

**STAFF REPORT**  
**Amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning**  
**and Subdivision Ordinance**  
**Required Neighborhood Meetings**  
**August 3, 2021**



Community  
Development  
Services

**Applicant:** City of Idaho Falls

**Project Manager:**  
Kerry Beutler

- Attachments:**
1. Proposed Amendment Language
  2. Neighborhood Meeting Guidebook.

**Staff Recommendation:** To **recommend** to the Mayor and City Council approval of the amendment language to the Comprehensive Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance.

**History:** The Planning Commission has considered whether or not to require neighborhood meetings over the years but has always elected to strongly suggest a developer hold a neighborhood meeting rather than making it a requirement. Earlier this year staff created a Neighborhood Meeting Guidebook as a resource for developers. The Mayor and City Council have now requested that staff draft the necessary changes to the code to require neighborhood meeting for specific types of projects.

**Staff Comments:** The proposed amendment language would change the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to require a neighborhood meeting, as part of an application for Preliminary Plat, Planned Unit Development, Rezoning or Conditional Use Permit. The Comprehensive Plan directs the city to develop a program to involve neighbors early in the community development process. Neighborhood meetings at the conceptual stage of development are a powerful tool for developers and surrounding neighbors to come together to share visions, discuss concerns, and work toward a better end result. They also create more informed and productive public hearings because the hearing is no longer the discovery meeting for the residents.

The application procedures section of the Zoning Ordinance is modified, adding the requirements for conducting a neighborhood meeting. This Section details the meeting's notice, format, order and scope the developer should follow when conducting a meeting. Because neighborhood meetings would be required the applicant would have to submit proof of holding the neighborhood meeting, who was noticed, summary minutes from the meeting and how they addressed concerns that were raised. These items would be part of their application documents and provided to the Commission and Council for review.

The neighborhood meeting must occur prior to the applicant making application to the city. Applications for Preliminary Plat, Planned Unit Development, Rezoning or Conditional Use Permits will not be deemed complete without submittal of the neighborhood meeting items.

The ordinance would also amend the Preliminary Plat process, within the Subdivision Ordinance, to remove the public hearing requirement at the Planning and Zoning Commission level but would require a neighborhood meeting prior to submitting the preliminary plat application to the city. State Statute does not require a public hearing process with a preliminary plat but does require each governing board to adopt a subdivision ordinance that outlines the application process for subdivision permits.

Continued on next page

The Planning Commission would continue to be the approving body with Preliminary Plats and affected parties would still have the ability to appeal the Planning and Zoning Commission's decision to the City Council. Public hearings, although not required by state law, were originally instituted as part of the preliminary plat process to provide individuals with a way to provide input on development near them. Over the years these hearings have set up false expectations for both the Commission and the public regarding what items can be discussed, what conditions can be placed on a developer, the proper timing of those conditions and the ability for the Commission to completely deny an application based solely on the City's Comprehensive Plan. During preliminary plat hearings the public often testifies regarding things that are outside of the Commission's scope or influence. These hearings have worked to create more frustration on everyone's part rather than provide the opportunity for discussion that they were intended for.

By eliminating the hearing requirement but instituting a neighborhood meeting requirement it removes the formality and limitations of the current process. Developers will be required to engage with neighbors earlier in the process where adjustments can be made while they're still developing their initial layouts. Developers and neighbors are also more free to discuss development plans and concerns openly with each other. Eliminating the hearing at this stage in the development process also clarifies the appropriate time for neighbors to voice any concerns regarding potential uses, setbacks, lot sizes, buffering requirements, etc. The correct time for neighbors to voice support or opposition for these items is during the zoning process, i.e., annexation and initial zoning, rezone requests and during Comprehensive Plan amendments. Once a property has been zoned the loses many of its ability to influence the overall development of the property.

The purpose of the preliminary plat, as defined by the Subdivision Ordinance, is to review the proposed lot layout of the subdivision, including utilities, lots and blocks, streets and proposed zoning when dealing with an unannexed parcel. These items can all still be reviewed, neighborhood influenced, and effectively addressed without the need for a hearing.

**ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO, A MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO; AMENDING TITLE 11 OF THE IDAHO FALLS CITY CODE TO INCLUDE A NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING AS A REQUIRED PART OF AN APPLICATION FOR PRELIMINARY PLAT, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, REZONING, OR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT; CHANGING A PRELIMINARY PLAT HEARING TO A MEETING, CORRECTING SMALL ERRORS IN THE SUBDIVISION CODE AND PROVIDING SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION, PUBLICATION BY SUMMARY, AND ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Idaho Falls strongly believes in citizen participation and collaboration in City planning and development; and

WHEREAS, the 2013 Idaho Falls Comprehensive Plan states the City should develop a program to involve neighbors early in the community development process; and

WHEREAS, neighborhood meetings at the conceptual stage of development are a powerful tool for developers and surrounding neighbors to come together to share visions, discuss concerns, and work toward a better end result; and

WHEREAS, neighborhood meetings also create more informed and productive public hearings because the hearing is no longer the discovery meeting for the residents; and

WHEREAS, the neighborhood meeting gives the developer an opportunity to share their development concept with the community and allows neighbors to ask questions and to discuss concerns related to the development proposal; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the neighborhood meeting is to facilitate an open dialog between the developer and the surrounding neighborhood during the early stages of the development process and to give the developer an opportunity to answer questions and to resolve concerns prior to the Planning Commission public meeting; and

WHEREAS, requiring a neighborhood meeting prior to Planning and Zoning approval of an application for a preliminary plat, planned unit development, rezoning, or conditional use permit should result in an efficient public hearing; and

WHEREAS, because the Neighborhood Meeting is now part of the preliminary plat application process, the hearing of the Planning and Zoning Commission will now be a meeting.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO, AS FOLLOWS:

**SECTION 1.** Title 10, Chapter 1, Section 8 of the City of Idaho Falls Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

10-1-8: PRELIMINARY PLAT APPROVAL PROCESS:

...

(B) Submittal and City Staff Review Process:

...

(2) Application and Contents of Preliminary Plats. The application and plat shall accurately and fairly describe and depict all improvements, structures, boundary lines, lot configurations, area to be developed, existing and proposed land use and zoning, grades, land contour, recreational and public use area, utilities, water works, topography, streets, alleys, easements, and shall contain such other information as may be necessary to determine if the proposed subdivision complies with the requirements of this Chapter. Proof of compliance with the Neighborhood Meeting requirements of the Zoning Code shall be submitted as part of a complete application. The plat shall be drawn in accordance with generally accepted engineering standards and practices and shall be drawn in such a manner as will assure legibility, clarity, reproducibility, accuracy, uniformity, and neatness of the plat.

...

(6) Preliminary Plat Public ~~Hearing~~Meeting.

a. After the review of City staff comments and recommendations have been addressed and resubmitted to the Community Development Services Department, a public ~~hearing-meeting~~ at a regularly scheduled meeting with the Planning and Zoning Commission shall be scheduled to consider the preliminary plat. Notice of the preliminary plat ~~hearing-meeting~~ shall be pursuant to requirements of the Idaho Local Land Use Planning Act. Within sixty (60) days following the date of the Commission meeting at which the plat and application were first submitted, the Commission shall complete its review and shall approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove of the preliminary plat and application, unless an extension of time is agreed to by the Commission and the developer.

(C) Planning and Zoning Commission Review.

(1) When acting on a preliminary plat application, the Planning and Zoning Commission shall review the preliminary plat to determine that the preliminary plat is consistent with the principles contained within the Comprehensive Plan and is in

compliance with this Chapter and all applicable Federal, State, or local laws. In conducting such reviews, the Commission may recess such ~~hearing-meeting~~ for good cause and may solicit information, data, studies, or comments necessary to determine such compliance. In the event the Commission conditionally approves the preliminary plat, it shall advise the developer in writing of the conditions under which the approval is granted, and upon developer's compliance with such conditions and the Director's written certification thereof, the preliminary plat shall be deemed approved. If approval of the plat is denied, the Commission shall advise the developer, in writing, of the reasons for denial of the preliminary plat application.

