

**Z**oning is the tool by which local government can control urban form by specifying the building use, size, and placement on a property. A rezoning is a process that changes the zoning of a property or group of properties. The City Council makes land-use and zoning decisions for Iowa City after receiving a recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission.

### ***What happens in the rezoning process?***

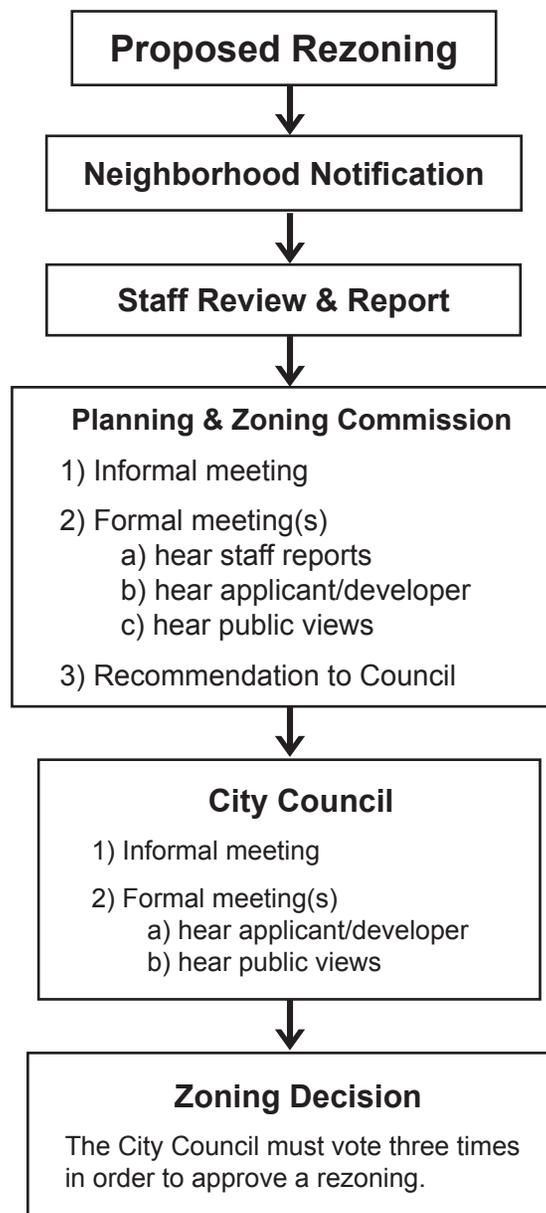
A change in zoning will typically affect the density, intensity, or permitted use of a property. The City's Comprehensive Plan, compatibility with surrounding zones, and adequacy of city infrastructure and services are all factors considered in determining if a rezoning is appropriate.

Public input is important in this process, so with any request for a rezoning, the public is notified by a number of means. When a rezoning application has been submitted, City staff sends notification by letter to all the owners of property located within three hundred (300) feet of the boundaries of the proposed rezoning site. This notice includes information about the request, a City staff contact (name, phone, and email), and the tentative date and location of the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting. A sign is also posted on the property advising the public that a rezoning has been applied for.

### ***Planning and Zoning Commission***

The Planning and Zoning Commission reviews applications and staff evaluation/recommendations for rezoning, street vacations, annexations, and subdivision development; hears opinions from both the general public and property owners affected; and makes recommendations to the City Council. In addition, the Commission makes recommendations on Comprehensive Plan amendments and District Plans. The formal

## ***The Zoning Process***



Planning and Zoning meetings are held on the first and third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in Emma J. Harvat Hall in City Hall.

Work sessions are sometimes held the Monday before the formal Planning and Zoning meetings. The work sessions are a time for Planning and Zoning Commission members to share information and discuss items of business. While the work sessions are open to the public, they are not a time for citizen input. The number of Planning and Zoning meetings where a rezoning is discussed depends upon the complexity of the issues involved.

### ***City Council***

The City Council makes final decisions on applications for rezoning, street vacations, annexations, and subdivision development, and the adoption of planning documents. Before making that decision, however, the Council reviews the recommendation from the Planning and Zoning Commission and hears opinions from both the general public and property owners affected.

