MONTCLAIR SAFETY & IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

Making A Difference-Together

Montclair Organized Neighborhoods (MONs) Leader's Guide

Montclair Organized Neighborhoods

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Montclair Organized Neighborhoods: The Power of Many

Overview

The California Oakland Hills' Montclair area is unlike most other urban or suburban landscapes. Many homes are built on the hillside and accessed via narrow, winding roads. Most properties are covered by dense vegetation, and we are bordered on the east by regional parks and on the west by a major urban environment. Like anywhere, living in the greater Montclair area has both its benefits as well as its risks. The benefits include little violent crime, quiet neighborhoods, privacy and a connection with nature. The risks include a high potential of natural disasters such as earthquake and fire, difficulty of access, less inherent sense of community, and yes, some (usually) non-violent crime such as break-ins and theft.

One proven concept that can help reduce the risks of where we live, as well as increase the benefits, is that of an organized neighborhood. As an example, a neighborhood might organize in order to:

- Deter crime.
- Increase their ability to prepare and respond to natural disasters and emergencies.
- Improve parking and traffic safety in their immediate area.
- Clean up and beautify the neighborhood.
- Socialize and get to know their neighbors.

Of course, neighborhoods can be organized to address any or all of those issues. Once organized, a neighborhood can make major progress to improve the safety, beauty and overall quality of life within their boundaries, and can overcome the effects of increasingly dwindling City resources.

Organizations like the Montclair Safety and Improvement Council (MSIC) and the Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association have set forth an ambitious goal to encourage every single neighborhood in the Montclair area to organize itself to pursue whatever areas of concern are most relevant to them. Their vision is to provide awareness, support and recognition for these organized neighborhoods.

This Leader's Guide was developed to assist neighborhoods throughout Montclair in their organizing efforts. This Guide provides recommended steps for neighbors to take to start the organization process. It outlines levels of organization that neighborhoods can progress through to receive increasing benefits. It provides summary information on City programs such as Neighborhood Watch/Home Alert and CORE (Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies). However, this Leader's Guide is just that—a guide. Neighborhoods will also come up with their own ideas of what works best for them, and determine what priorities they should tackle first. This Guide is therefore a continuous work-in-progress, and will be updated as new tips and techniques are created by our own organizing neighborhoods.

For more information on the MSIC and what constitutes the boundaries of the Montclair area, please visit http://www.montclairsic.org.

Why Organize?

Safe communities begin with well-organized and prepared neighborhoods. Our City resources simply do not stretch far enough to satisfy the public safety needs for 400,000+ people without help from residents. Consider that organized neighborhoods:

- Have power in numbers, leading to a stronger and more authoritative relationship with City officials.
- Have access to the City's intensive curriculum of neighborhood training to prevent crime and respond to emergencies.
- Gain more eyes and ears to detect and prevent crime.
- Pool labor, skill and knowledge to make an entire neighborhood less attractive and vulnerable to criminals.
- Know when something looks suspicious anywhere in the neighborhood and are trained to take appropriate action.
- Have access to support and resources from MSIC and the local neighborhood associations in Montclair.

The questions most residents ask are; "Why do I need to organize?", "Won't the police quickly respond to a crime or a suspicious event?", "Won't the City take care of me during a disaster?", "Won't we all instinctively know what to do in an emergency?"… and so on. Consider these facts about our City services and the area we live in:

- Oakland currently has, in comparison with other large US cities, far fewer police officers per capita.
- More Oakland police officers are assigned to other sections of Oakland that have much higher crime rates. During some time periods there is not a single patrol officer assigned to our Montclair area.
- Response times from the police can be much longer than expected, especially for minor crimes and crimes already committed (response times for serious crimes in progress have historically been quite good).
- The Hayward Fault runs through Montclair Village. A magnitude 7 earthquake occurring today on the Hayward would likely cause hundreds of deaths and almost $100 billion of damage (U.S. Geological Survey). In the event of a major earthquake, the Montclair area may be without City services (police, fire, and rescue) *for 72 hours or longer!*
- The USGS reports that there is a 70% chance that one or more quakes of about magnitude 6.7 or larger will occur in the San Francisco Bay area before the year 2030.
- Wildfires are also a concern. The 1991 fire in the Oakland/Berkeley Hills resulted in the loss of 25 lives, along with 3,354 family dwellings and 456 apartments destroyed.

Of course organized neighborhoods will not eliminate these issues. But, organized neighborhoods, in conjunction with Neighborhood Watch, are a definite deterrent to crime, and knowing and looking out for your neighbors is a benefit to all. Being organized and CORE trained will go a long way toward being prepared to survive and to handle the aftermath of a major disaster. Organized neighborhoods foster a much greater sense of community and belonging, which typically results in nicer, better maintained properties and thus higher home values. There are almost no disadvantages to organizing your neighborhood, and many, many advantages.

What is a MON?

Because neighborhoods can organize for many reasons, the MSIC has coined the term Montclair Organized Neighborhood (MON) to refer to any Montclair-area neighborhood that has organized for any purpose or combination of purposes, including crime prevention, emergency preparedness, beautification, socialization, etc. A MON can be (and hopefully is) Neighborhood Watch and CORE trained, however it may just exist as a social group. There is nothing unique about a MON compared with any other organized neighborhood group, except that it is located in the Montclair area and supported by the MSIC.

What is a MON Leader?

A MON Leader is the point person who helps organize and/or lead their organized neighborhood. This role may also be referred to as a Block Captain. The MON Leader may have one or more Co-Leaders who assist with the common leader's tasks as outlined in Appendix E below. For example, in some large MONs that encompass several blocks, there may be one overall MON Leader and several Co-Leaders/Block Captains, each responsible for their own section of the MON.

