

*Good Neighbor meetings are NOT required as part of the review process in Iowa City but they are strongly encouraged in most instances. If you state that you will or have participated in the program, **the following steps must be followed by the applicant:***

- **Meeting facilities located as close to the subject property and neighbors as possible.** The Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator can make suggestions and final arrangements in most cases.
- **Good Neighbor meeting notice reviewed by City staff prior to distribution.** The Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator will ensure that it is reviewed/approved and be responsible for sending it on to representatives of impacted neighborhood associations for their distribution.
- **Meeting notice sent by applicant to all property owners within 300' of the subject property by applicant and sent out not less than 7 days prior to Good Neighbor meeting date.**
- **Good Neighbor Meeting occurs no less than 7 days prior to the scheduled board/commission meeting** to enable adequate time to provide input.
- **Good Neighbor meeting attended by a City staff representative if necessary.** Staff will be available as a resource to respond to questions related to process, schedule, and zoning, etc. Staff can be arranged by the Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator.
- **Summary Report for Good Neighbor Meeting completed by applicant and submitted prior to board/commission review.** A fill-in form of the Summary Report is available at www.icgov.org/goodneighbor.



Neighborhood and
Development Services
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Good Neighbor Program

www.icgov.org/goodneighbor

City of Iowa City
Neighborhood and
Development Services

The Office of Neighborhood Outreach is available to assist with the Good Neighbor Program by arranging meeting rooms, providing sample meeting notices, notifying neighborhood association contacts, and other information and advice.

Contact Marcia Bollinger, Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator

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History and Background

Iowa City's Good Neighbor Program is part of an effort to make the development process run more smoothly between property owners and developers who seek zoning and related changes, and the neighborhoods that may be affected by those changes. The Good Neighbor Program is not a requirement, but rather a recommended approach that encourages proactive dialogue between property owners, developers, and neighbors that may help identify and resolve issues before the project is reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission or the Board of Adjustment.

For minor projects, such as a yard setback reduction, the approach may be as simple as knocking on neighbors' doors to discuss the proposed project with them. For a rezoning or subdivision, it may be appropriate to hold a neighborhood meeting or open house to present the project and invite questions and comments from your neighbors.

While the Good Neighbor Program does not guarantee specific outcomes, answering neighbors' questions and hearing their concerns or suggestions may provide the opportunity to developers/applicants to address concerns or objections before the project is reviewed in a public forum. This can minimize controversy and delays when a project is reviewed by the Board of Adjustment, Planning and Zoning Commission, or the City Council.

Helpful Tips for a Good Neighbor Meeting



What information can you provide that neighbors will find useful?

- Background information including a description of your project and the public process it must go through.
- Site plans, elevations, models, aerial photos, drawings, etc. This will help them visualize the changes you wish to make.
- Information or other resources that discuss the zoning or land development process. The Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator can provide you with this information or is available at www.icgov.org/goodneighbor



View it from their perspective: How will neighbors see your project?

- Put yourself in the place of the people who surround your property. Will they view your project as an enhancement or unexpected change?
- How might your project impact traffic or pedestrian safety in the area?
- Does your project enhance or complement existing

neighborhood character or does it contrast with what surrounds it?

- Will your project alter the natural landscape, impact views, etc.?
- Might your project reduce the sense of privacy for a neighboring property owner?



Ways to respond to concerns

- Listen and be respectful—give people the chance to be heard.
- Focus on identifying problems. This meeting is a chance for you to gather input that may be useful to you in getting your project through the review process. The issues that your neighbors raise are often the same issues that may be raised by the Planning and Zoning Commission or the Board of Adjustment.
- Be open to options that could be reasonable or affordable ways to alleviate or address problems.
- Resolving problems at the meeting is not necessary, but it may be helpful to identify areas where there is some flexibility in your plans.
- Know that you won't necessarily be able to please everyone, but that you are providing an opportunity for dialogue. The neighbors will appreciate your effort and the opportunity to share their views.