







Montclair Organized Neighborhoods Leader's Guide

Effectively Organize Your Neighborhood to

- GAIN POWER IN NUMBERS
- PREPARE FOR AND RESPOND TO EMERGENCIES
- DETER CRIME
- SOLVE ULTRA-LOCAL ISSUES LIKE PARKING, TRAFFIC, BLIGHT
- WATCH OUT FOR ONE ANOTHER
- BEAUTIFY OUR SURROUNDINGS
- SOCIALIZE AND HAVE FUN!

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What are MONs?

Montclair Organized Neighborhoods (MONs) were created in 2004 as a joint initiative between the Montclair Safety and Improvement Council (now Montclair Neighborhood Council—MNC) and the Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association (PPNA). The ambitious goal of both the PPNA and MNC is to have 100% of our neighborhoods organized into MONs. The starting point of each MON is to have a neighborhood leader, boundary map, roster, a way to communicate with one another, a list of priorities to tackle as a group and to plan one event per year.

PPNA now has 27 MONs in various stages of organization, and the MNC has over 30. Some are huge, some are tiny. Some are well-oiled machines and some are in start-up mode.

This Leader's Guide is intended as a tool kit to help MONs move up the 3-level skills ladder [see page 3]. PPNA and MNC also have MON support teams to help MONs get started or boost the energy of a flagging MON. Need help?

Send us an email: info@PiedmontPines.org or info@MontclairNeighborhoodCouncil.com

Organizing a MON and keeping it vibrant can be fun and very rewarding, and will yield many benefits for all involved.

Why are MONs important?

Safe communities begin with well-organized, well-prepared neighborhoods. Oakland's resources simply do not stretch far enough to satisfy the public safety needs of 400,000 people without help from residents, and in the Oakland Hills, response by public safety agencies like police and fire can be delayed, or in the case of a major disaster, not possible for quite some time. Consider that organized neighborhoods:

- Have power in numbers, leading to a stronger and more authoritative relationship with officials.
- Have access to Oakland's intensive curriculum of neighborhood training for crime prevention and emergency preparedness and response.
- Gain more eyes and ears to detect and prevent crime.
- Pool labor, skills, equipment, and knowledge to make an entire neighborhood less attractive to criminals AND LESS VULNERABLE TO CRIME.

Also consider:

- Even when Oakland Police achieves its ideal staffing, it needs all the eyes and ears it can get to respond effectively.
- The Hayward Fault runs through the Montclair Village. In the event of a major earthquake, we may be without essential police, fire, and rescue services for 72 hours or more.
- Wildfires will always be a concern. The 1991 Firestorm resulted in the loss of 25 lives and nearly 4,000 homes were destroyed.

Getting started in five steps

- 1. Form a start-up team -- recruit at least three people who share your interest in having a strong, organized neighborhood. See the sample Get-started flier to seek interested co-organizers.
 - Determine appropriate boundaries--the addresses to be included in your MON.
 - Get a volunteer to compile and manage the MON roster.
- 2. Establish the neighborhood communications platform and recruit someone to manage it. Consider these three popular options--each has advantages and disadvantages:
 - Nextdoor --You can establish a "private" group just for your MON. Each person can set filters for what posts they want to read. Disadvantage: everyone must join NextdoorPiedmontPines. Free.
 - Google Group https://groups.google.com/forum/#!overview. Disadvantage: roster lives in Google Docs; email lives in Google Groups, requiring maintenance of two documents per roster change. Free. Requires a Google account?
 - GroupsIO: Groups.io: Features. Launched in 2014, many groups find this easier to work with. Get the free version.
- 3. Poll neighbors for their interest in participating in the MON, inquire who has what skills for start-up roles.
- 4. Decide on a date and location for the first social event. Recruit volunteers to plan publicity, food. At the social event, consider:
 - People provide missing roster information
 - MON leader or PPNA support staff speaks about the advantages of being a MON
 - Volunteers sign up for specific tasks
 - Poll neighbors about MON priorities
 - Ask for show-of-interest signups for CERT and Neighborhood Watch training
- 5. After the social event, regroup the leadership team to review:
 - Neighborhood response to the social event
 - Roster gaps
 - MON priorities
 - Determine the best structure for leading your MON
 - First-year action plan--keep it simple and manageable
 - Volunteer roles
 - Fundraising needs (e.g., voluntary start-up dues to fund an emergency supply kit for the neighborhood)

What projects keep MONs vital?