The MON Leader role may be one person's on-going passion, or it may rotate among neighbors. The MSIC maintains a confidential roster of MON Leaders/Co-Leaders and their contact information, and manages an email list of MON Leaders for communicating information to be passed down through the neighborhoods. The MSIC also schedules MON Leaders meetings to discuss topics such as crime trends and upcoming emergency preparedness exercises, and to help MONs learn from the success of other MONs.

Support Structure

MONs can receive as much help as they need to get organized and to gradually increase their levels of training and overall benefits. The MSIC's goal is to see all 8,000 plus households in the greater Montclair area organized into MONs of around 30 households each. Each MON elects a neighborhood MON Leader and/or Co-Leaders (or Block Captains), who become part of a Montclair-wide support structure. This support comes from the MSIC and/or from associations such as the Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association or the Shepherd Canyon Homeowners Association. A detailed view of the MSIC support roles and relationships is noted in Appendix A.

Once a MON has developed its Action Plan (see below), the MSIC and/or the Neighborhood Association can offer such support as:

- MON Leaders network – meets to provide organizing assistance, share ideas, motivate, build and sustain momentum, and to communicate and provide assistance between MONs as needed.
- Emergency Preparedness coordination – to motivate, pool resources, coordinate CORE training, coordinate Citywide exercise participation, conduct local drills, define radio communications procedures, and recognize achievement.
- Crime Prevention coordination – to detect/report patterns, improve OPD response, communicate crime information, coordinate Neighborhood Watch training, and to recognize achievement.

- Traffic & Pedestrian Safety coordination – to work with police, Public Works and other City agencies to address dangerous intersections, parking and access on narrow streets, potholes, safe pedestrian paths, etc.
- Beautification projects – such as coordinating Earth Day, Creek to Bay Day, Adopt-a-Spot activities, and local projects such as the Shortline Pocket Park.

A lot of information on this topic of support, as well as documentation on MONs, crime prevention and statistics, beautification projects, emergency preparedness documents, contact information, etc, can be found on the MSIC Web site at: http://www.montclairsic.org

Five Step Plan for Organizing your Neighborhood

You're ready to organize, but you don't know to get started, or even if your neighbors are interested? Here are five easy steps for getting started on building your MON. Note that it doesn't take a significant amount of effort to organize a neighborhood, but it does take some work and perseverance (like anything worthwhile). Having several neighbors all pitch in on the steps will not only make it easier on everyone, it will ensure that if anyone has to drop out for any reason, the others will continue the process.

Step 1: Start the Process

People organize around areas of self interest. Preparing for an earthquake is something we all "plan to get around to one day," but often put off until we feel a real rumble. Gathering neighbors together when an event does occur on your street is an excellent way to get started. If a neighbor had a car stolen or vandalized, or a robbery took place, you can be sure neighbors would be very interested in doing something to prevent a recurrence. You can't create an earthquake to create neighborhood motivation, so consider the following suggestions:

- List your concerns about the neighborhood (crime, emergency preparedness, beautification, parking/traffic, sense of community, etc.).
- Determine what boundaries might make an effective neighborhood organization. The City suggests 20-40 homes make up a group, but let natural boundaries and your own area of comfort prevail. Existing MONs range in size from less than 10 homes to more than 100, but experience has shown that around 30 is a manageable number to try for.
- Draw a simple map of your neighborhood with squares for the houses. Write down the house numbers and any names you know in the squares.
- Start a Roster of residents with names, address, phone, cell and e-mail info. Make space for any special needs (elderly assistance, small children, pets), and any skills or materials they may have to share in an emergency (medical or first aid training, at home during day, generators, tools, etc.). An electronic spreadsheet is a good tool for this.
- Go talk to people you already know in the neighborhood. Ask if they will work with you to help form a MON group and contact other neighbors with you. Be sure to give them your reasons for wanting to do this and gain their agreement that this is a worthwhile effort.
- Contact the MSIC and/or your Neighborhood Association for assistance at any stage of organizing (see the section on Who to Contact for Assistance below).

Step 2: Call Together a Team

Gather neighbors who expressed an interest in Step 1. It's okay to start with a small group—you'll build steam as you go.

- Exchange phone numbers.
- Add more detailed information to your neighborhood map and Roster.
- Share priority concerns for your neighborhood.

- Schedule an event to include the whole neighborhood.

Step 3: Organize a Social Event

Having a formal meeting with a formal agenda may be too much for an initial meeting. Having a purely social gathering instead is a good way to stir up interest in forming a MON group. There are lots of ways to get neighbors together on a social level, or you can organize a work party to address a specific need in your neighborhood. See Appendix B for an idea sampler. You can download a complete Block Party Guide developed by the Oakland Police Department from the MSIC's Web site at http://www.montclairsic.org/pdf/BlockPartyGuide.pdf

The social event is a good time to get your Neighborhood Roster started. Ask residents to fill out a Roster form. See Appendix C for a template.

Step 4: Host MON Meeting #1: *Getting Organized*

In this meeting, your goal is for neighbors to continue getting to know one another, share neighborhood concerns, offer ways each neighbor might get involved and set up your organization's infrastructure. See Appendix D for a sample agenda and list of tasks and Appendix E for duties of the neighborhood leader, whom you'll elect in this meeting. Assign co-leaders or Block Captains to neighbors who are interested and who have the time and commitment to help. If organized for disaster preparedness, consider scheduling a CORE I class in your neighborhood. All it takes is a minimum of 10 people attending…and it's free!