The formal City Council meetings are typically held on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Emma J. Harvat Hall in City Hall, 410 East Washington Street.

### ***How can I participate in the process?***

Public input is important in order for the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council to completely understand the issues related to a rezoning request. You can provide comments orally (in person at the formal meetings) or in writing.

Written comments for the Planning and Zoning Commission should be received by the Planning Department no later than Thursday seven days prior to the commission meeting to ensure that they are included in the packet of information. To contact the Planning and Zoning Commission, send an email to [planningzoning@iowa-city.org](mailto:planningzoning@iowa-city.org) or send a letter addressed to the Commission at 410 East Washington Street, Iowa City IA 52240.

Written correspondence for the City Council must be received by the City Clerk's office by the Wednesday prior to the formal meeting in order to be included in the council packet. To contact the City Council, send an email to [council@iowa-city.org](mailto:council@iowa-city.org) or send a letter addressed to the council at 410 East Washington Street, Iowa City IA 52240.

All correspondence submitted after the deadlines listed above will be hand-distributed to the Commission or Council.

### ***Protest of Rezoning***

Under Iowa law, if the owners of 20 percent or more of the area located within 200 feet of the proposed rezoning oppose it, the zone change may only occur with a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote (6 out of the 7 members) by City Council. It is necessary to submit a written protest petition to the City **no later than the closing of the public hearing before the City Council**. Petition forms may be obtained at the Office of the City Clerk, City Hall, at 410 East Washington Street.

Petitions should include:

- Notarized signatures and addresses of the protesting property owners.
- Specific objections to the proposed rezoning may be attached to the petition in a separate letter.

Who can sign the petition?

- Property owners within 200 feet of the subject property (An owner list is available at the Department of Planning and Community Development).
- Other concerned citizens can sign a petition, but their names should be submitted separately.

How is the petition filed?

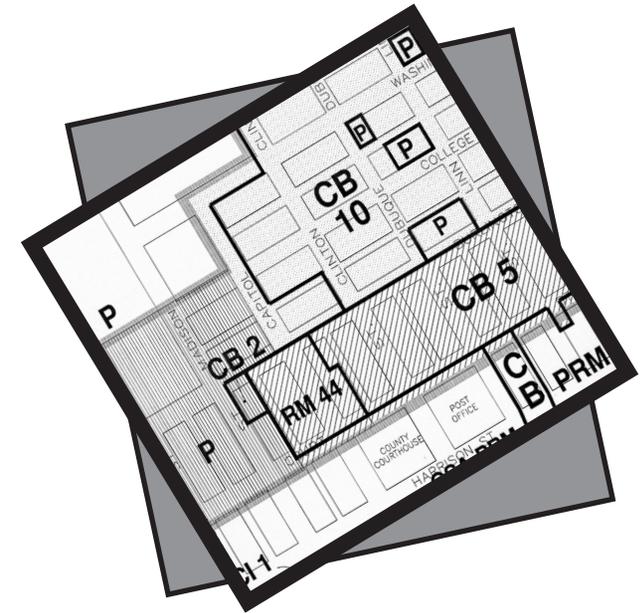
- The petition must be filed with the City Clerk no later than the Wednesday before the public hearing for inclusion in the City Council packet, or the petition may be presented at the hearing itself.

### ***Stay Informed***

You can view agendas of all of the City's Boards and Commissions and City Council at [ICGOV.org](http://ICGOV.org). To receive notification when new agendas or minutes are posted on the website visit [www.icgov.org/subscribe](http://www.icgov.org/subscribe). The agendas will include Staff Reports, Site Plans, etc. Agendas are also available in the City Clerk's Office.

For more information on urban planning visit: [www.icgov.org/urbanplanning](http://www.icgov.org/urbanplanning)

# A Citizen's Guide to the Rezoning Process



## ***Understanding and Participating in the Process***

***City of Iowa City  
Planning & Community Development  
356-5230***

