FROM THE CITY OF LEXINGTON'S
DIVISION OF PLANNING...

06.11.2020

The Public Engagement TOOLKIT

Tools for bringing developers & residents together to plan better communities.

imagine LEXINGTON

LEXINGTON Planning

This document was created and distributed by the City of Lexington's Division of Planning. With input from community advisors and information from outside research, this document was designed and composed in its entirety by the City of Lexington's Division of Planning staff.

Important Dates for Publication:
Final Advisory Group Meeting - February 5th, 2020
Initial Publication - February 20th, 2020
Revised Publication* - May 21st, 2020
Resolution Passed - June 11th, 2020

*An addendum to the original document was made to provide additional guidance relating to digital public engagement in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Illustrations used throughout the document are adapted from work by artist Andrew Rybalko.

Welcome to the Public Engagement Toolkit (PET)!

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00. INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

Lexington is growing. To accommodate this growth, development in Lexington will continue to take the form of infill and redevelopment in and around neighborhoods throughout the Urban Service Area. These projects require communication to create results that enhance existing places. Our 2018 Comprehensive Plan, Imagine Lexington, encourages anyone seeking a zone change to establish this communication through “meaningful engagement” with stakeholders early and often in the process. In the fall of 2019, the Division of Planning formed an advisory panel to help define this “meaningful engagement” and develop the Public Engagement Toolkit.

This toolkit is in response to input heard from both developers and neighborhood interests following the adoption of Imagine Lexington. Throughout the five-month effort by the advisory panel, a variety of participants with both neighborhood and development backgrounds worked to explore what is and isn’t working in the development process – looking for ways to build a more productive conversation. The goal is to offer developers guidance and tips for success, while simultaneously empowering Lexington residents to understand the development review process, know where to find information about proposed developments, and recognize appropriate stages in the process to provide input, giving them the tools they need

PET Project Timeline

1 Oct 6, 2019
- Review Imagine Lexington & outline the intent of the PET Project
- Introduce advisory group members

2 Oct 23, 2019
- Lead developer & neighborhood-interest breakout groups

3 Oct 30, 2019
- Report focus group findings

4 Nov 13, 2019
- Gather initial feedback on parts of the toolkit

5 Dec 11, 2019
- Revise toolkit components
- Determine what’s missing

6 Jan 15, 2020
- Overview of draft toolkit

7 Feb 5
- Overv toolki
- Prepa Sessio

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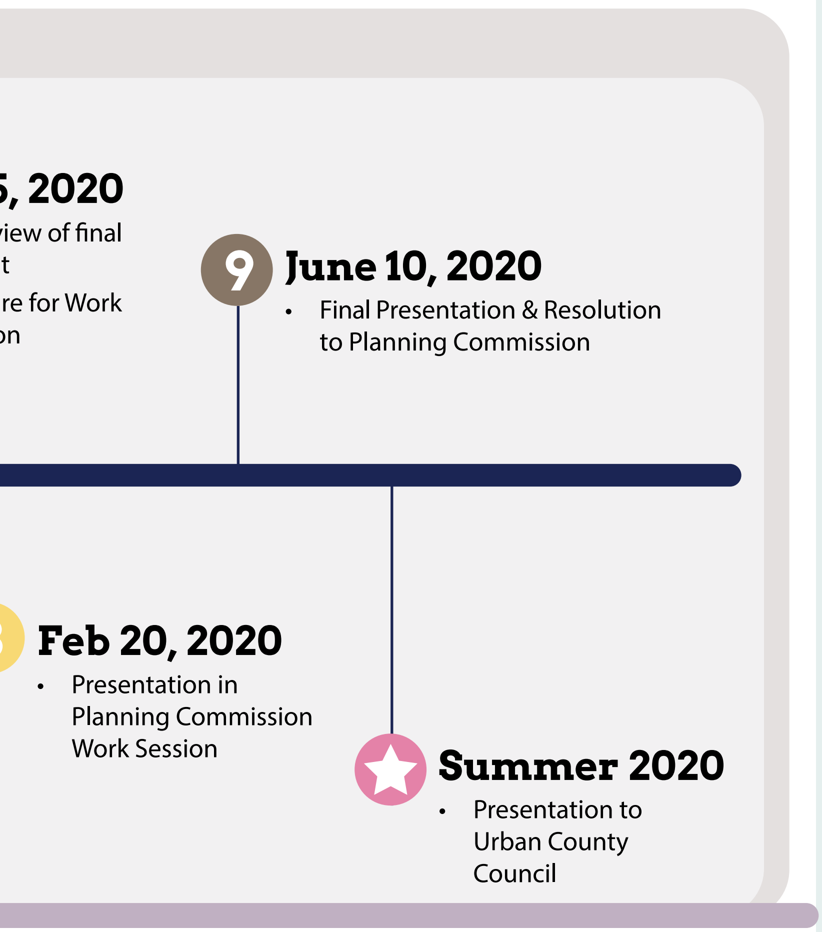
to effectively make their voices heard. The goal is to move the needle from passive methods of communication in which the public has to approach the City for information about a project, to a more active method where developers are reaching out directly to stakeholders.