Step 5: Host MON Meeting #2: *Creating Your Action Plan*

In this meeting, you'll hone and sort the issues identified in the first meeting, develop task lists, and assign who will do what by when. Keep the process simple, or you will lose people unaccustomed to such structure. Recruit someone to take minutes. See Appendix F for a sample agenda, list of tasks and an Action Plan template. Be sure to build into your plan events that are both fun and productive. Consider some of the projects in Appendix B. If organized for disaster preparedness, consider scheduling a CORE II class in your neighborhood. This session focuses on organizing a neighborhood and can stimulate sub-team formation to put the plan in action.

A Note about Participation

During these steps in organizing, **don't be discouraged if you don't have 100% participation from your neighborhood!** Some folks just aren't going to be interested, no matter how beneficial this is to them, or how much fun the events are. Some folks purposely live in the Montclair area to "get away from it all," and don't really care to interact. This is to be expected. At the minimum you do want everyone's contact information on the Roster, in case of an emergency. And the more neighbors you can have take Neighborhood Watch and/or CORE training, the better of course.

If you can pull together a couple (or small handful) of dedicated co-leaders or Block Captains, and have at least half of your neighborhood consistently show up for events, you're doing very well. Give yourself a well-deserved pat on the back!

Keep the Momentum Going

Your Action Plan will evolve over time. It should include activities that will take your MON to the next level. For a list and description of MON Levels, refer to Appendix G. The items in the list below should be reviewed against your Action Plan and achieving your next desired MON level, and if missing, consider adding them as time and energy permit.

Get Neighborhood Watch Training

Neighborhood Watch (NW) is operated by the Oakland Police Department and includes free training and an array of resources to equip citizens to secure their own property and teach how to recognize and report suspicious activity. See Appendix H for more information.

Get CORE Training

CORE (Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies), currently operated by the Oakland Fire Department, is a free training program that is available to individuals, neighborhood groups and community-based organizations in Oakland. CORE is a structured 3-part training curriculum based on CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) standards. See Appendix I for more information.

The underlying premise of the program is that a major disaster will overwhelm our first responders and leave many of our citizens on their own for the first 72+ hours after the emergency. CORE teaches self-reliance skills and helps neighborhoods establish response teams to take care of the neighborhood until professional emergency personnel arrive.

Establish Recognition Activities

A volunteer's pay is the recognition that he or she is an equal and respected partner of the MON. Your recognition program can contribute to productivity (volunteers who complete meaningful tasks will feel rewarded by their own accomplishments), contribute to retention and contribute to the group's camaraderie. Build informal recognition into each meeting and use any annual, festive events to promote individual and team recognition.

Welcome New Residents

Develop a Welcome Packet for new residents, including the Roster, Neighborhood Map and any other useful information such as NW and CORE brochures. Assign a "Buddy" to deliver it and review the neighborhood's plan and progress. Encourage them to complete the Roster form and join a work team. Issue them a special invitation to the next meeting or event. Work with local realtors to have them let you know when someone is moving in.

Use Technology to Stay Connected

- **E-mail:** Electronic mail makes staying connected fast and easy. The MON Leader should maintain a MON-wide e-mail list for sending out important information at the click of the send button. Co-leaders or Block Captains should do likewise for their sub-teams. Keep track of who doesn't have access to e-mail and make arrangements for how they will stay informed.

- **On-line Group:** This is a free e-mail based service offered by Yahoo!, Google, etc, where you set up a group that neighbors can use for any purpose linked to your group's interests. Someone posts a comment, sends it to the group, and all replies are likewise sent to all your subscribers. To set up a group for your own neighborhood, go to the Web site for Yahoo! or Google or other similar provider. Once signed up and signed in, you can set up your own group. Also consider joining MSIC's Yahoo! Group to learn what is happening beyond your neighborhood. To join go to http://www.montclairsic and click on the Join MSIC Yahoo! Group button.
- **Evite**: Also a free e-mail service, this is a handy way to send out meeting announcements and invitations to events. You'll enter each neighbor's name and e-mail address into a group, create an invitation, and send. If it's a potluck, for example, you can include items to bring, and as recipients RSVP, they can note what they want to contribute. Every other recipient sees who is coming and who is bringing what. Go to www.evite.com to get started.
- **Cell phone:** It's a good idea to include cell phones on your Roster so you can contact neighbors in the event of an incident or emergency when they're away from home.
- **Two-way radio:** All residents in a neighborhood should be encouraged to purchase low-powered Family Radio Service (FRS) two-way radios, or higher-powered FRS/GMRS two-way radios, to be able to contact others in the neighborhood in the event of an emergency when regular land-line and cell phone service may not exist. The MISC and local NAs can provide training in the set up and use of these radios. The MSIC can help you coordinate your own neighborhood-specific FRS channel configuration so neighbors can stay in touch and not interfere with other nearby MONs.
- **Phone Tree:** Services such as Calling Post (http://www.callingpost.com) provide fee-based phone tree messaging. You sign up and pay for a certain number of calls, then add your neighbor's phone numbers to the on-line database. You can then record a voice message, and it will be automatically sent out to all your neighbors. This can be most effective as a reminder for meetings, and in a disaster if you have time to prepare (and the phones are still working).
- **Neighborhood organizational software:** Whether you use a simple spreadsheet or a dedicated software program for organizing neighborhood information, the computer can be a valuable tool. Whatever you choose, be sure to create a printed version of the data for use in an emergency when power may be out, and to keep in your Neighborhood Incident Command Center (detailed in CORE II training).