...

(D) Appeal of Preliminary Plat. Any person aggrieved by the Planning and Zoning Commission decision on the preliminary plat may appeal the Planning and Zoning Commission's decision. Such appeal shall be submitted with the appeal fee to the Community Development Services Department within fourteen (14) days from the Planning and Zoning Commission's written decision and shall list the specific Code provisions or other reasons that the appellant believes comprise error. The appeal is on the record that was produced in the preliminary plat process. The appeal shall be scheduled for consideration at a Council meeting and shall occur within sixty (60) days following receipt of the appeal. Upon considering the preliminary plat appeal, the Council may uphold the appeal, deny the appeal, or remand the appeal to the Planning and Zoning Commission for further action; ~~including direction to reopen the public hearing to receive further information.~~

...

**SECTION 2.** Title 11, Chapter 6, Section 2 of the City of Idaho Falls Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

...

**11-6-2: DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES.**

...

(E) Summary of Actions/Decisions. Table 11-6-1 Summary of Actions/Decisions that follows is a list of the actions/decisions the City shall take in the administration of this ~~code~~Code, the decision body responsible and the process and findings under which the action shall be granted.

...

**SECTION 3.** Title 11, Chapter 6, Section 3 of the City of Idaho Falls Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

...

11-6-3: APPLICATION PROCEDURES.

The purpose of this Section is to outline the application procedures for a permit or decision under provisions of this Code.

(A) Application Requirements.

...

(2) All requests for permits and decisions in accordance with this Code shall submit a complete application to the Zoning Administrator on forms approved and provided by the ~~city~~City.

...

(7) No application for a preliminary plat, Planned Unit Development, rezoning, or Conditional Use Permit shall be considered complete until all materials required for compliance with the Neighborhood Meeting in this Code are received by the City.

(~~B~~) Action on the Application. After an application has been determined to be complete, an action or decision shall occur as follows:

(1) For an administrative decision identified as “ADM” on Table 11-6-1 Summary of Actions/Decisions, the Zoning Administrator shall act upon the application within thirty (30) days.

(2) For a permit request identified as “P” on Table 11-6-1 Summary of Actions/Decisions, the decision-making authority shall act upon the application within sixty (60) days.

(3) For an application requiring a public hearing identified as on Table 11-6-1 Summary of Actions/Decisions, the initial hearing shall be held no later than sixty (60) days after the date of the determination of completeness, unless waived by the applicant.

(~~C~~) Public Hearing Procedures. All applications subject to a public hearing as identified on Table 11-6-1 Summary of Actions/Decisions, shall follow the public hearing requirements consistent with Idaho Code.

(~~D~~) Appeal Procedures for Decisions of the Zoning Administrator.

...

(~~E~~) Expiration of Action on Applications. All application approvals shall expire one (1) calendar year from the date of approval unless:

...

(GF) Resubmittal.

...

(HG) Certificate of Occupancy. No certificate of occupancy shall be issued for any approved application until the development has been inspected and determined to be in compliance with all terms and conditions of the permit, including but not limited to, proper installation of all required improvements.

(HI) Application Procedures for a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

...

(2) Prior to the filing of an application for a PUD permit and following a Neighborhood Meeting required by this Code, the applicant shall request, and the Zoning Administrator shall schedule, a pre-application conference with the Planning Division staff and other City staff, as deemed necessary.

...

**SECTION 4.** Title 11, Chapter 6, Section 4 of the City of Idaho Falls Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

11-6-4: DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES.

...

(E) Types of Hearings.

...

(2) Two Meeting ~~Quasi~~Quasi-Judicial Hearings.