The Public Engagement Toolkit will become a tool for everyone, and an integral piece of the Development Handbook, set for release in the summer of 2020. The Development Handbook will serve as an update to the previously titled Developer's Handbook and will be an entire revamp aimed at making the development process more accessible to all parties.



Special thanks to our PET Project Advisors -

who represent a broad range of interests in & contributions to the Lexington community

Dennis Anderson
Anderson Communities

Clay Angelucci
Block + Lot Real Estate

Russ Barclay
Lexington Community Land Trust

Nathan Billings
Billings Law Firm

Peter Carew
My Old Kentucky Home Repair

Kerry Churchill
Nurse Graduate Student

Ginny Daley
Burley American Neighborhood Resident

Jo Gawthrop
Distillery Heights

Johan Graham
AU Associates

Blake Hall
Kenwick Neighborhood Association

Andy Haymaker
Haymaker/Bean Commercial Real Estate

Peggy Henson
Former Councilmember, Cardinal Valley Resident

Ed Holmes
EHI Consultants

Shayla Lynch
Lexington Fair Housing Council/ Ampersand

Kris Nonn
NoLi CDC

Amy Preece
Lexington Habitat for Humanity

Mike Scanlon
The Zenith Company, Former Vice Mayor

Liz Sheehan
University of Kentucky

Richard Young
Civic Lex

The Seven Core Principles for Public Engagement

Careful Planning & Preparation
Ensure that engagement serves both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of the participants through adequate and inclusive planning.

While there are no hard and fast rules for optimal public engagement, a project team should ensure that they are meeting this checklist to the best of their abilities!

Inclusion & Demographic Diversity
Equitably incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, & information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes.

Collaboration & Shared Purpose
Support and encourage participants, government bodies, community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good.

Openness & Learning
Help all involved listen to each other, explore new ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, learn, and apply information in ways that generate viable options. Evaluate public engagement activities for effectiveness.

Transparency & Trust
Be clear and open about the process, and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed.

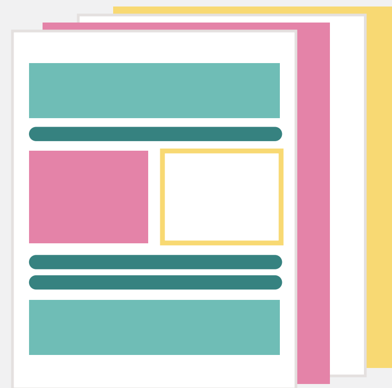
Impact & Action
Ensure each opportunity for engagement has real potential to make a difference, and that participants are aware of that potential.

Sustained Engagement & Participatory Culture
Promote a culture of participation with stakeholders that support ongoing quality public engagement.

Material adapted from a publication distributed by the National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation
http://ncdd.org/rc/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/PEPfinal-expanded.pdf

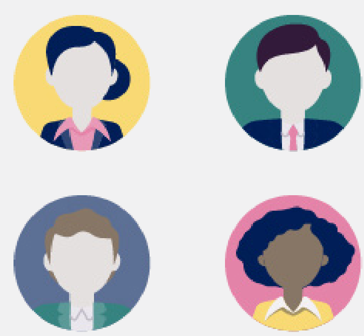
Things to note as you move through the toolkit -

Specific implementation tasks derived from this toolkit are called “Action Items” and are found throughout. This is a to-do list of items for Planning staff to implement which stretch beyond either the length or scope of this toolkit.



There are various sample forms and templates throughout the document. These documents will be made accessible independently of the toolkit on the Division of Planning’s website.

While we aim to use plain language, in some instances words and phrases specific to a particular activity are needed. This “jargon” that may be unfamiliar is defined in a nearby pink box for easy reference.