A Note about Momentum

Maintaining momentum, especially after the initial interest in organizing has subsided, can be a challenge. Make sure to mix up activities and have enough fun events, and if at all possible try to rotate duties and responsibilities—for example periodically change the leadership role so that others can participate and folks don't "burn out."

Revisit why your neighborhood organized in the first place, and update the focus as a group on a regular basis as an incentive to keep moving forward. Set reasonable goals with reasonable timeframes, such as attaining the next MON Level by a certain date (see Appendix G). Finally, make sure you recognize everyone who plays a role, large or small, and who contributes to the betterment of the neighborhood.

Who to Contact for Assistance

Now that your MON is off and running, here are some contact numbers to help you stay on course:

Montclair Safety and Improvement Council

Information
E-mail: info@montclairsic.org
Phone: 510.457.1674
http://www.montclairsic.org

MON Coordinator
E-mail: mon@montclairsic.org
Phone: 510.457.1674
http://www.montclairsic.org/mon.htm

Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
E-mail: emergencypreparedness@montclairsic.org
Phone: 510.457.1674
http://www.montclairsic.org/response.htm

Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association

PPNA Coordinator
E-mail: info@piedmontpines.org
Phone: 510.530.4286
http://www.piedmontpines.org

Shepherd Canyon Homeowner's Association

SCHOA President
E-mail: mpetouho@ch2m.com
http://www.shepherdcanyon.org/

Neighborhood Watch Training

Brenda Ivy
Police Neighborhood Services
E-mail: bivey@oaklandnet.com
510.238.3091 or 510.777.8621

CORE Training

CORE Coordinator
Oakland Fire Dept, Office of Emergency Services
1605 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Oakland, CA 94612
E-mail: core@oaklandnet.com
510.238.6351
www.oaklandcore.org

Acknowledgements

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Claudia Albano Neighborhood Services Manager City of Oakland	Jim Dexter Montclair resident
Dick Spees President, Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association	Roger Vickery Montclair resident
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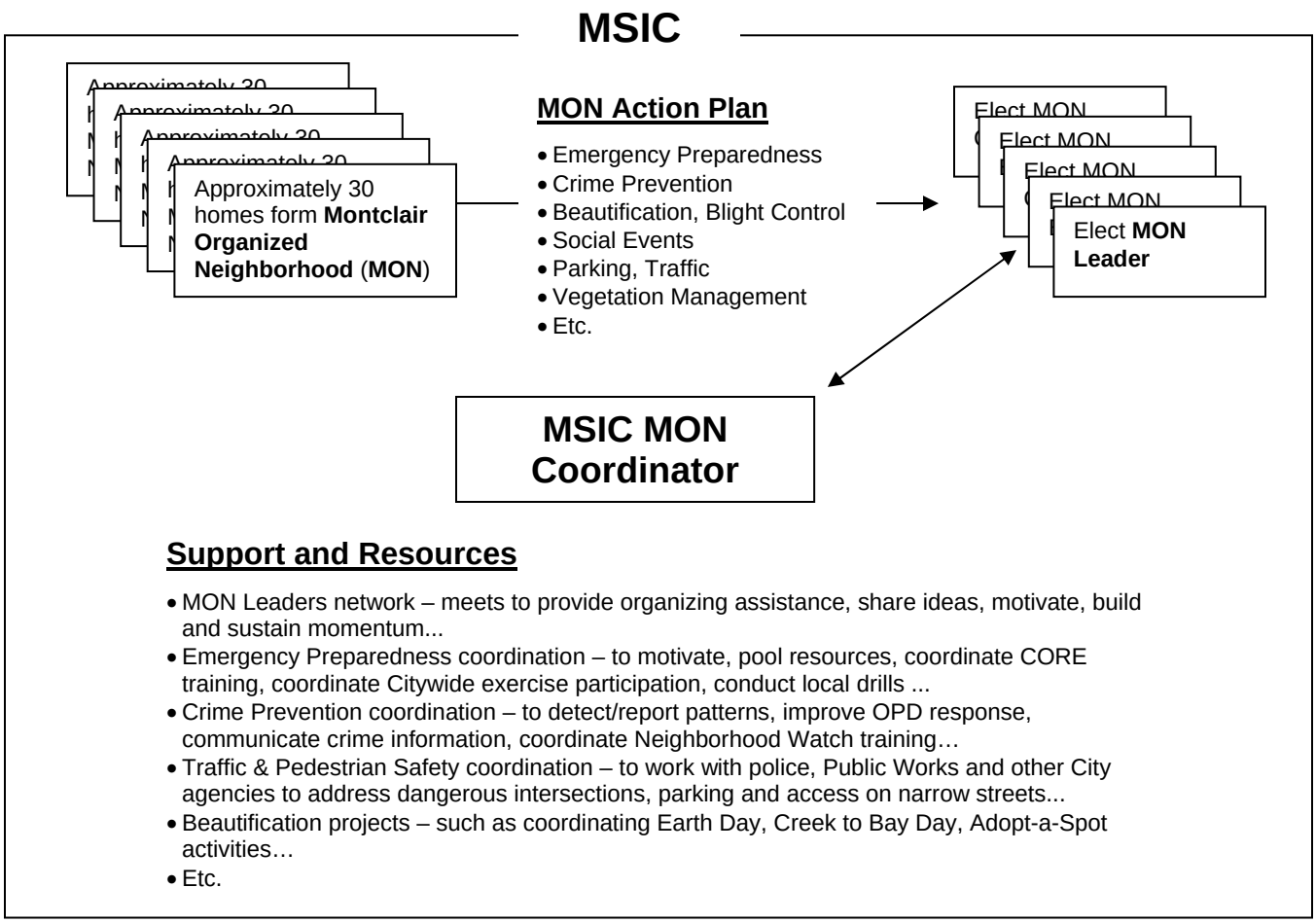
Appendix A: Roles and Relationships

MSIC Support and Resources for your MON



Appendix B: Sampler of Ideas for MON Events

Social and Organizing Ideas

Here are some ideas that can get you started building the relationships among your neighbors necessary for creating a successful and sustainable organized neighborhood. The Oakland Police Department has put together a complete Block Party Guide, which you can download at http://www.montclairsic.org/pdf/BlockPartyGuide.pdf. It includes the petition you'll need your neighbors to sign if you want to block off the street for any event.