MONs offer a way to expand the benefits and reduce the risks of living in the East Bay hills. Here is a sampler of projects taken on by MONs:

- Welcome new neighbors as soon as they move in. Give them a letter or flier describing your
 MON. Get their contact information for the MON roster. (See template for letter contents)
- Hold social events to welcome new neighbors and acquaint neighbors with one another to better watch out for the safety of the entire neighborhood
- Broadcast alerts about crimes in progress in the immediate neighborhood.
- Reduce unsafe parking on narrow streets (see printable leaflet in Templates)
- Organize a community workday to pull weeds and beautify a patch of open space
- Widen a street by shoveling away sloughed dirt
- Hire private security patrols to reduce crime
- Install video surveillance cameras to deter crime and produce evidence for Oakland Police
- Host emergency preparedness and crime prevention training inside the neighborhood (See page 9)
- Participate in CERT training and Citywide emergency preparedness drills to sharpen skills
- Encourage neighbors to install automatic gas shutoff valves, work on getting a neighborhood discount
- Establish a neighborhood command center stocked with emergency supplies
- Team up to reduce vegetation overgrowth to reduce fire risk within your neighborhood
- Identify areas in need of traffic calming measures; forward to PPNA
- Present comments and offer mitigations to City planners to prevent unsafe or environmentally objectionable construction in your neighborhood
- Work with schools or PPNA Open Spaces teams to beautify our surroundings and increase fire-safety
- Encourage the purchase of hand-held radios; participate in radio drills
- Form a brigade to do grocery shopping and meal preparation or dog walking for those in temporary need

MON leadership models

Each MON establishes a leadership model that fits its needs. To prevent burnout and stimulate engagement, we highly recommend that roles and tasks be as widely dispersed as possible. Here are examples of leadership structures:

Steering Committee: One person serves as the overall leader, calling the steering committee together a couple of times a year to schedule upcoming events, review priorities, etc. This is recommended for mid-size MONs where the team meets at the beginning of each year to chart out the annual event calendar and define who will do what for each event. Roles can rotate each year, such as:

- Encourage neighbors to take CERT emergency preparedness training
- Schedule and host Neighborhood Watch training
- Schedule and plan an annual neighborhood social event
- Schedule and plan an emergency preparedness drill
- Keep the neighborhood roster and boundary map up to date
- Locate, maintain supplies in the Incident Command Center
- Welcome new neighbors
- Publicize events, stimulate participation
- Manage fundraising and treasury
- Serve as liaison to PPNA or MNC
- Attend MON Leaders Network forums

SuperMON: One person serves as the overall leader with Block Captains overseeing smaller neighborhood groups. This is recommended only for very large MONs. They pool efforts where it makes sense; work independently where issues or interests are not shared. They come together for an annual social event and emergency/crime training. Block Captains keep their own the rosters updated and share it with the overall leader.

Single Leader: One or two people do most of the work. This is an option of last resort and, for the long haul, will only work in a very small MON. People burn out, people move.

Keep the momentum going

Don't be discouraged if participation is not what you expected. Some folks just aren't joiners and may not share your enthusiasm for a stronger community. If you get 30% of your households engaged at least once a year, you're on the road to success. You also need a way to welcome new residents into the fold (and to tap into their energy!)

Tips for energizing your MON

- Brainstorm and prioritize what your neighborhood most needs to work on.
- Rotate duties and responsibilities to avoid burnout among your core team
- Mix up activities and be sure each event includes time to socialize and have fun
- Revisit why your neighborhood organized in the first place and keep your neighbors informed of what you've accomplished
- Break tasks into the smallest possible pieces so they are doable for people with busy lives
- Know what neighbors have what skills and interests and when you have a need for help, you can do a direct ask

Recognize who has contributed to your MONs success in ways big and small--consider fun, quirky prizes

Event and team ideas

- Holiday party, with cookie exchange
- Happy hour gathering
- Welcome new residents with a potluck dinner
- Talent show
- Yard sale -- raise funds for emergency equipment, like a generator
- House numbering team
- Drain cleaning team

Sample MON Calendar

Some ideas to pick and choose from once your MON is up and running.

