### **Mission**

Our mission is to enhance the quality of life in our neighborhood through management of common areas, enforcement of rules and covenants, support of initiatives that strengthen bonds among residents and investment in capital improvements that benefit the whole community.

F I R S T

T H I N G S

F I R S T

*even a journey of 1,000 miles begins with the decision to **take the first step...***

# MISSION WORKSHEET

CREATE YOUR OWN MISSION+ VISION STATEMENTS

MISSION + VISION   GOALS + ACTIONS	
PROCESS	Define your vision
	List 3 – 5 goals
	Identify separate actions for each goal
I. THE VISION	Define your organizations Vision
II. THE GOALS	Establish broad goal categories
III. PUT IT TOGETHER	Use your vision and goals to help direct your mission statement

## I. THE VISION

a. What are the key elements of your vision – concepts, principles and values that guide your organization?

i. EXAMPLES:

1. Quality of Life
2. The greater good – overall well-being of the neighborhood
3. Community
4. Sustainability

## II. THE GOALS

a. Based on the concepts you've chosen and defined, establish 3 – 5 goals that will guide your mission and your organization.

i. Questions to help shape your goals are as follows:

1. Why do we exist?
2. What makes us different?
3. What do we want to do?
4. Who do we want to do it for?
5. What is the benefit of what we want to do?

## NEEDS OF A MISSION STATEMENT

- Should be clear and simple
- Should avoid elaborate language that is hard for others to understand
- Should be easily explained to and by others
- Should be unique to your organization

# MISSION WORKSHEET

CREATE YOUR OWN MISSION+ VISION STATEMENTS

## LET'S GET STARTED!

I. THE VISION

a. What are the key concepts, principles and values that guide your organization?

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II. THE GOALS

a. Based on the concepts you've chosen and defined, establish 3 – 5 goals that will help you to accomplish that vision. These will guide your mission and your organization – keep in mind the questions from the prior page.

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3. 

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4. 

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5. 

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# MISSION WORKSHEET

CREATE YOUR OWN MISSION+ VISION STATEMENTS

## STARTING TO PUT IT TOGETHER:

- I. THE MISSION
  - a. How do the vision and goals that you've established come together to drive your organization?

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[ADDITIONAL NOTES]

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# WHAT ARE WE AFTER? OUTCOMES

The desired outcomes are those things that you hope will come as a direct result of the neighborhood plan document, mission and vision. This is your bottom line; at the end of the day, what things do you need to have accomplished to be able to say that you have been successful? “What are we trying to accomplish **collectively?**”

**Example:**

The Neighborhood Improvement Program's desired outcome for our Five Year Plan is the **completion of prioritized Master Plan Implementation Projects.**

SMALL STEPS

**B I G**

I D E A S

*small, incremental changes lead to staggering long-term results*

# OUTCOMES WORKSHEET

ESTABLISH YOUR DESIRED OUTCOMES

## QUESTIONS TO GUIDE YOU

- What do your neighbors think will work to achieve the results they want?
- What has worked in similar neighborhoods?
  - Find neighborhoods that are a lot like yours where people have worked together to improve their lives.
  - Were the results they wanted similar to yours?
  - What worked for them?
  - What activities, resources and programs did they use?
- What’s missing and what is already in place in your neighborhood?
- Use what you’ve learned about your neighborhood – facts and figures, a resource map and other information.
- When you compare what has worked in other places with what your neighborhood has in place, what’s missing?
- What resources do you have that you can use in new ways?
- What is most likely to work in your neighborhood?
- When you look at what has worked in other places, what seems like it would work in your neighborhood?
- What steps are the best fit with the results you and your neighbors want, your potential resources, and your neighborhood challenges?

### [TAKE SOME NOTES]

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# ALL THINGS IN ORDER. PRIORITIES

After you have established your mission, vision and goal(s) you will need to draft a list of projects that align with those things. How can you take the ideas you've used to structure your organization and turn them into tangible efforts that have a direct impact on your community and those in neighboring communities?

Once you decide on a list of projects your organization would like to do, you need to come up with a system for deciding the sequence of implementation. How will you decide which project comes first, second, third, etc... How will you

**prioritize?**

# ACTION PLAN + PRIORITIES WORKSHEET

ESTABLISH YOUR PRIORITIES + BUILD YOUR PLAN OF ACTION

## STEPS TO HELP GUIDE YOU:

- Write each project separately.
- You don't have to list actions for each project yet, but give each project its own "territory" (skip a few lines on your paper).
- List actions necessary to proceed with each project (as many as you can). Do what you can to begin.
- Don't try to tackle every project right now. Where can you begin?
- Now focus on the most important projects and list actions that will be needed to accomplish the project – as many as you can. Where do you feel energy or motivation to begin? Start there.
- Brainstorm all actions required to move toward and complete the projects you choose to work on for now.
- Apply time frames, deadlines, when possible.
- Break actions down into the small incremental steps.
- Now repeat until you have actions and a timeline for each project.
- Lastly, rank the importance of each project you have to establish your priority list so you know where your team will begin!