Social Ideas

A few types of gatherings to consider:

Neighborhood Holiday Parties: Every holiday is an excuse for a MON party! Potlucks are easier on everyone, as well as rotating homes where the parties are held.

Happy Hour Gatherings: These after-work meetings are great for brainstorming solutions to possible issues.

Welcome Dinners for New Residents: A definite good-will gesture for new neighbors, and will be a nice presentation of the type of benefits of the MON.

Here are some ideas to "sparkle up" your event:

- Have everyone bring their family's favorite dish.
- Record the story of how everyone came to live in the neighborhood and what he or she likes best about it.
- Casually discuss what issues/concerns people have and what they'd be willing to devote time and energy to improve.
- Make plans to have a neighborhood clean-up.
- Build a bench, plant a garden, paint street numbers, or plant a tree as part of the neighborhood party activities.
- Have games that appeal to kids (or adults too).
- Organize a kid's talent show or parade.
- Have everyone bring a childhood photo and see who can guess who's who.

Neighborhood Organizing Ideas

House Numbering Team: Nothing is more frustrating to a responding police officer or fire department than to arrive at a location and not be able to find the exact house because no house numbers can be seen. And this can result in a critical delay of needed services. Every house number should be uniform as to the size and location and should be visible from the street at night. Start a project that will ensure that house numbers are present, uniform, and conspicuous. The current fire code is for house numbers to be a minimum of 4 inches tall.

Beautification Team: Your group can organize an effort to remove graffiti, trash, abandoned autos, and other unsightly nuisances from your neighborhood community. Community pride

can be enhanced even in impoverished areas by working to make the area more attractive and livable. Research has indicated that improvements of this type can have measurable effects on reducing actual crime as well as the fear of crime among community members.

Neighborhood Yard Sales: This is an effective method of raising funds for the MON.

Neighborhood Vacation House Sitting: Your Group should urge members of church groups, senior citizen clubs, and social clubs to establish routine procedures for "house-sitting" when their members are vacationing.

Neighborhood Decorations: Set up some neighborhood decorations for holidays or special events like someone's birthday or a special honor (see the section above on Recognition).

Drain cleaning: Consider adopting a drain or drains on your street; keep them clean and report any defects to the City's Public Works Agency.

Neighborhood path creation and maintenance: Clean and repair stairs, paths and trails going through your area. You can prevent accidents, provide alternatives to dangerous streets, and enhance the beauty of your area.

Debris removal: Don't wait for a City agency to show up. Take action on your street to discourage the proliferation of trash.

Rent-A-Teenager System: Whenever possible, the young adults of your neighborhood should be actively involved in your MON program. Through "Rent-A-Teen" they perform odd jobs (wash windows, cut grass, wax cars, paint, etc.) for a fee. They can donate all or a portion of their fees to your MON operating fund.

Appendix C: Neighborhood Roster Form Sample

Address: _____

Names of household members (ages of children):

Pets that might need care in an emergency: _____

Contact information

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

E-mail: _____ Out-of-State Contact #: _____

Privacy

We respect your privacy. Please indicate your preference for sharing this information:

____ it is okay to share this information with other neighbors.

____ it is okay for only the Neighborhood Leader(s) to use this contact information.

Areas of interest

What I'd most like to see improved in the neighborhood: _____

_____

_____

Special Emergency Skills/Training (first aid/CPR, mechanic, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, child care, fire fighting, crisis counseling): _____

_____

_____

Special Needs (include special concerns you would need help with such as elderly, chronic illnesses, disabled)**:** _____

_____

In an emergency, I can house/sleep _____ people.

Please return this completed form to: _____

Appendix D: Planning Your First MON Meeting

Before the Meeting (Recruit help!)

- Establish the date, time and location. Allow ~2 hours.
- Prepare an agenda (see below) and distribute to all neighbors along with a personal appeal to attend.
- Arrange refreshments.
- Arrange for one person to take minutes, another to record issues onto an easel.
- Make copies of the Neighborhood Roster form (Appendix C) and Neighborhood Watch and CORE training overviews (Appendices H, I).
- You are more than welcome to request a representative from the MSIC to attend your meeting and present information on organizing, what other MONs have done, the MSIC's role, etc. (see the section on Who to Contact for Assistance above).