(a) General. Two Meeting Quasi-Judicial Hearings shall be required when the permit or regulatory change sought requires a sequence of two (2) or more public hearings before final action may be taken on the request. The initial public hearing shall be conducted by the Planning and Zoning Commission whose task is to prepare a recommendation for submittal to the Council. Following receipt of the recommendation from the advisory board, a second public hearing must be scheduled before the Council before a decision on the request may be rendered. Like those hearings classified as Single Meeting Quasi-Judicial Hearings the rights of individuals are at stake and the protection of those rights is a prime purpose of the required procedure. Like a Single Meeting Quasi-Judicial Hearings procedure, the resulting decision from a Two Meeting Quasi-Judicial Hearing procedure is final unless appealed to a subsequent decision-making tribunal. Unlike the Single Meeting Quasi-Judicial Hearings procedure, care must be taken in the steps between the initial and second hearing to protect the interests of all parties involved. Two Meeting Quasi-Judicial Hearings are used in request for changes in zoning district boundaries, changes to the Comprehensive Plan when sought in conjunction with a request for a change in zoning district boundaries, Planned Unit Developments.

...

**SECTION 5.** Title 11, Chapter 6, Section 8 of the City of Idaho Falls Code is hereby added to read as follows:

11-6-8: THE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

A. Purpose. The purpose of the Neighborhood Meeting is to allow the developer to present the proposal to neighbors and other members of the public prior to the formal public hearing so that the parties can discuss and consider neighborhood impacts, compatibility, public safety, mitigation of impacts, design and construction elements, traffic, and the like. It gives the developer the opportunity to explain how the proposed development is consistent with the principles in the Comprehensive and complies with this Code. A further purpose is to allow developers to have related applications considered concurrently by the hearing bodies.

B. When Required.

(1) A Neighborhood Meeting shall be required for each of the land use matters below. Where the applicant desires to file more than one (1) application involving the same project and/or property and desires all related applications to be considered within the same hearing, only one (1) Neighborhood Meeting shall be necessary, as long as all relevant applications are discussed in such Neighborhood Meeting.

(2) A Neighborhood Meeting shall be required as a prerequisite to filing of an application with the City for the following land use matters:

(a) Preliminary Plat;

(b) Planned Unit Development;

(c) Rezoning;

(d) Conditional Use Permit; or

(e) Any combination of the foregoing.

C. Notice of Meeting.

(1) Notice of the Neighborhood Meeting shall be given to all property owners of record within three hundred feet (300') of the subject property. Such notice shall be provided at least fourteen (14) days before the first Neighborhood Meeting regarding the subject property. Notice of the Neighborhood Meeting shall be made by mail to the current or last known address of the property owners of record. Property owners of record shall be determined by review of records in the possession of Bonneville County. Alternatively, the City may provide a list of property owners to the applicant upon receipt by the City of the proper request form and the appropriate fee.

(2) Notice shall include a vicinity map, the general nature of the proposal, the size of the land, the number of lots/dwelling units, the date, time and location of the meeting, and the name, address, telephone number and email address of a contact person. The Neighborhood Meeting shall be set at a date, time, and place reasonably calculated to facilitate the attendance of the property owners who are required to receive notice. Evening meetings during the work week are encouraged.

D. Format.

(1) General. The applicant or applicant's representative shall conduct the Neighborhood Meeting according to orderly procedures. The person conducting should provide the participants in the Neighborhood Meeting a fair chance to be heard. The person conducting will have the authority to recognize participants in the Meeting and to maintain order in the conduct of the Neighborhood Meeting. Formal rules of evidence will not apply during the Neighborhood Meeting, but the person conducting may limit the duration of comments or presentation where necessary to give the broadest number of participants the opportunity to express their views.

(2) Order. The Neighborhood Meeting shall generally be conducted in the following order; however, the Meeting should not be so formal that it precludes or unduly limits participation by those in attendance nor should it be so unruly that information gathering and exchange cannot occur:

(a) Opening of the Meeting and a call to order;

(b) Introduction of the proposal/project by the applicant and/or the applicant's representatives;

(c) Public comments in support of the application;

(d) Public comments in opposition of the application;

(e) Questions and/or other public testimony;

(f) A response of the applicant (if desired by applicant);

(g) Any related business; and

(h) Close of the Neighborhood Meeting.

