

Rock Hill Council of Neighborhoods

What is the RH Council of Neighborhoods?

We believe that your neighborhood can and should determine what events occur within its boundaries to shape your future. Each neighborhood should have the chance to play a role in its own development. To those ends, the RH Council of Neighborhoods was formed. We exist to foster cooperation between neighborhoods and City government by providing information exchange through a recognized channel of communications.

We are a non-political, non-profit, *volunteer* organization that gives you a forum to discuss issues affecting your neighborhood and to find solutions to common problems that affect us all. Our members and officers are not appointed by the City of Rock Hill, nor are we an official part of the governmental structure. We are the citizens of Rock Hill.

We meet the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in room 373 at City Hall. Our meetings are usually 60-90 minutes long and are informal.

What's Required to Join?

We are volunteer organization. There is no cost to join. All that's required is time and effort once a month from one or two members of your neighborhood organization.

Full Membership in RHCN is open to any Recognized Neighborhood Organization within the city limits of Rock Hill whose constitution, bylaws, or operating principles establish among its goals the preservation and improvement of the neighborhoods in the City of Rock Hill.

A "Recognized Neighborhood Organization" is one that meets the following requirements:

1. Has an identifiable constituency, representing at least one-tenth of the households located within fixed geographical boundaries
2. Has at least one public neighborhood meeting annually
3. Has a body of officers
4. Is non-partisan in nature
5. Has a Constitution and/or Bylaws and/or Statement of Principles of Operation.
6. Makes membership in the organization open to anyone who lives in or owns property in the neighborhood regardless of race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, or physical or mental disability

Neighborhood Organizations that meet the minimum requirements as stated above may be considered for membership in the RHCN. Interested neighborhood organizations must complete the **Membership Acceptance Form** and submit it to the Neighborhood Empowerment office for review. The **Petition of Neighborhood Interest Form is no longer required**, but is a good way to judge neighborhood participation. After review, the Rock Hill Council of Neighborhoods will vote to admit your neighborhood.

Depending on the level of membership you are applying for (**Voting or Non-Voting**) your neighborhood will be required to select either:

- One contact person to receive RHCN mailings and distribute RHCN info among your neighbors, but who is not required to attend RHCN meetings

OR

- Two representatives (a primary and an alternate) who will attend the regular RHCN monthly meetings and vote on issues. Only one representative is required to attend any meeting and only one representative per meeting has voting rights. To maintain your Voting Membership, your neighborhood can miss no more than 6 monthly meetings.

Why Should Your Neighborhood Join?

Joining the RHCN does the following for your neighborhood:

1. Connects your neighborhood with many others throughout the city
 - A. Find solutions to problems common among all neighborhoods
 - B. Coordinate events with neighborhoods bordering your own (cookouts, traffic calming, crime watch)
 - C. Promote understanding by meeting people from all throughout Rock Hill
2. Provides a “larger voice” when speaking to City Council on issues in your neighborhood
 - A. Address your issues as a neighborhood but with backing of the RHCN
 - B. Combine your input with other neighborhoods on such things as zoning issues or development
3. Gives you access to information about events, programs, utilities, and services available within the City of Rock Hill
 - A. Learn about changes to city utilities programs and how they affect you
 - B. Learn how to take advantage of CDBG funds and how to create a neighborhood improvement project

What’s Required by Neighborhood Empowerment?

The following are guidelines for creating a Neighborhood Organization. These guidelines are put forward by the City of Rock Hill Neighborhood Empowerment Office.

1. A regular meeting time and place should be established. The minimum requirements are an annual meeting. Many neighborhoods meet on a regular schedule (i.e. first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.) and have meetings last no more than an hour.
2. You will need to choose/elect a leader. We need this person to be the representative that we will contact directly. Other officers can be a secretary, treasurer, vice-president, or whatever else your group feels will suit your needs.
3. Define your borders. You will need to decide what the boundaries of your association will be.
4. Notify the Neighborhood Empowerment Office of changes in neighborhood boundaries, meeting time, place, officers, etc. to ensure continued accuracy in our communication with your neighborhood.

- While not required by the Neighborhood Empowerment Office, we suggest your organization adopt bylaws. They will set the standard and direction for your organization. They may be required sometime in the future (and are required by the RHCN). They can be simple or complex. Examples of the contents are the organization's purpose, name, meeting time, place, dues (if any), duties of officers, etc. We can give you sample bylaws to assist you in developing your own. You may also download bylaws and other forms at www.rockhillcon.org.