Agenda Template

- Welcome (**2 minutes**): Why you were interested in organizing the neighborhood
- Introductions: Around **1 minute each**, each neighbor states:
    - Name, address, when moved to neighborhood, where moved from
    - Names and ages of other family members living in the home
- Overview of Neighborhood Watch and CORE programs (**5 minutes**) Note: It's likely that emergency preparedness or crime prevention will come up in the following discussion, and it might be helpful for residents to see the resources that exist so they don't imagine having to recreate the wheel.
- Issues of greatest concern (**10 minutes**). Instruct participants to give just the subject, not the detailed history of why it's important. They may list as many as they choose. Your assistant will record these on an easel.
- Prioritize your issues (**10 minutes**): Each person casts two votes for the top issues they'd like the neighborhood to undertake. These are then listed by priority order onto a separate sheet.
- Willingness to work (**2 minutes**): Using the sorted priorities, list who is willing to work on each issue (specific tasks come later; you're now just testing the energy level each issue garners).
- Re-sort your list into Priority A, B and C: (**5 minutes**)
    - A = Where you have a high priority and high willingness to work. These issues have the makings of highly successful Action Plan items.
    - B = Where the priority is high but willingness to work is low, you'll have a problem, but it's manageable.
    - C = Where both the priority and willingness to work are low. These issues could spell defeat for your Action Plan. "Park" them for future consideration.

If you get this far in the first meeting, congratulate yourselves! You now have the foundation for your Action Plan. Because not everyone will have been able to attend this meeting, consider stopping the Action Plan here. By getting the notes out to the rest of your neighbors, you'll likely recruit new energy for round two.

But before you adjourn, complete the following (or schedule a follow-up meeting if you're out of time):

- Establish your group's infrastructure: (**45 minutes**). The infrastructure may grow and become more sophisticated over time, but here are the bare essentials:
    - Elect MON Leader. See duties listed in Appendix E. Eventually you might consider one over-arching MON leader and several associate leaders or Block Captains. One might lead the CORE effort; another might set up Neighborhood Watch, etc. You can all work off the same neighborhood infrastructure with Action Plans and timeframes integrated into one cohesive document. For now, just stick with the primary leader.
    - Develop a Roster: A neighborhood Roster is one of the most fundamental tools for keeping a neighborhood group functioning. Ask each neighbor to complete the Neighborhood Roster form (Appendix C) and be sure they mark whether they're willing to have their information published to other neighbors. Call attention to the inventory of skills and knowledge, so you can see who might best be pressed into various tasks in the future. These forms will get compiled into one neighborhood Roster distributed to all who wish to participate—recruit help for compilation. An electronic spreadsheet is a useful tool with which to create your Roster.
    - Recruit New Members: Using your Neighborhood Map from Steps 1 & 2, ask neighbors to contact non-represented households to see if they'll join the effort.
    - Develop a Telephone Tree: Ask for a volunteer to take this on. Even with the growing proliferation of E-mail, there will be times when an old-fashioned phone call is best. Meeting reminders, for example. Or crime alerts. Your volunteer should recruit tree captains who will divide up the phone list into groups of 3 to 5 households. (Tree Captains can also be responsible for printing and distributing hard copies of the group's materials to those without computers.) Or you can utilize a commercial phone tree service as noted above.
    - Determine Funding Needs: Consider requesting minimal donations to cover refreshments and printing expenses. When your Action Plan is completed, you'll have a better sense of future funding needs and can revisit this topic then. Many established MONs have "dues" that are requested from each household on an annual basis, and used for funding emergency supplies, social events, etc.
    - Commit to a Meeting Schedule: Set a regular interval for future meetings such as the first Thursday of each month or quarter. This enables people to set up their calendars and eliminates a lot of wasted time trying to coordinate last minute arrangements. It also builds in deadlines for committee work and helps keep the group energized and on task.
- Adjourn and congratulate yourselves.

Meeting Follow-Up (Again, recruit help!)

- Create minutes (be brief—attachments will have most of the information. Be sure to include the date, time and place for the next meeting.)
- Compile and update Roster information.
- Transfer issues onto an Action Plan for further embellishment at next meeting. See Appendix F for an Action Plan template.
- Set up an e-mail distribution list and note who needs hard copies versus electronic copies of materials.
- Update the neighborhood map you started in Steps 1 & 2 above.
- Distribute a meeting packet to all in the neighborhood with minutes, Roster, and preliminary Action Plan. Consider establishing a Web site where materials can be posted and viewed by residents.

A Note on Funding

As mentioned above, many established MONs collect yearly "dues" from each household. The yearly "dues" typically range from $10 to $25. They can be requested as part of a neighborhood newsletter that is delivered to each resident and that outlines what has recently been accomplished by the neighborhood, what is planned next (i.e. a CORE exercise coming up…), and other bits of relevant neighborhood news and information. For an example of a neighborhood newsletter, check out the template at: http://www.montclairsic.org/word/Neighborhood_Newsletter.doc

These funds can be used to purchase emergency supplies or large items like a generator for your Neighborhood Incident Command Center (when you create one from your CORE training), or to help offset the costs of neighborhood beautification projects, etc. You may find that neighbors who, for whatever reason, aren't able or interested in participating in MON/NW/CORE activities are more than willing to pay "dues" instead, and it allows more people to share in the effort. However, as with MON participation in general, do not be discouraged if you don't receive funding from 100% of your neighbors!

Appendix E: Duties of the MON Leader

What is Expected of the MON Leader

The key person in any Montclair Organized Neighborhood group is the MON Leader. This person is an integral component to keeping the neighborhood actively involved in the area or areas of focus like crime prevention and/or emergency preparedness, as well as the important process of information exchange among neighbors. Many neighborhood organizations groups flourish, while others disappear over time. How successful the MON is depends on the Leader and the support he or she receives from fellow neighbors.

The following is a list of recommended activities for the MON Leader. It is not meant to be all-inclusive, because many Leaders are creative in their approach.