January: Steering
Committee outlines
events/
dates/locations/roles for
the year. Distribute SaveThe-Dates to residents

March: Publicize Citywide Emergency Preparedness Exercise

April: Pitch in on Earth Day; participate in Emergency Preparedness Exercise

August (Firsts Tuesday): Participate in National Night Out.

October: Set a date for Neighborhood Watch (NW) training

December: Holiday party to welcome all new neighbors

Skills ladder for MONs

Developing a vibrant, effective MON happens over time, and takes teamwork. Here's our vision for building the skills of MONs throughout PPNA and the MNC. Our MON Support Team will help at every stage. How many can your MON check?

Key resources

Support Team. Both the PPNA and MNC offer seasoned MON leader volunteers who are available to help at any stage of your neighborhood's journey to becoming a Level 3 MON. Send an email to info@PiedmontPines.org or info@MontclairNeighborhoodCouncil.com to discuss your needs. A sampler of support you can expect:

- MON Leadership Circle--meets to provide organizing assistance, share ideas, motivate, build and sustain momentum, and to communicate and provide assistance between MONs.
- Emergency Preparedness --to motivate, pool resources, encourage CERT training, coordinate participation in Citywide preparedness exercises, conduct local drills, and recognize achievement.
- Radio support--define radio communications procedures. Training for you and your neighbors on the use of two-way radios can be scheduled through GENOAK (https://www.genoak.org/).
- Crime prevention--to detect patterns, improve OPD response, coordinate Neighborhood Watch training, connect interested neighbors with private patrol companies, provide information about security cameras, encourage camera owners to register cameras with OPD.
- Support from city resources--if your action plan includes such issues as traffic, pedestrian safety, emergency vehicle access, compliance with new septic regulations, building permit concerns or other government or civic issues we can assemble the right agencies to help.
- Provide Welcome Bag for new Piedmont Pines residents full of information about Oakland, Montclair and PPNA. (PPNA MON leaders contact info@PiedmontPines.org)
- Roster information—PPNA will provide contact information to MON Leaders when new residents move in. This information is for use ONLY within the MON.

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) is a free FEMA emergency preparedness and response training for individuals, provided by Oakland's Emergency Management Services Division. The underlying premise is a major disaster will overwhelm first responders and leave many of us on our own for days or even weeks. CERT teaches self- reliance skills and helps neighborhoods take care of the situation until professionals can arrive.

The CERT curriculum includes 8 units of online training that cover general disaster preparedness and response, CERT team organization and the Incident Command System, first aid/medical operations, disaster psychology, fire safety and utility controls, light search and rescue and terrorism. The online training is followed by a weekend of additional skills training and practice that includes first aid, putting out a small fire, searching a building and cribbing to move heavy objects. The total CERT training is about 24 hours. To register, go to https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/oaklandcert

PEP (Personal Emergency Preparedness) is a free 1 ½ hour emergency preparedness and response workshop for neighborhoods, provided by Oakland's Emergency Management Services Division and the Oakland Firesafe Council. PEP teaches the most important actions that we should all take to be better prepared for a disaster. Sign up for an online or in-person PEP workshop at https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/personal-emergency-preparedness-classes

Oakland Firesafe Council provides programs, information and education on wildfire preparedness, safe parking, Firewise USA program for firesafe communities and more. https://oaklandfiresafecouncil.org/programs

The Firesafe Council's emergency preparedness Guides each focus on a topic such as creating a family emergency plan, emergency evacuations, building a Go-Bag/Stay-Box, hardening homes against wildfire and earthquake, firesafe landscaping, preparedness for elders and for pets, the Zonehaven evacuation system, backup power, and much more. Go to https://www.oaklandcpandr.org/guides

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.

Steps to set up Neighborhood Watch

- Call the Oakland Police Department, Neighborhood Watch Coordinator, Brian Cassidy, Police Services Technician II at 510-238-6200 or email him at bcassidy@oaklandca.gov
- 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) and schedule the meeting.
- Distribute flyers inviting neighbors to the Neighborhood Watch meeting about 7 to 10 days before the meeting. The Police Department can supply flyers.
- 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:

- What is National Night Out and how it can help you organize your neighborhood
- 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

Templates

Template: Roster form

use roster information nformation unless it's f
2-Way ng Radio/HAM
•
•
•
•

Template: Get-started flier

Help Build a Stronger Neighborhood

When neighbors know each other, neighborhoods are safer and better prepared for emergencies

Dear neighbors on [enter street name(s)]

I hope you'll join me in getting our neighborhood better equipped to prevent crime, respond to emergencies, and act on issues that are important to each of us. I'm looking for a core group of five to eight neighbors interested in and willing to invest some time and energy to get our neighborhood organized.