There are many characters throughout the toolkit to help guide you through concepts along the way. You might even recognize a few friendly faces from your local Planning staff!

What is an appropriate level of public engagement?

Public engagement should be individualized for each project. Some projects may only warrant a single meeting or form of outreach, while others may be best served through several forms of engagement. It is for the project team to make a judgment call on how complex a project may be since they will be asked by the Planning Commission what, if any, public engagement was pursued prior to and during the application process when it comes time for them to hear their case.

A few things to consider when attempting to determine the appropriate level of engagement:

- How much potential influence on the project are you willing to provide the public?
- How much influence is the community expecting to have, and what are the potential consequences if the engagement plan under-performs?

Engagement can range from simply informing people about the project to allowing the public to

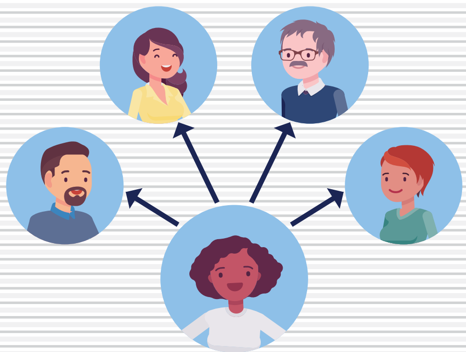
make decisions. The [International Association of Public Participation] (IAP[2]) created a spectrum to illustrate the full range of participant involvement options, which is presented on the following page.

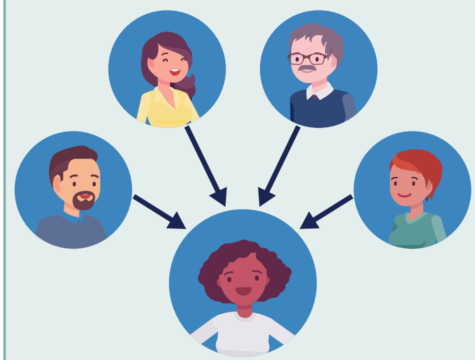
Though there is a rich variety of methods to use in consensus-building efforts around a project or meeting, it is important to recognize that **there is no one solution!**

The more complex the issue, the less likely there is to be a single conclusion that pleases everyone. Reaching an agreement, or consensus as it were, among the majority may be possible with a conscious and strategic approach to engagement.

Consensus: noun (kən-ˈsen(t)-səs) -
decision-making that seeks widespread agreement among group members. General agreement among the members of a given group or community, each of which exercises some discretion in decision-making and follow-up action.

Spectrum of Public Par

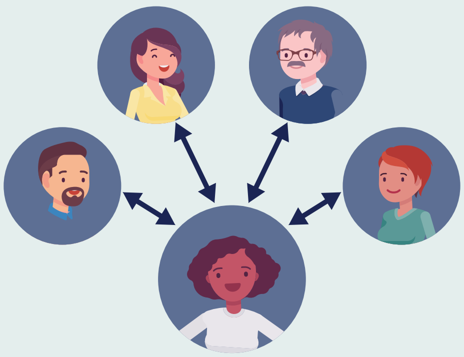
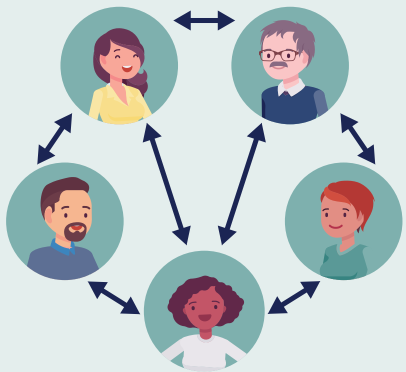




	Inform	Consult
Public Participation Goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions
Desired Outcome	Keep the public informed.	Keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.
Relationship to the Planning & Zoning Process	The Inform level of public participation does not actually provide the opportunity for public participation, but rather provides the public with the information they need to understand the agency decision-making process. The Division of Planning's current process already accomplished the "Inform" part of the Spectrum through their rezoning notification process outlined by state and local regulations.	

rticipation

The International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) created a spectrum to illustrate the full range of participant involvement options.

Involve	Collaborate	Empower
		
To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision- making in the hands of the public
Work with the public to ensure that their concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	Look to the public for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate their advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	The public's idea will be implemented.
		The Planning and rezoning process deals with private property and all of its associated rights, and because of that **Empower has limited applications for the purposes of this toolkit.**

The optimal form of engagement is more likely to fall somewhere between **"Consult"** and **"Collaborate"** to foster an open dialogue and a sense of buy-in from the community.