Any of these tasks can be delegated to Co-Leaders or Block Captains, but the Neighborhood Leader should be responsible and accountable for overall coordination to:

- Organize the MON group. Hold regular meetings and discussions with Co-Leaders or Block Captains and advise of any new developments or concerns.
- Act as a liaison between your neighborhood residents and the MSIC MON Coordinator, as well as with other MON Leaders, including communications up and down the chain, suggestions, requests, and other items as needed. Attend MON Leaders meetings.
- Periodically monitor the membership of your group. Contact new residents to get them involved and to obtain their support and participation. Update your membership Roster as needed including phone numbers, addresses, names, skills and emergency contacts of each resident in the neighborhood. If organized for crime prevention or emergency preparedness, keep the appropriate City contacts updated if you stop serving as a Neighborhood Leader and/or if someone else takes over.
- Compile and maintain accurate neighborhood maps, including location of gas shut-offs.
- Develop a neighborhood communication system to distribute vital information to neighbors pertaining to criminal activity, emergency response, meeting and event invitations and other concerns that develop in the area. This can be a periodic newsletter, telephone tree, two-way radio communications, and/or a one-page notice that can be quickly distributed. Encourage neighbors to practice with their radios.
- Arrange for your group to meet socially at least once a year to exchange information and renew relationships as well as to get acquainted with new neighbors. People who communicate regularly will care more about each other and be more willing to keep an eye out for suspicious behavior.
- Coordinate the annual CORE Citywide Emergency Exercise with your neighborhood.
- Act as a liaison between the individual homeowners and City agencies (Police, Fire, Public Works, etc.). Encourage neighbors to advise you concerning criminal activity or other concerns in the neighborhood. It is the victim's responsibility to contact the Police regarding criminal activity. However, you can keep a record of break-ins, vandalism, graffiti, and/or any activity that becomes a concern for you and your neighbors. Provide this type of information to neighbors at your next neighborhood meeting.
- Establish and maintain a library of appropriate printed materials on Neighborhood Watch, CORE, safety, emergency response, and other relevant topics.

Appendix F: Agenda and Tasks for Second MON Meeting

Creating Your Action Plan

- Introductions: New neighbors repeat process from first meeting, others just state name.
- Recap of all issues in priority order, and make adjustments based on input received after the first meeting from those unable to attend.
- Tackle the highest priority issue first: This is your "A" priority with the most votes and highest willingness to work.
    - What needs to be done (tasks)?
    - When should it be completed?
    - Who will do each task?
- Continue with the other issues until you run out of either energetic volunteers or time. Or, once you've worked through one issue as a group, you can recruit Co-Leaders or Block Captains to work on the other issues and return to the group with a proposed plan of action at the next meeting.
- Set the next meeting date and what's expected by then.
- Adjourn: Congratulations, you now have an Action Plan. You will review, refine and update the plan in each subsequent meeting.

Template for Action Plan

Priority	Issue # votes	Responsible Leader & Team Members	Tasks	By when	Who	Status
A	Emergency Preparedness 16 votes	**Joe Brown** Sally Doe John Clair Sue Bourne	Arrange CORE I training	5/1/XX	Sally Doe	Done
			Arrange CORE II training	10/1/XX	John Clair	On Track
A	Neighborhood Watch 15 votes	**John Doe** Bob Barker	Set up NW meeting	11/1/XX	Bob Barker	On Track

Appendix G: MON Levels

The following levels of organization have been established by the MSIC for MONs. Each level is based on specific criteria, and is designed to allow a MON to progress to a higher level as desired.

Some MONs may only exist for socializing, and will thus remain at Level 1. However, the MSIC encourages each MON to set a goal of reaching their next level, so that they may be better prepared for an emergency, or to deter crime, etc. The MSIC will make available plans, guidelines and incentives for each MON to reach their next level, and recognition for those that do.

Level E (Emerging)

- A MON organizer (acting or interim) has been identified and the neighborhood needs help in getting organized.

Level 1

- Reasons why the neighborhood wants to organize are identified.
- The 5 organizing steps above are completed.
- A MON Leader is selected.
- MON boundaries are identified and a preliminary neighborhood map created.
- A Roster with contact information is created.
- An Action Plan is created.

Level 2

- Neighborhood Watch training is completed (25%+ neighbors trained).
- CORE I training is completed (25%+ neighbors trained).
- The MON has participated in a Neighborhood Night Out event or held a similar neighborhood gathering in the last year.

Level 3

- CORE II training is completed (20%+ neighbors trained).
- Block Captains/Co-Leaders are selected.
- Emergency preparedness tabletop exercises are performed.
- An internal radio channel is selected (in conjunction with MSIC).
- A detailed neighborhood map is created.

Level 4

- CORE III training is completed (5%+ neighbors trained).
- The Neighborhood Incident Command Center (NICC) is set up and supplied.
- The MON has participated in a CORE Citywide exercise in the last year.
- External radio communications capability is established.

Level 5 (Advanced)

- Includes one or more of the following accomplished after reaching Level 4:
    - Advanced Neighborhood Watch or CORE training taken.
    - Ham/Amateur radio capability established.
    - A first aid station created.
    - At least one volunteer to work with and help other MON groups is identified.

Appendix H: Neighborhood Watch Training

Neighborhood Watch

Oakland Police Department
455-7th Street, Oakland, Ca 94607
510-238-6372

How to Start a Neighborhood Watch Group

The Oakland Police Department encourages you and your neighbors to form a Neighborhood Watch group on your block. It is easy to do, and is one of the most important things you can do to prevent crime. Below are frequently asked questions about Neighborhood Watch. Please call the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Brenda Ivey at 777-8621 for more information.

What is Neighborhood Watch?
Neighborhood Watch is a partnership between neighbors and the Oakland Police Department to improve safety and prevent crime. Forming a Neighborhood Watch group on your block is the first step to making and keeping your neighborhood safe.