(3) Other. Conduct by all participating in the Neighborhood Meeting should be respectful, should avoid personal attack, and should be directed toward gathering and exchanging information regarding the proposal(s).

E. Scope. Each Neighborhood Meeting shall be conducted so that those in attendance can discuss the project/proposal which is the subject of the application(s) to be filed. Where more than one (1) application is to be considered in the same public hearing, the Meeting shall include discussion of all related matters. For example, where there is to be a submittal

for a rezoning along with a preliminary plat, both shall be thoroughly discussed in the Neighborhood Meeting.

F. Submission of Neighborhood Meeting Materials to City.

(1) Time to submit materials. Neighborhood Meeting materials required to be submitted pursuant to this Code shall be submitted with the application(s) and relevant fee(s).

(2) Materials to be submitted. The following shall be submitted to the City with the original filing of the land use application(s) and shall constitute part of such land use application(s):

(a) Time, date and location of the Neighborhood Meeting;

(b) Names and addresses of property owners to whom notice was sent;

(c) Names and addresses of all attendees;

(d) Summary of comments, suggestions and discussion;

(e) Applicant's response to comments, suggestions and discussion, including any modifications made or intended to be made to the project proposal/application as a result of the Neighborhood Meeting comments; and

(f) Materials utilized or submitted (including plans, proposals, designs, power point presentations, maps, handouts, petitions, letters, studies, etc.) shall be submitted with the application for the related project(s). The summary of comments, suggestions and discussion should be extensive enough to allow the reader to understand what occurred.

A verbatim transcript of the Neighborhood Meeting is not required nor is a video and/or audio tape (unless the applicant wishes to submit it).

G. Notice of Hearing. Following receipt by City staff of the required submittals with the application and fee(s), notice of a public hearing on the related application(s) shall be scheduled before the Planning and Zoning Commission. Notice of such public hearing shall take place not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the required public hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission pursuant to this Code.

**SECTION 6.** Title 11, Chapter 7, Section 1 of the City of Idaho Falls Code is hereby amended as follows:

11-7-1 DEFINITIONS

...

Neighborhood Meeting: A meeting required to be held and conducted by an applicant for certain types of proposed land use changes in order to provide an opportunity for dialogue between the applicant and the public, especially those who live close to the property that is the subject of the

application. The Meeting must be held in advance of any formal quasi-judicial consideration of the application pursuant to the Local Land Use Planning Act.

**SECTION 7.** Savings and Severability Clause. The provisions and parts of this Ordinance are intended to be severable. If any section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance should be held to be invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the validity or constitutionality of any other section, sentence, clause, or phrase of this Ordinance.

**SECTION 8.** Codification Clause. The City Clerk is instructed to immediately forward this Ordinance to the codifier of the official municipal code for proper revision of the Code.

**SECTION 9.** Publication. This Ordinance, or a summary thereof in compliance with Idaho Code, shall be published once in the official newspaper of the City, and shall take effect immediately upon its passage, approval, and publication.

**SECTION 10.** Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage, approval and publication.

PASSED by the City Council and APPROVED by the Mayor of the City of Idaho Falls, Idaho, this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

ATTEST:

CITY OF IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO

\_\_\_\_\_  
KATHY HAMPTON, CITY CLERK

\_\_\_\_\_  
REBECCA L. NOAH CASPER, Ph.D.,  
MAYOR

(SEAL)

STATE OF IDAHO                    )  
  ) ss:  
County of Bonneville            )

I, KATHY HAMPTON, CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO, DO  
HEREBY CERTIFY:

That the above and foregoing is a full, true and correct copy of the Ordinance  
entitled, “AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO, A  
MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF THE STATE OF IDAHO; AMENDING  
TITLE 11 OF THE IDAHO FALLS CITY CODE TO INCLUDE A  
NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING AS A REQUIRED PART OF AN APPLICATION  
FOR PRELIMINARY PLAT, PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, REZONING,  
OR CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT; CHANGING A PRELIMINARY PLAT  
HEARING TO A MEETING, CORRECTING SMALL ERRORS IN THE  
SUBDIVISION CODE AND PROVIDING SEVERABILITY, CODIFICATION,  
PUBLICATION BY SUMMARY, AND ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE DATE.”

