



MINNESOTA'S NIGHT TO UNITE Planning Kit 2016

*It's time to start planning
your neighborhood's
Night To Unite celebration!*

What's Inside?

- ☆ Your Block Party Registration Information and street closing request form
- ☆ Ideas for planning your Night To Unite event
- ☆ PRISM Food Drive
- ☆ A blank flyer to use as an invitation
- ☆ Party and game ideas

Join neighborhoods around Minnesota in celebrating Minnesota's Night To Unite on **Tuesday, August 2!**

Cohesive neighborhoods are key to preventing crime, and Night to Unite is an opportunity for our neighborhoods and community to come together around the shared goal of a safe and healthy community. It also reinforces the Police Department's partnership with our residents to deter crime.

If you decide to use this as an occasion to get together for your Neighborhood Watch social gathering, the enclosed information will help you and your neighbors plan. Remember, according to Golden Valley's Neighborhood Watch charter agreements, each group agrees to meet at least once a year for a social gathering so you can stay in touch with each other. These requirements help maintain the credibility and effectiveness of our Neighborhood Watch program for the mutual benefit of all members.

Dates to Remember

☆ **Friday, July 22—Register your party with the Police Department**

To register your Night To Unite gathering, please visit the City website at www.goldenvalleymn.gov/events/nighttounite and complete the short form and street closing form. If you are unable to register online, please fill out the enclosed form and return it to the Police Department. It's important to register so we can do our very best to send a Police or Fire Department representative to your party.

If you have questions about closing your street, contact Sara Hawes at 763-593-8079 or shawes@goldenvalleymn.gov.



The Police Department will hand out giveaways as its members visit Night To Unite gatherings.



Getting Started



In the past, Golden Valley neighborhoods have come together for potluck dinners, ice cream socials, lemonade parties, barbecues, swimming pool parties, etc. Use your imagination and plan something fun! A successful block party is not difficult. It just takes a little motivation, some planning, a lot of cooperation, and the willingness to enjoy time with your neighbors.

Get Help

The sooner you start planning, the better. You also stand a better chance of getting help. Consider inviting a few neighbors to your home to discuss planning the party. Not only will you find helpers, you will also find out how many people are interested in attending.

Get Organized

Save yourself time and last-minute headaches by putting others in charge of:

- ☆ Activities (be sure activities will include everyone and will promote conversation)
- ☆ Kids' entertainment (assign the older children to plan children's games and activities)
- ☆ Logistics (eg, tables, chairs, bug repellent, grills, coolers, utensils, ice, etc)
- ☆ Food
- ☆ Invitations/Flyers
- ☆ Clean-up

You can do whatever your block wants, but the best advice is to KEEP IT SIMPLE. This event is supposed to be fun! Enjoy the evening with your neighbors.

Make an invitation or use the enclosed invitation.

Simply fill in the invitation with the details of your gathering, make copies, and distribute them to your neighbors. Invitations are also available at www.goldenvalleymn.gov/events/nighttounite.

Register early to win prizes!

The first 10 neighborhoods to register their Night to Unite gathering with the Police Department will win a special Night to Unite kit! The kits contain a variety of items to help make your event extra special and that you can use as you wish. Winners will be notified the first week of July.

10 Reasons To Have A NTU Block Party

1. To have fun—no excuse is needed to celebrate!
2. To meet your neighbors. When you know who lives in your neighborhood, you are more likely to identify strangers or suspicious people.
3. To increase the sense of belonging in your neighborhood.
4. To organize a neighborhood watch group. Contact Joanne Paul at 763-593-8058 or jpaul@goldenvalleymn.gov for more information.
5. To make community connections. When you know people, you can exchange skills or resources and perhaps organize a book club, baby-sitting co-op, share walking to school duties, or find new friends for your children.
6. To "use" the street for one day (for rollerblading, street hockey, riding bikes, etc).
7. To meet long-time neighborhood residents and learn the neighborhood's history.
8. To update your neighborhood map, including all your neighbor's names, phone numbers, and emails.
9. To remind each other of crime prevention basics (locking doors, closing the garage door, turning on lights, calling).
10. To start a neighborhood tradition of getting together at least once a year!

