



MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 17, 2019

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. Ortega".

TO: Honorable Mayor and
City Council Members

FROM: Michael J. Ortega, PE
City Manager

SUBJECT: Support for Neighborhood Associations

As you will recall, our discussions during the FY 2019/20 operating budget included the allocation of 3 additional FTE's to the Planning and Development Services Department. My intent is to allocate one of these positions to assist neighborhood associations.

Neighborhood associations play a vital role in making our community an attractive, welcoming place to live; sharing crucial information with residents about City government; and serving as an avenue for local cooperation and community-building. From organizing neighborhood clean-ups, holding block parties and porch fests, planting and caring for green spaces, and partnering with public safety officers to make our community safer, neighborhood associations do much to make our City stronger. In addition, neighborhood associations weigh in on land use matters affecting the community.

Over time, we have heard the request for the City to provide more assistance to neighborhood associations to support them in these efforts. As I mentioned above, as a part of the upcoming fiscal year, the Planning and Development Services Department will designate a neighborhood engagement specialist to serve as a point of contact for neighborhood associations. Rebecca Ruopp, a Principal Planner with extensive experience in community engagement, will fill this role. In addition to serving as the primary liaison to neighborhood associations, this position will support neighborhood associations through other means, such as:

- Capacity building programs provided in partnership with Pima County and other entities
- Holding an annual orientation and training session for neighborhood association leadership which will cover bylaws, meeting protocol, strategic planning and other topics
- Convening periodic "Neighborhood Huddles" to support peer-to-peer sharing of ideas and resources. These meetings will provide neighborhood association leaders a chance to exchange ideas, tips, and success stories.
- Making neighborhoods aware of resources such as NoticeTucson which they can use to be better informed about projects in their neighborhood

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- Providing guidance and helping neighborhoods access resources to assist in updating neighborhood plans
- Continuing to support neighborhoods in their communications with an annual newsletter as well as the Neighborhood Nugget; and with registering new associations and updating neighborhood association contact information

These services are some initial ideas based on the needs we have heard directly from neighborhood associations as well as from TRRG (Tucson Residents for Responsive Government). As we shape this program, we are open to input and feedback from stakeholders regarding how we can better meet the needs of neighborhood associations.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

cc: Albert Elias, Assistant City Manager
Scott Clark, Planning and Development Services Department Director