



A Guide to Starting a Community League

January 16, 2024

1) Call the EFCL

Once you have a group of interested people (5-10), we will come out and meet with you and provide an overview of Leagues and how they operate, as well as options for joining or starting one and an outline of the process. We will walk with you through the journey to becoming a Community League. In the meantime, feel free to reach out to your District Representative- they are well connected with Leagues in the area and would be happy to speak with you. <https://efcl.org/about/efcl-board/>

2) Develop a Steering Committee of Five to 10 People

Your steering committee will guide the formation of the Community League in your neighbourhood. To be successful, you will need key people in defined roles and agreed on processes for how you will govern yourselves and do the work of becoming a League.

Key People: A Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Communications Director are some key roles you may want to assign. You may also want to consider a Vice Chair or other Members at Large. An individual's unique skills, commitment level and capacity should be taken into consideration.

Terms of Reference: Create a terms of reference that will outline clearly your committee's purpose, objectives and how decisions will be made along the way. [EXAMPLE](#)

3) Contact your Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator (NRC)

This person is your key to all things City of Edmonton. They will help you define the new League's boundaries, neighbourhoods included and population statistics – all things you will need for the next step. Based on what we have learned about Leagues, the desired population to support a League is 5,000 to 15,000 residents. Your NRC will also provide you information about City park land eligible for licensing by the new League and let you know the state of any existing amenities. The licensing agreement for parkland is called a Tripartite Agreement and can take quite some time to put in place.

4) Get to know your amenities

Your NRC will let you know what if any amenities (eg. rink, tennis courts) are already built on parkland. It will be important to understand who owns those facilities (eg. homeowners association, developer, existing League) and to work out an agreement allowing the new League to run them.





5) Write a letter of intent to the City Including:

- Community description (who you are)
- List of Steering Committee names, contacts and roles
- Proposed boundaries (clarify with your NRC)
- Total population and projection according to structure plan (from your NRC)
- List of community names or neighborhoods within the desired boundary
- List of site/amenities (schools, playgrounds, sports fields, ponds, park signs)
- Letters of support (NRC, EFCL, neighbouring Community League(s), schools, parents council etc.)

6) Think of Funding Opportunities

A one-time Community League Emerging Grant of \$5,000 is available from the City to groups interested in establishing a new Community League who have the support of the EFCL, the NRC and neighbouring Community Leagues and have completed the notifications to the community of the intent to form a League. More information can be found [here](#) or ask your NRC. The EFCL will hold these funds in trust for use by your steering committee so it is important to include us in this step.

7) Needs Assessment / Survey

A well planned and executed needs assessment will clarify, confirm or correct:

- Whether a need/desire for a League exists in your community or not. Are there partnership options available with other groups (e.g. a HomeOwners Association) or neighbouring Leagues that should be considered? Are there assessed needs these groups can or cannot meet currently?
- If you will have the support needed to sustain a League.
- Which projects, programs and services are sought after by residents.

The questions you ask in your survey should help the committee decide on the creation of a League and the direction it will take if formed. When forming your questions, consider:

- Who do you need to reach to have a satisfactory sample of people represented in your assessment and how many people do you need to engage?
- How are you collecting data? Phone, interview or written survey (email, mail-in, Google form?) or a variety of methods asking the same questions?



- What do the results tell you? Once you compile and summarize the data, you will want to share it and request feedback before putting anything in motion.

Survey Tips:

1. Keep the questions simple and rotate easy yes/no questions with more open ended questions
2. Try digital surveys like Google Form or Survey Monkey AND paper surveys to ensure diverse access
3. Consider getting input at an event like an Open House: use sticky notes, suggestions boxes, or small table discussions
4. EFCL Tip Sheet on Surveys and Engagement [HERE](#)

8) Hold the First Public Meeting

The timeline of your first public meeting may vary depending on your needs. Potentially this step may even happen before, during or as part of your needs assessment. Or it could be your opportunity to share the results and recruit volunteers for interim committees to assist you with the tasks in step 7.

9) Set Up Working Committees

Yes! A Community League is needed and supported. Let's do this! Once the results of your needs assessment determine there is a need and support for a Community League in your neighbourhood(s) there are some important next steps:

Suggested Interim Committees

- Bylaws Committee: To work on name check with registries office and draft bylaws
- Finance Committee: To work on budget and obtaining necessary letters of approval for the
- Membership Committee: To work on defining membership criteria and dues, order membership supplies
- Program and Social Committee: Plan and host the next public meeting

Identify Other Stakeholders: Develop healthy relationships with other community groups. For instance can you partner with a neighbouring League/group that will support a soccer program, provide joint membership privileges or share assets and resources?



10) Communicate

Set up a website or social media pages and accounts, secure space in a local newsletter.

11) Create Bylaws and Objects

Draft Boundaries: If the neighbourhood(s) your proposed League wishes to represent overlap with pre-existing League boundaries, you will have to collaborate with those Leagues to negotiate the changes to boundaries. Boundaries are then spelled out in your bylaws.

Draft Bylaws: Taking the time to craft sensible, clear bylaws is critical to the success of your organization. Review the Societies Act and decide on what the objects (purpose) of your society will be. Your bylaws should support your objects, which will in turn help you create policy and procedure to govern practice. This is your road map that will guide you when you run into obstacles and challenges along the way. [Model Bylaws](#)

Draft Objectives: What is the Leagues purpose and what and how will you be reaching your purpose? Your needs assessment will inform your League's objectives.

11) Hold Second Public Meeting/Event

Your second meeting will be an opportunity to move forward in the final stages of establishing your Community League, including generating community support and getting buy-in on the League name, boundaries and bylaws. You can also use the meeting to collect contact information of community members interested in joining the League.

12) Register as a Society

More information about this process can be found [here](#). Applications can take up to 3 months to be approved. Members of the Steering Committee now become the Board until an AGM can be held when the official board will be elected.



13) Set up Membership Sales

EFCL will help you set up your membership sales through our membership management platform, [Communal](#). The League can only officially sell memberships, however, once they are registered as a society.

Reach out to the Membership Director at EFCL to better understand this process:

Darlene.Dudley@efcl.org

14) Plan Annual General Meeting (AGM)

This is your opportunity to get final confirmation and establish your League. This won't be a regular AGM as described in the new bylaws but should include:

- Announcing your League's name
- Reviewing the new bylaws
- Providing a report on the steering committee's finances
- Celebrating events held so far
- Reviewing results of needs assessments
- Announcing plans for the next year
- Electing the new board

At the AGM your new League will need to sell memberships (and sign up volunteers) at the door. EFCL staff will work with you and provide support to your volunteers

16) Formally join the EFCL

At the next EFCL general meeting after your registration as a society, we will formally welcome you into our community of communities!

17) League Established

Let's Celebrate! Once you're registered as a society and have a year of operations and financials, and programming, you're a League.