Imagine the possibilities! ☆



Theme, Food, & Activity Ideas

★ Themes ★

- ☆ **Hat Party:** Have neighbors wear a fun hat that fits their personality.
- ☆ **Decade Party:** Set a decade and have everybody dress in clothing/accessories from that era.
- ☆ **America Theme:** Have neighbors show their patriotic side by wearing red, white, and blue.

★ Food ★

- ☆ **Bring Your "Famous" Dish:** Ask neighbors to bring the dish they're known for. Make sure they bring the recipe along. Once everyone tastes their dish they will want the recipe.
- ☆ **Ice Cream Sundaes:** You supply the ice cream and ask each household bring toppings.
- ☆ **BBQ**—Set up a few grills and everyone brings their own meat or veggies to grill. In addition, each neighbor brings a salad, side dish, or dessert to share.
- ☆ **Cater It**—Take up a collection and cater your party. Once you know how many neighbors to expect and how much you want to spend per person, all you do is place your order. The pros do the rest (pizza, subs, ribs, chicken, etc).

★ Activities ★

- ☆ Get the party started with some **ice breakers**. "Who Am I?" is playing by taping a card labeled with the name of an object or a famous person to each participant's back. Participants guess what's on their back asking only yes or no questions. In "Mingle, Mingle," a leader is selected who yells out pairs for people to match up (for example: "one person with earrings and one without," "one person with blue eyes, one with brown," etc). Those who cannot find partners are out.
- ☆ **Yard games** can keep the momentum going. Consider including bocce ball, corn hole, croquet, ladder golf, Frisbee, or others.
- ☆ Prepare a few fun **neighborhood awards**. Some ideas include neighbor of the year, longest/newest resident, best dressed (for the theme you select), etc.
- ☆ **Children's activities** are a must if you have children in your neighborhood. Some fun ideas might include a bike parade, a scavenger hunt, face painting, chalk art, and piñatas.

Helpful Suggestions

- ☆ Use name tags to help everyone learn names. Include activities that encourage people to meet each other.
- ☆ Set a beginning and end time so people know how much time they need to commit. If they are having fun, they can always stay longer.
- ☆ Take time during the event to thank everyone for coming. Introduce guests and ask neighbors to introduce themselves.
- ☆ Have handouts (many are available through the Police Department).
- ☆ Remind neighbors to have their front lights on.

Don't forget...

to register your celebration with the Police Department by **Friday, July 22**.

Just go to www.goldenvalleymn.gov/events/nighttounite and fill out the short form to register your party. If you have questions regarding Night To Unite, contact the Police Department at 763-593-8079 or police@goldenvalleymn.gov.

PRISM Food Drive

The Police and Fire Departments encourage neighborhoods to collect non-perishable food (no glass jars) and/or personal care items (shampoo, toothpaste, laundry detergent, etc) for the PRISM Food Shelf (see enclosed flyer).

If your neighborhood chooses to participate, please notify us. Police and Fire personnel will be happy to pick up these donations while visiting your neighborhood's Night To Unite celebration. If we're unable to stop by your gathering, please deliver your donations to the Public Safety Building by Friday, August 5. Please feel free to reproduce the enclosed flyer, and note that we have included this information on the bottom of the invitation template.

Last year, we collected more than 4,000 pounds of donations!

Please Note

- ☆ Due to the large number of Golden Valley neighborhoods that participate in MN's Night To Unite, we are unable to accommodate specific requests (eg, squad cars at a specific time to lead a kiddy parade). We will do our best to have someone visit every gathering that has registered!
- ☆ In 2003, the Minnesota Legislature passed a bill stating that the location of MN's Night To Unite is public information. We will provide individuals requesting the information with a list of Night To Unite gatherings in Golden Valley and their general location (no specific addresses or names).
- ☆ The City is unable to accommodate requests for picnic tables as there are no extra tables available.



This document is available in alternate formats upon a 72-hour request. Please call 763-593-8006 (TTY: 763-593-3968) to make a request. Examples of alternate formats may include large print, electronic, Braille, audiocassette, etc.