To kick off this effort, I'm hosting a start-up meeting at my home on [date] from [start and end times] at [address]. If you can join me in this effort, please contact me at [phone number] or email [email address].

Here's what I hope to accomplish at this meeting:

- 1. Review our boundary map.
- 2. Determine our highest priorities-- reasons organizing will be beneficial to all.
- 3. Outline start-up tasks and seek volunteers to lead a team for each major task.
- 4. Select the best method for keeping one another informed--such as a Google group or Nextdoor's listsery.
- 5. Determine what leadership structure and roles we need to get this effort moving and sustain it.
- 6. Schedule a social event to bring neighbors together--to recruit help on tasks such as scheduling crime prevention/ emergency preparedness training and to fill in our roster.

If you share my passion for improving the safety of our neighborhood by working together, please join me on [date]. I look forward to working with you,

[<mark>sign</mark>]

Template: National Night Out Flier



Neighborhood Block Party

Date:

National Night Out is a nation-wide annual event designed to strengthen neighborhood spirit and unity, introduce Emergency Preparedness ideas, and raise crime prevention awareness.

Get to know your neighbors!

Location:	
Time:	
What you should bring:	
Who to contact:	
Phone:	

Template: Welcome letter from PPNA

[various versions of this are sent to neighbors who come through PPNA's "front door." Highlighted items are customized. MON leaders are copied so they can update their rosters. On the next page is a template for the MON leader to deliver]

Dear

WELCOME to Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association (PPNA). We're a 1400-home neighborhood association (since 1941!) with the broad purpose of improving the quality of life in our community. You've moved into a fabulous neighborhood, and I hope you'll love living here as much as I have for 40+ years.

A few items:

I have added you to the PPNA roster, so you'll now get our neighborhood e-news.

Be sure to visit our website at www.piedmontpines.org to get to know all that we do

Our association dues are voluntary and start at \$35 a year--many pay more based on the value members attach to being part of this association. You can pay online or by mail. For online payments, I've set [Name] up as the Dues Contact (only one DC per household to prevent duplicate payments and confusion). If [name] is more appropriate, let me know and I'll change it to her.

To pay online, [Name] can access the Member Center on our website by clicking Sign In at the top of our home page at www.piedmontpines.org. You'll need a username (your email address at start up, but you can pick any user name you like) and a password. The system assigns a temporary password which you reset by:

- Go to www.piedmontpines.org and click sign in at the top, then scroll down to the very bottom, Forgot Password.
- That page will ask for your email address, then click submit. The system will send you a link to create a password. Then you're all set to return to the Member Center to add phone numbers and other info, and to pay dues online or by mail.

On a related note, PPNA is divided into 27 smaller organized neighborhoods that we call MONs. Learn more about them here: http://www.piedmontpines.org, then click on the Projects menu, then Organized Neighborhoods. You are in our MON #x on the map. [Name] is the lead and is copied here and will add you to the MON's local listsery.

PPNA's official "welcome wagoneer," will deliver a bag of interesting and useful information about PPNA and Montclair.

You can join the Piedmont Pines Nextdoor listserv by going to Nextdoor.com. You'll get instructions with your welcome email.

Again, WELCOME!!!

Robbie Neely, Executive Director Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association

Template: Welcome letter from MON leader

Customize the highlights

Welcome to our neighborhood!

My name is [name], your neighbor at [address]. I'm the Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association Lead for our neighborhood.

You may or may not realize that you are living in Montclair Organized Neighborhood (MON # xx). Thanks to the Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association (PPNA) and the Montclair Neighborhood Council, Montclair has been organizing neighbors into MONs with 40 to 60 homes each, with the goal of creating smaller neighborhoods where the residents know each other, can communicate easily and can work together on safety and other issues. PPNA has 27 MONs in its boundaries.