Use of a Facilitator

Use of an unbiased third party facilitator at meetings convening the developer and the community could help because:

1. Facilitators set and enforce ground rules.
2. Facilitators allow everyone space to speak. If someone is dominating the conversation they get others involved.
3. Skilled facilitators have the ability to look beneath emotional responses and bring to light the underlying interest, need, or concern.
4. Facilitators must maintain neutrality at all times.
5. Facilitators have an outside perspective, which should be used to see who ISN'T speaking and what's NOT being said. While looking for the gaps in the conversation?

Distilled from the [City of Fort Collins Public Engagement Guide](#).

If using a facilitator, an agenda should be created beforehand and shared prior to the meeting. The expectations should also be set prior to the meeting and communicated at the outset (or earlier if possible through notification). Once at the meeting the facilitator runs the show and the developer shouldn't attempt to intervene, but be there to respond to questions. Facilitation can be used at many scales, from small focus groups to large public meetings, and at any point of engagement.

Consideration: It is recommended that the use of a facilitator be paired with a member of Planning staff to answer any questions that may arise, particularly as it relates to process or regulations.

Resources: Qualified facilitators can be found through the Facilitation Center at EKU (*https://facilitation.eku.edu/facilitation-services*).

Facilitator: noun (fa·cil·i·ta·tor \fə-'si-lə-tā-tər\) -
one who helps to bring about an outcome (as learning, productivity, or communication) by providing indirect or unobtrusive assistance, guidance, or supervision.

The Pros & Cons of Stakeholder Groups

Everyone is a stakeholder

Anyone with an interest in a particular project should be considered a stakeholder. Selecting just a few individuals to represent a large and diverse number of interests may skew the community's voice and concerns. Early in the development process (at the "Consult" level of the Spectrum) a large group setting works well to gather as much feedback from as many voices as possible.