## [TAKE SOME NOTES]

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N O W  
T H E N  
N E X T

***DO** what you can **NOW**; **PLAN** for what's **NEXT***



# JUST A FEW TIPS:

We recommend that you take into consideration two factors when deciding how to order your projects:

- **How much will the project cost and do we have the capacity to implement it right now or will we need time to gather resources?**
- **How immediate is the need for this project?**

You will want to create a timeline and update it annually. What will you try to accomplish in the next year? What will you try to accomplish in the next three years? What will need to wait until year five? This list will also help you establish how much funding you are going to need so that you can be proactive.

It is important to remember that your aim is not to complete Master Plan level projects; this is the charge of the Neighborhood Improvement Program. Instead, you want to be thinking about smaller, incremental implementation that will have a major impact on your neighborhood. Can you come up with a program that helps keep neighbors aware of what your organization and the County are doing by implementing a newsletter or a one-call system? Can you host your own internal neighborhood clean-up days to ensure that your community is staying clean and safe? Can you organize a crime watch, especially around the holidays, to make yourself and your neighbors more secure? Your goal is to take ownership of your area and to do what you can where you can to see the things that are important to you come to fruition.



# SHOW ME THE MONEY. FUNDING

Your organization may want to consider things like 501(c)3 status, which makes you able to apply for and receive federal grant funds to aid you in your cause. Additionally, for all who reside in Richland County, The Neighborhood Improvement Program annually offers up to \$1,500.00 in funding for community projects via the

**Neighborhood Matching Grant.**

## FUNDRAISING:

Depending on the types of activities that your organization wishes to pursue, you may need more money than can be raised through dues collections. In this case, you will probably want to initiate a fundraiser. Traditional types of activities could be a bake sale, a car wash, or a pancake breakfast. Some neighborhoods, particularly those of a historic nature, have home shows where the public purchases tickets to get an interior tour. There are endless possibilities in regard to fundraising. Choose something that will be fun and that will get lots of people involved. Make sure that all financial matters are closely monitored. Keep track of all receipts, and produce a detailed report for your membership to view at the next meeting.

*Information on becoming a 501(c)3 organization is included via brochure with this workbook and can also be provided at your request by your Neighborhood Improvement Program Staff.*

**W O R K**

T H E

V I S I O N

*the only failure is giving up.*

## TALK ABOUT IT:

Ask yourself and the members of your organization what challenges they foresee when trying to accomplish each project and then have a brainstorming session to talk about what opportunities are at your disposal to aid you in combating those challenges. Keep in mind that you have the support of your Neighborhood Improvement Program Staff, which is an area of great opportunity as you move into implementation.

# CHALLENGES WORKSHEET

IDENTIFY AND PLAN HOW YOU'LL OVERCOME CHALLENGES

## STEPS TO HELP GUIDE YOU:

1. Explain problem as briefly as possible:

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2. List possible causes of the problem:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

3. List possible acceptable solutions to the problem:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4. List possible means/people (include phone numbers) to help solve the problem:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Things to do ( Remember to come back and add the date task was completed)

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

6) \_\_\_\_\_

7) \_\_\_\_\_

8) \_\_\_\_\_

9) \_\_\_\_\_

10) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Resolutions/Decisions/Accomplishments

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_



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5) \_\_\_\_\_







# ACCOUNTABILITY IS KEY. EVALUATION

As you prepare for implementation, you will need to do an honest evaluation of challenges and opportunities your organization will need to manage. This will help you develop an implementation strategy, or plan of attack, for the things you would like to **accomplish.**

You'll also want to articulate in your plan how you will evaluate yourselves. This keeps everyone in the organization on track and accountable - it also lets you know when you need to update your plan document. We suggest that you have quarterly meetings dedicated to checking the progress of your projects and goals and reassess if they will be able to be accomplished in the time-frame you originally set for them.

# NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN CHECKLIST

MONITOR YOUR PROGRESS

NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION	
<b>Name:</b>	
<b>Address/Location:</b>	
<b>Telephone number:</b>	
<b>Fax number:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Members/Committees Involved:</b>	

CHECKLIST	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighborhood Vision Statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighborhood Goals Development
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighborhood Mission Statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establishment of Desired Outcome(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project List
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Prioritization + Action Plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project Implementation Plan (one for each project)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Funding Strategy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identification of Challenges
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resolution Plan (corresponding to identified challenges)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighborhood Plan Evaluation

G R E A T  
I S N ' T  
E A S Y

*just because it's hard work doesn't mean it isn't worth it - keep going.*

# PROJECT PLAN CHECKLIST

PUT ALL OF THE PIECES IN PLACE FOR SUCCESSFUL PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION	
Organization Name:	
Project Name:	
Timeline:	
Project Manager(s):	
Members/Committees Involved:	

CHECKLIST	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project objectives/ goals clearly identified
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appointment of (a) project manager(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project tasks assigned to members of group <i>(make it clear who will do what and by when)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Project funding identified/ funding plan developed
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**THE NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM STAFF** is so proud of you for completing this exercise! We are excited to see the many great things that will be accomplished by your organization via this document. Please, email us at [NIP@richlandcountysc.gov](mailto:NIP@richlandcountysc.gov) to tell us of your successes or to ask our help with the challenges you face as you move through this process. Your Richland County NIP Neighborhood Coordinators are available for help along the way!