

Neighborhood Association vs. HOA

A **neighborhood association (NA)** is a volunteer organization of residents who work together to improve and maintain the quality of life in its neighborhood. Associations can form out of concern over a particular issue or as a means of enhancing a "sense of community."

Features of a Neighborhood Association:

- Membership is **voluntary** and open to all residents, not just property owners, in the neighborhood.
- Participation is optional and boundaries are established by the association.
- Membership dues are voluntary
- There is no legal authority to enact or enforce maintenance or design requirements beyond those established by City ordinances.
- To ensure a visibly democratic process, the organization establishes formal or informal bylaws to provide for at least one general membership meeting per year and to require an annual election of officers.

A **home owners association (HOA)**, unlike a neighborhood association, is a formal legal entity created to maintain common areas and enforce private deed restrictions. Most condominium, town house developments and newer single-family subdivisions nowadays have home owner associations created when the development is built.

Features of a Homeowners Association:

- Membership is **mandatory** for all property owners within the boundaries of the development.
- Members are charged mandatory dues.
- Homeowners associations have the legal authority to enact and enforce maintenance and design standards in addition to those established by city ordinance.
- Homeowners associations are corporations, with formal bylaws, which have a governing board that may be elected annually.