What will I learn?
- Who your neighbors are and how to work with them to prevent crime
- How to use a neighborhood map and roster to communicate
- How and why crime happens
- How to improve home security and personal safety
- How to recognize and report suspicious activity
- How active Neighborhood Watch groups with visible Neighborhood Watch signs can deter crime
- What the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council in your beat is and what it does

Who can participate?
Anyone who lives in Oakland can participate in Neighborhood Watch whether you live in an apartment, condominium complex, townhouse, or a single family home.

I'm Interested! What are the next steps?
1. Call the Oakland Police Department, Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Brenda Ivey at 777-8621.
2. Contact your neighbors; find out the best time for them to attend a meeting (typically a weekday evening about 6:30 or 7:00 PM).
3. Schedule the meeting.
4. Distribute flyers inviting neighbors to the Neighborhood Watch meeting about 7 to10 days before the meeting. The Police Department can supply flyers.
5. On the day of the meeting, give your neighbors a call or flyer to remind them.

What happens at the meeting?
A Police representative will discuss:
- Crime in your neighborhood/beat
- How and when to contact the police
- Neighborhood Watch program requirements - and how and why it works
- What you can do to make your home more safe and secure
- What the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council is, and what it does
- What is National Night Out and how it can help you organize your neighborhood

What are the requirements to be an official Neighborhood Watch group?
- Schedule and hold two Neighborhood Watch meetings
- Complete a roster of members' names, addresses and telephone numbers
- Complete a neighborhood map
- Select a Block Captain and an Alternate for the group
- Decide how many signs you want and where the signs should be installed
- Send a copy of the completed map and roster to the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator.

What is a Block Captain?
The Block Captain and the Alternate are liaisons between the Neighborhood Watch group and the police department. They make sure the map and the roster are complete and the Neighborhood Watch signs are purchased and installed. They also schedule Neighborhood Watch meetings, maintain a current membership roster and map, and distribute flyers or other information as provided by the police department. Many groups rotate the Block Captain and Alternate responsibilities.

What about the Neighborhood Watch signs?
Every official Neighborhood Watch group must have at least one Neighborhood Watch sign. The sign acts as a crime deterrent by notifying people who enter the area that the neighborhood is watching and knows how to contact the police.

Communication and Meeting Topics?
Neighborhood Watch groups communicate by using telephone rosters, flyers, emails, fax rosters, websites and newsletters. While some groups have formal meetings, others prefer to be more relaxed with barbecues and block parties. However they communicate, most groups focus on safety and crime prevention. The police department is a resource that offers brochures and videos on topics such as:
- Personal Safety and Crime Awareness
- Child, Teen or Senior Safety
- Halloween, Summer or Holiday Safety
- Scams or Fraud Schemes

To obtain brochures or borrow a video, call the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Brenda Ivey at 777-8621.

Is disaster preparedness training available to our group?
Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies (CORE) trains residents to respond to emergencies. CORE I focuses on home and family preparedness, Core II focuses on neighborhood preparedness and response and Core III focuses on emergency response in a hands-on training. All Neighborhood Watch groups of 10 or more can elect to have CORE I training in their neighborhood. For more information on CORE call 238-6351 or visit www.oaklandcore.org or ask the Neighborhood Watch Coordinator about it.

Appendix I: CORE Training

In seeking opportunities to promote community awareness and service, the mission of CORE is to promote the spirit of neighbor helping neighbor and to provide the highest quality emergency and disaster prevention, preparedness and response training.

Citizens of Oakland Respond to Emergencies (CORE) is a **free** training program for individuals, neighborhood groups and community-based organizations in Oakland. The underlying premise is that a major disaster will overwhelm first responders and leave many citizens on their own for the first 3 to 7 days after the emergency. CORE teaches self-reliance skills and helps neighborhoods establish response teams to take care of the neighborhood until professional emergency personnel arrive. CORE training facilitates the development of CORE Groups throughout Oakland who are organized, empowered and involved in the health, safety and well-being of their neighborhood.

Since its inception in 1990, the CORE program has provided training to over **17,500** Oakland residents. CORE set a new standard for emergency preparedness and residential hazard reduction and earned the Outstanding Service Award by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services in 1991. The CORE Program has also received commendations from the Oakland City Council and the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company. Training currently includes:

CORE I – Home and Family Emergency Preparedness - Learn how to reduce common household hazards, prepare family disaster plans and emergency supply kits, develop evacuation plans and respond to earthquakes, fires, chemical emergencies, severe weather and terrorist threats.

CORE II – Neighborhood Preparedness and Response - Learn how to organize a command center and create emergency response teams, (i.e. communications, damage assessment, hazard reduction/ utilities, search and rescue, disaster first aid, shelter and special needs).

CORE I and II classes are conducted at neighborhood sites and require minimum of 10-20 participants.

CORE III – Emergency Response Hands-On Training - Learn beginning response tactics. Get classroom instruction and hands-on training in fire suppression, damage assessment, light search and rescue, disaster first aid, disaster psychology, special needs and neighborhood emergency communications. Training includes a functional exercise (simulated earthquake). Classroom and hands-on training are conducted at Oakland Fire Training Center.

CORE I, II and III manuals are printed in Chinese and Spanish to facilitate training in culturally diverse communities. Bilingual translators help provide CORE training to other language groups in Oakland.

See CORE website: **www.oaklandcore.org** for more information and training schedule.

CORE is a CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Program
CORE is a program of the Oakland Fire Department
510 238-6351 • core@oaklandnet.com