The boundaries of our MON are [describe] which includes [##] households. For more information on MONs, including a map, go to PiedmontPines.org and click on Projects, then Organized Neighborhoods. Some particulars about our MON:

Our roster: We maintain a roster of our neighbors so we can stay in touch with one another. **[Describe your roster format, such as Google Doc Roster.]** Attached is roster form—you can provide as much information as you're comfortable sharing with your neighbors. **[describe who the form goes to for inputting and how it's shared with neighbors]**

Our local listsery: [Describe your MON's listsery here] – how they get enrolled, how they post

Save the date: Our yearly official gathering is [describe, such as: National Night Out—when and where.]

Nextdoor: You may already be on Nextdoor, a social network for neighborhoods. If you're not familiar with it, please consider joining; it's free. Information is here:

https://help.nextdoor.com/customer/en/portal/articles/805001. You can join the Piedmont Pines Nextdoor listserv by going to Nextdoor.com. You'll get instructions with your welcome email.

We have a friendly neighborhood, and you are surrounded by some terrific people. I hope you'll be very happy here. I hope to meet you soon. Feel free to call if you have any questions.

[Name] [email] [phone]

[Then send an email to the entire MON to introduce the new neighbors.]

Dangerous parking leaflet: Print and cut



MANY Piedmont Pines residents have expressed concern about cars dangerously parked on our narrow, twisting streets that:

- impede access by emergency vehicles (20-foot minimum clearance required by the City Fire Code)
 and
- create dangers for drivers approaching blind curves

This vehicle is parked in a way that increases the dangers. On behalf of your neighbors, we ask that you either park in your driveway or find a safer place to park. Lives depend on it.

Thank you!

Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association Board



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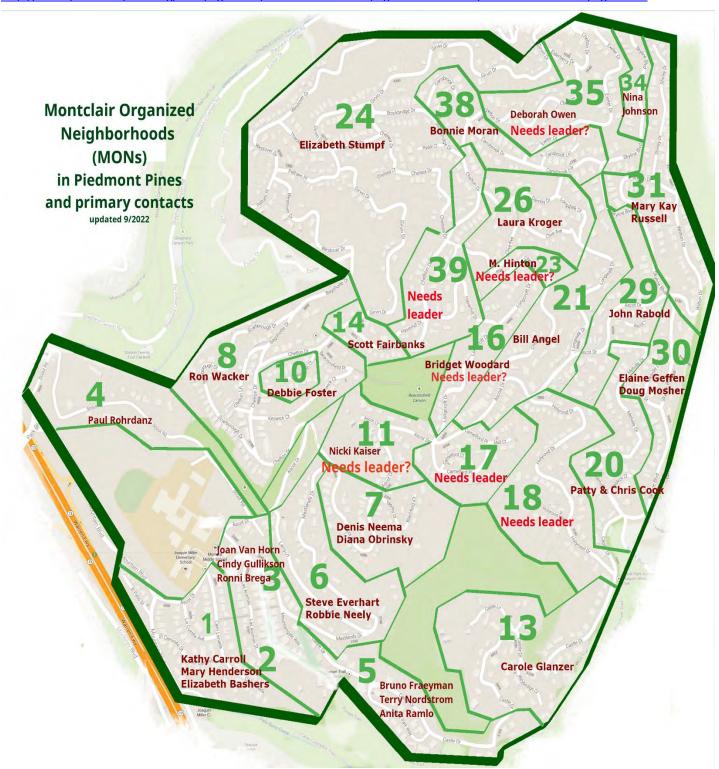
Thank you!

Piedmont Pines Neighborhood Association
Board

PPNA MON map

Here are the boundaries of PPNA's current 27 MONs, after multiple mergers and splits over the years. This map will continue to evolve. For the most current map, visit PPNA's website:

http://www.piedmontpines.org/site page.cfm?pk association webpage menu=2053&pk association webpage=5708



Version history

Version	Date	Author	Revision
3.0	2022-09-15	Robbie Neely, Doug Mosher	Major updateStreamlined, new templates
2.1	2019-01-01	Doug Mosher	Changed MSIC references to MNC
2.0	2016-02-17	Robbie Neely	Streamlined, MON leader feedback
1.6	2011-02-15	Doug Mosher	Minor updates
1.5	2011-01-19	Doug Mosher	Minor updates
1.4	2010-02-11	Doug Mosher	Minor updates
1.3	2009-06-22	Doug Mosher	Major update
1.2	2008-01-10	Doug Mosher	Minor updates
1.1	2007-07-15	Robbie Neely	Minor updates
1.0	2006-06-15	Robbie Neely	Original