

NEIGHBORHOOD DIRECTORY TIPS

Many neighborhoods find it useful to create a directory of residents. Directories provide a tool for connecting with your neighbors, sharing information, making contact in an emergency, and helping with daily needs such as baby sitting, pet sitting, etc.

Directories can be published in hardcopy or electronically, which make them easier to update. Hardcopy directories can be printed from simple Excel or Access databases or in any format you choose, and are generally updated annually. Electronic directories can be housed on a neighborhood web site and updated regularly. Also, there are some services that provide directory templates ; one example is www.ineighbors.org.

Directories can include some or all of the following information:

- Information on the HOA or neighborhood association
- Annual calendar of events/meetings
- Dues/membership info
- History of the neighborhood/complex
- Budget/bylaws (if applicable)

The main part of the directory is focused on residents. Information that could be useful includes:

- Name of owners/residents
- Address
- Phone numbers – home, business, cell
- E-mail addresses
- Children (year of birth, not age, then no need to update yearly)
- Others who live in the household (e.g., parents, other relatives)
- Pets (a good aid when identifying a lost pet)
- Owner's or residents' occupations or places of business
- Skills, interests
- Services offered (house sitting, pet sitting, baby sitting, yard work, etc.)
- Items to share (e.g., Rototiller, snow shovel, trips to the dump, etc.)
- Advertising from local businesses

When you decide what information to compile, usually a letter and/or form is distributed to neighbors giving them the option to participate or opt out of the directory. It is also a good idea to put a notice in your directory that it is for use of the neighbors, and not to be used for solicitation. The letter can be delivered door-to-door in a smaller neighborhood or by mail. The City can provide mailing labels for your neighborhood.

Some other resources that may be available to you:

- Funds from the City of Bellevue Little Match Program that can help with printing or mailing costs for community building activity such as an initial directory.
<http://www.bellevuewa.gov/5858.htm>
- Building Blocks for Neighborhood Projects provides a “how to” guide for many neighborhood projects including a neighborhood directory.
http://www.bellevuewa.gov/pdf/Neighborhoods/Building_Blocks_How_To_Guide.pdf