(SEAL)

\_\_\_\_\_  
KATHY HAMPTON, CITY CLERK

# Neighborhood Meeting Best Practices

Idaho Falls strongly believes in citizen participation and collaboration in City planning and development. The 2013 Idaho Falls Comprehensive Plan states the City should develop a program to involve neighbors early in the community development process. Neighborhood meetings at the conceptual stage of development are a powerful tool for developers and surrounding neighbors to come together to share visions, discuss concerns, and work toward a better end result. They also create more informed and productive public hearings because the hearing is no longer the discovery meeting for the residents. To assist in creating successful neighborhood meetings, Idaho Falls has developed this guidebook.

**\*Note:** This guidebook has been modified to include recommendations for hosting meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. Specific recommendations for safe meetings are included in section X. However, as pandemic guidelines, orders, and rules change, users of this manual should always make sure to check with the local health district for the most current recommendations for gatherings.

## 1) Meeting Purpose

The neighborhood meeting gives the developer an opportunity to share their development concept with the community and allows neighbors to ask questions and to discuss concerns related to the development proposal. The goal of the neighborhood meeting is to facilitate an open dialog between the developer and the surrounding neighborhood during the early stages of the development process and to give the developer an opportunity to answer questions and to resolve concerns prior to the Planning Commission public meeting.

Neighborhood meetings are recommended for all projects, but especially for, preliminary plats, planned unit development (PUD) concept development plans, and conditional use permits. Neighborhood meetings are also recommended for rezoning applications, but taking special care to let neighbors know that the zone allows for many things, including what the

developer is proposing. Neighborhood meetings may also be beneficial for other types of developments that have impacts on a surrounding area.

Developers are given the opportunity to explain how the proposed development:

- Is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan
- Complies with City code
- Will handle typical concerns such as traffic flow
- Will be compatible with surrounding neighborhood

## 2) Scheduling and Advertising the Neighborhood Meeting

- The developer should meet with City staff to discuss neighborhood meeting plans, set up, and logistics.
- Set a date, time, and location. For virtual meetings, please see recommendations in section X
- Invite the neighborhood
  - Two weeks prior to the meeting an invitation should be sent to residents and property owners in the neighborhood along with information regarding the developer's proposal.
  - The meeting notice should be mailed or delivered to all owners or occupants within three hundred feet (300') of the development project boundary line. Notice should also be given to City staff. City staff can provide mailing names and addresses for properties within area to be given notice.
  - The meeting should generally be held sometime during a normal work week, Monday through Thursday (excluding Holidays) between 6:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
  - The developer may also publish the notice in media outlets if they wish.

### 3) Prepare for the Meeting

The developer is the host of the meeting. As the host, the meeting is set-up and facilitated by the developer. The meeting should allow for brief presentations about the project proposed by the developer, who should initially describe the development and answer questions. The following are also recommended to the developer:

- Create a “quick facts” sheet regarding the project.
- Prepare a 10-15-minute presentation which includes site plans or concept drawings. Remember, this is the best opportunity for the developer to convey his/her excitement and vision about the project to the surrounding neighbors.
- Have business cards to hand out
- Prepare and display sign-up sheet for attendees.
- Prepare sheets for attendees to provide written comments.

### 4) Meeting Day

Developer should arrive no less than fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled start time. If the developer needs to set up equipment, they should plan their time accordingly. If you are using audio/visual equipment, be sure to set up and practice ahead of time so there won't be any delays at the meeting. This is especially true for virtual meetings.

Neighborhood meetings are facilitated by the developer and structured in a “question and answer” format in order to capture dialogue and to record public input.

- Call to Order
  - The developer will call the meeting to order, make introductions, and thank everyone for coming.
  - Introduce some basic civility requirements and ask that comments be directed and focused around the project, not individuals in the room.
  - The developer will review the meeting agenda, purpose of meeting, development review, and provide any general neighborhood meeting “ground rules”.

