



PROJECT MEETING INFORMATION

(Project Meetings were formerly known as Neighborhood Meetings)

VIRTUAL PROJECT MEETINGS

(Revised February 11, 2023)

A virtual project meeting may be required prior to any type of approval.

The City of Westminster places a high priority on contact with adjacent property owners and existing projects that could be affected by a new development proposal. As part of the development review process, the City of Westminster requires that the applicants representing new projects contact the surrounding property owners regarding their proposed developments. **The applicant is responsible for all public mailing notifications.** The City will provide a notice letter to copy and distribute, as well as a notification map and mailing list. The City will provide the virtual platform for, and facilitate, the project meeting.

While the Project Meeting will be lead by the applicant / development team, City staff will attend the virtual meeting to answer any questions about the development review or public hearing process, and the Project Planner and Project Engineer can also help to answer questions about the project from the City's perspective. A record of attendees will be generated from the virtual meeting platform and saved to the project file.

The Project Meeting is a potentially valuable tool for the applicant to determine issues of importance to the surrounding community and, because this is typically required early in the review process, gives the applicant adequate time to make alterations to the plans, if necessary. In addition, addressing project concerns and identifying merits of the proposal through proactive contact with the project can reduce or eliminate negative comments that could occur later in the public hearing forum.

WHO MUST BE NOTIFIED

Typically, project contact must be made to **all addresses within 1000 feet of the site property lines.** Because each proposed development and existing, surrounding developments are unique, this distance must be discussed with the City Planner assigned to the project. It may be necessary to go beyond the 1000-foot notification boundary to inform others who may be affected by the development. Nearby Homeowners' Associations may also need to be contacted.

Community Development's GIS Department generates:

- A List of names, addresses, and parcel numbers of all addresses within 1000 feet of the site boundaries.
- A map outlining the 1000-foot boundary and identifying the location of addresses within, where practical.

The above information from GIS, and certification from the developer that the required notices were mailed (with mailing date indicated) must be submitted to the City Planner for review and approval.

Note: H.B. 1088 (2001) requires surface owners to provide mineral estate owners with written notice prior to the time of any necessary public hearings regarding surface development,

zoning changes or subdivisions. It is the responsibility of the applicant, not the City, to identify and notify all mineral estate owners with any interest in the applicant's property.

FORMS OF PROJECT CONTACT

There are two ways for the applicant to satisfy the project contact requirement. One is to conduct a **virtual project meeting** to present the proposed project, answer questions, and address project concerns. A second is to **mail informational packets** to the property owners. In addition, some applicants have had success with a combination of the two by mailing an informational packet with the letter announcing an upcoming virtual meeting. Contact the City Planner assigned to review the development proposal to discuss which procedure will be followed (as either may be appropriate), when to schedule a virtual meeting, and who should be contacted. **With each of these two notification procedures, be certain to leave adequate time for City staff to review and approve all project contact correspondence prior to mailing any notifications.** Based on project concerns and comments, subsequent contact(s) with the project(s) may be necessary.

VIRTUAL PROJECT MEETINGS

The City will be responsible for facilitating the virtual meeting using an appropriate electronic platform. The Applicant/Developer will be responsible for mailing required notices and providing illustrative information to the public. City staff will open the meeting with a brief description of the proposal and close the meeting, and answer any questions, as needed. The meeting may be conducted as an "open house" or "lecture" type of meeting, whichever City staff determines as most suitable for the project.

Project meetings typically utilize PowerPoint presentations wherein applicants present site and landscape plans, building elevations, and other illustrative images of the proposed development. Conducting a meeting allows the applicant to present the project, explain various attributes of a proposal, and elaborate on design elements which may help alleviate the concerns of neighboring residents and property owners. It also enables the applicant to answer questions and address concerns in a real-time, transparent setting.

If a meeting is held, it is necessary to provide at least two weeks written notice (which will, at a minimum, identify the meeting's purpose, date, time, and will include a virtual meeting link) to property owners. City Staff will provide a project meeting notice letter to copy and use. Site plans, building elevations, and similar elements may be included with this notice. Prior to the meeting(s), City staff will provide the applicant with any meeting procedures and requirements. The applicant must furnish a list of all applicant team attendees and speakers, and must provide a suitable PowerPoint presentation for the meeting.

MAILING INFORMATIONAL PACKETS

A second form of project contact is achieved by mailing an informational packet outlining the particulars of the proposed project. The applicant sends a cover letter along with reduced-size copies of the proposed plans and elevations to the property owners. A detailed letter is crucial for this type of contact since the recipient may not be familiar with, or understand, site plans. The letter should attempt to anticipate and address questions that might arise related to the proposed project. This helps reduce anxiety and confusion related to the proposal on the part of the recipient. The cover letter should:

- Indicate the purpose of the letter.
- Describe the development proposal (including location, type of use, building size(s), architectural materials, site layout, amenities and benefits, etc.).

- Identify the development team, contact names, and phone numbers to answer questions (also needs to include the City contact name and phone number).
- Specify the procedures necessary for project approval along with tentative timing.
- Indicate whether the land use proposed is currently permitted on the property.
- Highlight elements incorporated into the design that may help alleviate residents' and neighboring property owners' concerns.

TIMING

Contact with surrounding projects is typically made between the first and second plan set reviews. This gives the applicant an opportunity to respond to the City's initial comments and revise the plan accordingly, prior to conducting the project meeting. In addition, attendees will be able to review the plan with enough detail that any questions they have can be addressed. Design pieces such as landscaping, architecture, site design, buffers and setbacks, and similar elements will be far enough along at this stage to provide realistic and accurate representations of the project. Also, because the project meeting occurs early in the development review process, changes necessitated by suggestions and concerns expressed by attendees can be made by the applicant at a point where alterations are less difficult and costly.

Scheduling of the virtual project meeting must be made 30 days in advance of the meeting date. This 30-day allowance allows City Staff to schedule and organize the appropriate virtual meeting platform in preparation for the meeting, and for the needed mailings to take place.