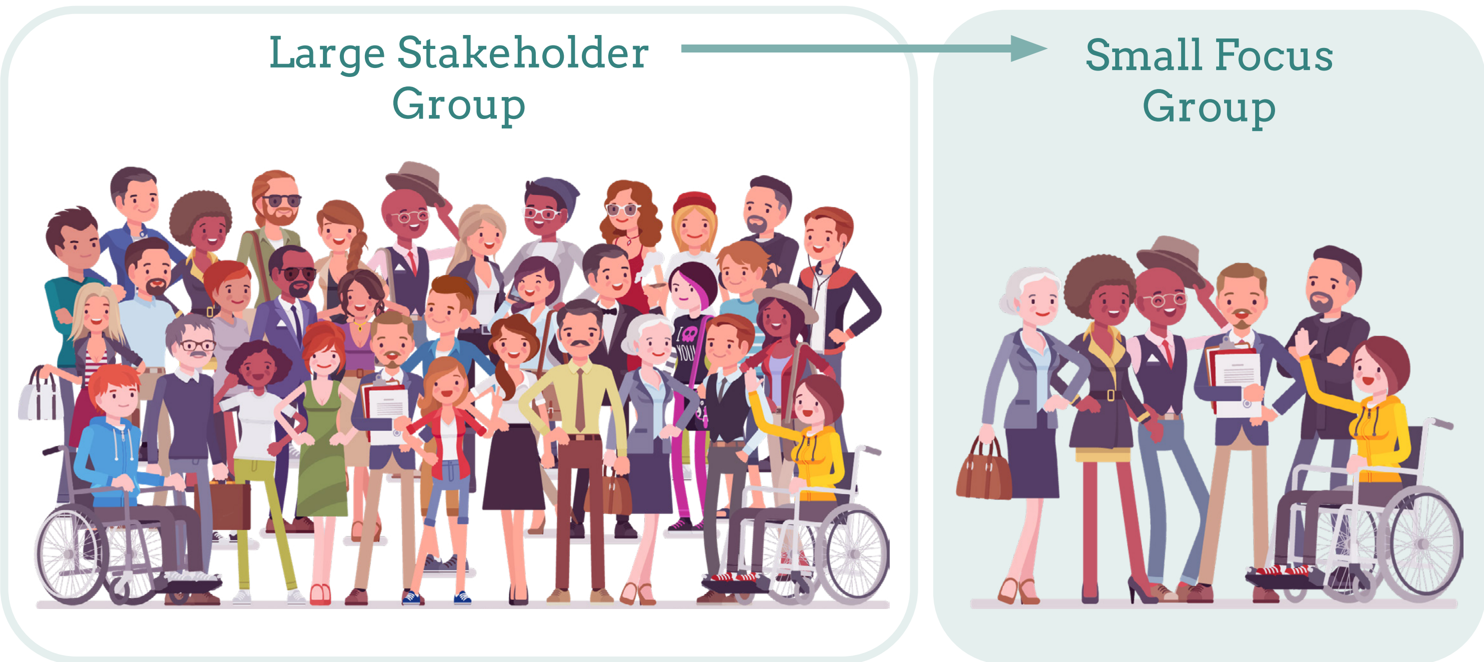
Focus on the relevant topics

Eventually, if a project is facing lots of opposition or challenges, it may become necessary to explore specific sticking points. Those can often be discussed in a smaller focus group setting using representatives of the community.

At the "Collaborate" level of the Spectrum, using small focus groups can produce potential solutions based on the years of experience and wealth of local knowledge of the people in that select group.

However, the developer shouldn't assume that the focus groups speak for everyone, so the outcomes of any such meetings should typically be brought back to the larger group. On the flip-side, members of the public should realize that a developer may have trouble weighing all of the concerns they have heard. It may be necessary to select representatives to help elevate the topmost issues and try to come up with productive solutions.

Stakeholder: noun
(stake·hold·er \stāk-ˌhōl-dər\) -
an individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organization; stakeholders may include: neighbors, business owners, staff / employees, customers, local and regional communities, other organizations, etc.



Tips for Success

More openly discuss market pressures

The public may be more open to a developer bringing forth a certain pro forma, or turning down suggestions or requests, if they have a better understanding of market constraints. This doesn't have to mean opening the books to the public, but it might entail explaining the market rationale for why a grocery store wouldn't work in an area with few houses, or why a self-storage facility wouldn't be a good investment in the heart of Downtown.

Make the developer available

Allow the public to interact and ask questions of the developer and their team in an open house setting or through drop-in studio hours. By providing access and humanizing the development team the community can relate to them better and appreciate the complexities of the project on a whole new level. Plus, it allows for the developer to put a face to a concern, and to get to the heart of specific fears or issues.

Pro Forma: noun (prō ‘fôrmə) -
in real estate it refers to the cash flow projections for a property, directly tied to number of units, type (e.g. studio, three bedroom), and amenity-level.

Consider showing plans & drawings

There are trade-offs to sharing actual drawings or renderings of a potential site with the public, especially when the plans might not be fully thought through yet. In some cases the developer can come off as already being too far down the road to take comment seriously.

On the other hand showing options or ideas may be just what the project needs to solve difficult design decisions, and it provides the community something to react to and give feedback on, which has the potential to help better shape the development. Be sure to use the terms "preliminary" or "draft" when describing them to cut down on any confusion.

Community benefits can lead to success

The best examples of communities and developers coming together are often when there is a benefit to the community within a development. This isn't appropriate for every project, but in some cases a developer can identify portions of their project that could help solve a community shortcoming in a mutually beneficial way to help enhance the neighborhood. Not only does this make the design of the site collaborative with the public, but it helps tie the project in with the community.

02. NOTIFICATION & INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS

What are some ways to get the word out about upcoming engagement?

One of the keys to ensuring meaningful engagement is making certain that citizens hear about a project early and feel like they are part of the process. Long gone are the days when a single method of communication would suffice. In today's culture, a multi-pronged approach should help spread the message. For instance, to optimize who is seeing a meeting notification think about pairing low-tech (e.g. door-to-door hangers, yard signs) with digital (e.g. emails, social media).

The toolkit creation also revealed that there is a perceived gap in information that occurs between the notification of a rezoning application and the Public Hearing with the Planning Commission. It is important to keep interested parties and the community informed about the details and status of a project as it moves through Planning's approval process.

The developer can draw from the items in this section to provide updates to the community throughout the life of the project. This openness can go a long way to building community trust.

The reality is that you will never be able to reach everyone, but by trying as many means as possible you will be that much closer. The ideal is to have a representative sample which is a subset that accurately reflects the characteristics of the larger population. If the audience successfully reflects this varying range of characteristics, it is more likely that the resulting discussion will better capture the range of perspectives held by different individuals and/or groups living or working within the project area.

