

NAC Organization Guidelines and Position Descriptions

The Neighborhood Advisory Council was formed in 2013 through action of Springfield City Council and Manager to act in an informal advisory capacity to City Council and City staff leadership on matters pertinent to the betterment of neighborhoods and quality of life throughout the city. NAC facilitates two-way communication between members of Springfield's city council, key city staff and representatives of the associations serving its neighborhoods. NAC is comprised of representatives from Springfield registered neighborhood associations. As NAC is an advisory support for the City, it does not carry formal obligations as does Planning and Zoning and other boards, and therefore does not require a formal corporate structure nor formal procedural practices. The following organizational guidelines and position descriptions (originally adopted in 2018 and amended in 2024) reflect the practices of NAC as it currently conducts its activities.

1. Each neighborhood organization officially recognized by the City of Springfield has the opportunity to designate a representative and alternate (collectively, NAC members) to serve on the Neighborhood Advisory Council. Each officially recognized neighborhood will have one vote. If a rep or alternate holds the position of NAC chair or vice-chair, his/her neighborhood organization may designate another person to fill the vacated position.
2. Each neighborhood association sets its own criteria for designating its representative and alternate and keeps NAC's City Staff Administrator up to date on names and contact information.
- 3. NAC Representative Expectations**
 - a. All representatives are bound by the Tenants of Civility adopted by the NAC and City of Springfield.
 - b. Attend and participate in NAC quarterly meetings
 - c. Act as a communication conduit between his/her neighborhood association and the NAC
 - d. Participate in other NAC activities as time and interest allow
- 4. NAC Alternate Expectations**
 - a. All alternates are bound by the Tenants of Civility adopted by the NAC and City of Springfield.
 - b. Attend and participate in NAC quarterly meetings in the absence of their respective NAC representatives.
 - c. Fulfill other duties of their NAC representatives in their absence
 - d. Participate in other NAC activities as time and interest allow
- 5. NAC Chair Expectations**
 - a. Coordinate NAC efforts and communication across the participating neighborhoods, members of City Council, and City staff for the upcoming NAC program year (July 1 to June 30).
 - b. Prepare (or cause to be prepared) timely communications of reports of findings, perspectives and recommendations from Topical Studies and Focus Groups.
 - c. Designate Facilitators for Topical Studies and Focus Groups. In some cases, Chair may act as Facilitator.
 - d. Act as spokesperson for NAC to City staff, the news media and other interested parties.

- e. Engage and work with City Council, staff, neighborhood representatives and others to develop and drive the NAC activities to results that benefit the City's neighborhoods.
- f. NAC Chair shall serve a 2-year term beginning July 1, with elections held at NAC Quarterly meeting preceding this date with an opportunity to serve one additional 2-year term as mutually agreed upon by the Chair and NAC.
- g. Author a column in the SGF Neighborhood News quarterly editions.

6. NAC Vice-Chair Expectations

- a. Fulfill the duties of the Chair at such times as may be necessary
 - b. Assist Chair by helping to obtain input from NAC reps and others to help achieve results of Topical Studies and Focus Groups
 - c. Act as Facilitator for one or more Topical Study or Focus Group.
 - d. Act as a team with Chair and others in preparation of written reports and communications pertinent to Topical Meetings, Focus Groups and other NAC activities.
 - e. NAC Vice-Chair shall serve a 2-year term beginning July 1, with elections held at NAC Quarterly meeting preceding this date.
7. The NAC will determine annual priorities. These priorities are intended to shed light on needs and issues related to the quality of life and betterment of neighborhoods. NAC encourages input from City Council members and key City staff in determining these priorities.
8. The NAC Positive Action Committee (NAC PAC) serves as the Executive Committee for the NAC. It reviews and provides input on NAC meeting agendas developed by the Chair and City planning staff, and reviews progress related to annual NAC Priorities and the work of the Focus Groups. NAC PAC is comprised of NAC's Focus Area Leaders (if any) and any other NAC members who have the time and interest to participate. The Chair may designate a NAC PAC member to facilitate meetings in the absence of the Chair.
9. Topical Studies may be conducted and/or Focus Groups established to help flesh out and address annual priorities.
- a. Topical Studies: Studies may be undertaken as single meetings intended to address narrow topics, or may be a series of meetings which may result in creation of a document outlining findings and perspectives generated during the topical study. Topical Studies shall generally be called by the Chair based on interest from the NAC members. They are intended to have defined purposes and time schedules for completion.
 - b. Focus Groups are intended to maintain continuing awareness and knowledge of general topics of interest to neighborhoods. Previous focus groups have dealt with chronic nuisance properties, crime and security, communications, and planning and development. Focus Groups are comprised of NAC members who have the time and interest to participate in them. Focus Groups will generally be self-governing and will set their own meeting schedules as can best fit the schedules of their participants. Focus Groups need effective leadership in order to assure they stay on topic and appropriately engage City staff and others in pursuit of their objectives.
 - c. In addition to NAC members, any neighborhood association may nominate one additional person to represent their association in any given Topical Meeting Focus Group. Acceptance of Topical Study additional participants shall be by action of the NAC Chair or in the case of Focus Groups, a vote of the Focus Group participants who are NAC members.

10. Within a month of establishment of a Focus Group or Topical Study, the NAC Chair may select an individual to facilitate it for a period of up to one year. In general, a Facilitator is an individual who has the time, knowledge, and drive to convene meetings, and prepare and report findings of their group. A Facilitator needs to come to the project with an open mind and a desire to thoughtfully listen and study the pertinent issues to assure the Focus Group or Topical Study findings and recommendations are well-founded, inclusive and intended to foster neighborhood betterment. Ideally, NAC participants step forward for consideration to be Facilitators. They do not have to be neighborhood representatives. They are expected to attend NAC PAC and/or NAC meetings as requested to present findings and recommendations.
 - a. Focus Groups and Topical Study Groups shall present their findings / reports to NAC members prior to presenting to any City staff.

11. From time to time, NAC may undertake activities or study such issues as may be deemed by City Staff to be outside the bounds for which the City is authorized to participate in and support financially. In such cases, City staff will notify the NAC Chair and the Chair will make reasonable efforts to assure such City restrictions are not violated. In general, meetings and reports related to such issues will include announced or written disclaimers acceptable to the City.

12. Generalized Schedule of Annual NAC Activities (Beginning July, ending following June)
 - a. Throughout Year: Topical Studies and Focus Groups meet as desired to study/discuss issues and develop recommendations
 - b. October: With input from Topical Studies and Focus Groups, PAC summarizes recommendations related to City budget for vetting with full NAC
 - c. November: Proposed Budget Recommendations presented at quarterly NAC meeting
 - d. During the 1st Quarter: Budget Recommendations communicated to City Leadership
 - e. Feb/Mar: NAC discusses findings and recommendations with City Council members and seeks guidance from Council regarding areas of concern for consideration over the ensuing 1-15 months
 - f. Biannually at NAC 2nd quarterly meeting: NAC Chair and Vice-Chair for next term selected