To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT: REGISTRATION POLICY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide information to the City Council about the Registration Policy for Community Organizations, and some recommended updates.

The City currently has a registration policy for various types of organizations. The registration is voluntary and there are minimum requirements, based on the type of organization.

When an organization is registered, they receive the following benefits:
- Inclusion in the Community Engagement Database.
- Inclusion in the distribution of the Community Engagement Bulletin.
- Inclusion in the Neighborhood Organization Map.
- Registration in the Early Courtesy Notification System.
- Support and training.

Why does the City have a registration process?
- Improve outreach and engagement.
- Maintain an updated database of neighborhood, faith-based and community organizations.
- Provide advance notifications of zoning cases and other City programs.
- Share regular information and updates on City services and events.
- Assist neighborhoods with capacity building and identifies those needing assistance.

We currently offer registration to these types of organizations:
- Voluntary Neighborhood Associations
- Mandatory Neighborhood Associations – HOAs
- Neighborhood Alliances
- Redevelopment Organizations
- Faith-based Organizations

The current policy was written approximately 14 years ago. As neighborhoods and community organizations have evolved, several updates are needed. Here are a few suggested edits to the current policy.

Change the annual updates to January of each year. In the past, updates were done on the anniversary date of the organization's initial registration date. This caused a continuous registration process for staff. Moving all updates to January makes it easier to track updates and moves all organizations to the same renewal date.

Allow overlapping boundaries for associations if the residents are in agreement. The current guidelines say that if 50% +1 household wishes to form a new association, then the new association is allowed. Because these are voluntary associations, we don't feel like it is fair to force the households to move to a new association. In situations where this occurs, we will show the overlapping boundaries and each household can determine which association they wish to belong to. The overlapping area will only be when people living in that geographic area have chosen to belong to different associations. We will also add that any association has to be contiguous, to prevent fragmented associations.

ISSUED BY THE CITY MANAGER   **FORT WORTH, TEXAS**

Eliminate Alliance geographic boundaries. When an alliance is formed, they must get the associations to agree to be a member. In the past, boundaries were then drawn to include that entire geographic area. In some instances, neighborhoods have fallen within this geographic boundary and do not want to belong to the alliance. In the future, organizations belonging to the alliance will be listed, but no geographic boundaries will be used. This will avoid the confusion over which neighborhoods belong to each alliance on a map.

Add Business Associations, Crime Prevention and community organizations to the database. We have organizations that fall into these categories, that would like to be included in the database. This would allow us to expand our contacts in the community and share information with a wider audience.

Modify the process for inactive process. The current policy has a detailed process to un-register an organization. We recommend simplifying this process. An organization will be inactive if they don't provide updates after three attempts by staff. If an update is provided at a later date, they will once again be active in the database.

Soften the language and change the name from policy to guidelines. The term "guidelines" better reflects the goal and purpose. The new language also goes along with the voluntary basis of the process.

In addition to the updates to the Registration Guidelines, staff is currently working with ITS to launch a new database. This database will allow us to easily update the information and also have multiple departments provide information on any contact with these organizations. The current database is approximately 15 years old and doesn't have all the functionality needed for the increased engagement that is taking place throughout the City.

An updated copy of the guidelines is attached.

For any questions about the Community Engagement Office or this IR, please contact Michelle Gutt, at michelle.gutt@fortworthtexas.gov or 817-994-9141.

David Cooke
City Manager