- The developer will send around the sign-up sheet. Sign-up sheets are extremely valuable to document who attended and to help keep interested parties informed throughout the development process.
- Presentation of the development. Illustrations of the development concept are extremely helpful and valuable to the attendees.
- Question and answer period. Generally, it is best to limit the question and answer time. Approximately 30 minutes is recommended.
- The developer will take meeting notes and send the meeting notes to City staff and anyone who signs in at the meeting.
- Wrap up
  - The developer will end the question and answer period, thank attendees for their comments and remind them to put any additional ideas on the written comment sheets, explain the next steps in the development process, and adjourn the meeting.

## 5) After the Meeting

The developer should document information and issues gathered from the meeting by preparing a summary report to include citizen questions, concerns, input, issues and ideas. The meeting summary report should also include copies of letters or petitions received from residents, property owners, and attendees, minutes from the meeting, and the sign-up sheet.

Developers should consider the information exchanged at the neighborhood meeting and modify the development application, if in the developer's opinion it will improve the project.

Once the summary report is submitted to City staff by the developer, the developer may then turn in the formal application to the City of Idaho Falls.

## 6) Virtual Meeting Recommendations

Virtual meetings may be a preferable or required option when significant events such as the COVID-19 pandemic prevent large groups of people from gathering together. They are also a useful tool even outside of such events and provide additional opportunity for those who may not be able to attend the meeting physically. However, because technological difficulties and unfamiliarity may exclude some residents from virtual meetings, in-person options are generally preferable when possible. Below are recommendations specifically for virtual meetings:

- When creating the meeting, consider that most connection links are long and difficult to type and that you may not have email addresses of potential invitees. If you are sending letters with log-in information consider one or both of the following:
  - Rather than including the link to the meeting, you can provide your email address and let people know they can contact you for the link.
  - You can also use a tinyurl service to reduce the link to a smaller, more typeable link that you can insert into your letter.
  - A YouTube video with an open comments section or short survey may also be valuable.
- Consider recording the meeting and sending the link to the recording to residents who may not have been able to attend.
- If you are unfamiliar with virtual meetings, practice ahead of time. Know what tools are available to you and how to use them. In particular, know how to share your screen with others.
- Consider having someone on your team help you run the meeting, including managing technical and audio issues and manage the chat features.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **When can a neighborhood meeting be scheduled?**

Any time after the review of the project concept with City staff.

### **Who sends out the notification letters?**

The developer.

### **How long is a neighborhood meeting?**

Typically, neighborhood meetings are one to one-and-a-half (1-1.5) hours.

### **Are there refreshments at the meeting?**

The developer may provide refreshments. Refreshments are not required but are encouraged.

### **What happens after the neighborhood meeting?**

Although the developer is not required to make any or all of the changes suggested at the neighborhood meeting, the developer should be ready to address what was expressed at the neighborhood meeting when the project application is formally submitted. If changes were made as a result of the meeting, those should be pointed out to City staff. If changes were not made, the developer should be prepared to explain why not.

### **Where will the meeting be held?**

It is recommended that the neighborhood meeting to be held at a neutral location near where the project is to take place.

# Sample Notice and Sign-up Sheet

## Neighborhood Meeting

[Date]

Dear Property Owner or Resident:

This letter is being sent to you to let you know about a development proposal, [Project Name], in your area and to invite you to an informational meeting where the developer will present (his/her) development concept. You can learn more about the proposed project and can ask questions about it.

[Project Name] is a project for [use and/or purpose] at [property address]. The property is zoned [zoning district] and is [# of acres] acres in size. The property presently contains [description of current property].

The proposed project is [description of project]. We welcome and encourage your participation. Your input is an important part of the City's development review process. Please join us for a neighborhood meeting to discuss the proposal on [date and time]. The meeting will be held at [meeting location]. The meeting is an opportunity for you to provide input on the project and to have your questions answered directly by the applicant.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, but would like to provide input or ask questions, please contact [contact name] at [phone number] or [email address]. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Sincerely,

[Name and title]