Meeting Notification Methods

The following is a brief list of meeting notification methods ranging from low-tech to high-tech, each having their own sets of advantages, disadvantages, and considerations. These are by no means all of the options, and it is highly encouraged to look for other methods not listed here.

Yard Signs / Placards / Neighborhood Notice Boards

Consider using signage within the community to alert the public of upcoming meetings and to keep them aware of any major development changes. This works particularly well in a community where people are already used to looking in a specific location for updates on neighborhood meetings, etc.

Advantages: *Relatively cost effective and it can reach both drivers and pedestrians in an area.*

Disadvantages: *The message must be kept brief so that it remains legible and eye-catching. The best solution for this is to direct interested people to a website with additional information.*

Door Hangers

Can be used to inform a neighborhood that is better reached by more traditional methods about upcoming meetings or to provide development updates.

Advantages: *By going door-to-door you can ensure that information reaches all residents and not just property owners within a neighborhood. It is also good for people who may not use technology as their primary means of communication, but it requires a lot of staffing to undertake.*

Disadvantages: *Hangers don't serve their purpose if placed on vacant property or mistaken for junk mail. May also require a lot of time for distribution. It also leaves out stakeholders who may not live in the area.*

Radio / TV / Video

Promote a meeting by securing an interview on a local tv or radio program.

Advantages: *can be an effective way to spread the word. The interview can be recirculated and redistributed.*

Disadvantages: *The project has to be interesting enough for local programming to be interested in an interview. The project team also has to be far enough in its thinking to answer questions.*

Action Item:

- Consider the project team's use of the LexCall / #311 Alert system for upcoming meeting announcements in a specific area.

Ads / Press Releases

Traditional print media (newspapers, magazines, circulars) reach a good portion of the population.

Advantages: *Press releases can be immediately picked up by multiple publications (both print and digital).*

Disadvantages: *Ads can be cost-prohibitive for anything but larger projects. Many people opt for the digital versions of these publications where ads are much harder to find.*

Email

Interested parties can opt into receiving meeting notifications or project updates via email.

Advantages: *These can be an effective means of notification and outreach, particularly for portions of the population who live on their email, or for people who may not be able to make a meeting in person.*

Disadvantages: *It may be difficult to get contact information initially, and junk/spam filters may block out unknown senders.*

Social Media/ Nextdoor / Neighborhood Websites

Notifications and project updates can be announced via social media feeds such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit, etc., or on Nextdoor, or similar neighborhood sites that tie announcements to specific neighborhoods/locations within the City.

Advantages: *These can be an effective means of outreach, particularly for portions of the population who are comfortable with technology, or for people who may not be able to make a meeting in person.*

Disadvantages: *This is an open forum and while it may be useful for notifications it is still a place where people can post misinformation, or work to spread discord for a project.*

Mass Mailing

Address locations for all nearby property owners, residents, and businesses can be pulled from the [Fayette County, Kentucky Property Valuation Administrator (PVA)]() and used for meeting invitations, project updates, etc. Encourage the clear statement on the front of the mailing envelope that this is "Of Neighborhood Interest".

Advantages: *Send out informational mailings can be sent out prior to the meeting so that participants can understand issues, meeting expectations, and form questions.*

Disadvantages: *Traditional mailers are often overlooked as junk mail and don't have the same immediacy as digital methods.*

Text Messaging

Similar to email, interested parties can opt into receiving notifications or project updates via text message.

Advantages: These can be an effective means of notification and outreach, particularly for those portions of the population who live on their phones, or for people who may not be able to make a meeting in person.

Disadvantages: It may be difficult to get contact information initially and to target specific users. Standard message and data rates apply. A limited number of characters should be used.

Billboards

Works well for getting out high-level information to a many users.

Advantages: *Seen by a lot of people, particularly those who drive or take transit along a specific route.*

Disadvantages: *Billboards can be costly and are limited in the amount of information that can be displayed, and in the flexibility of changing that information.*

Notification Considerations:

Property Owner Notification

The typical method of notification has been to use PVA information to make any nearby property owners aware of new planning applications. Planning requires a notification to the mailing address listed for any property owner holding property within 500' of a rezoning. This same method can be used prior to filing an application.

Renter and Business Owner / Employer Notification

In addition, notify renters and anyone leasing a business space – don't assume that they have less interest or buy-in to their community. This can be done using the property's physical address and the address of the listed owner from PVA, and removing duplicate entries.

Neighborhood Association Notification

All neighborhood associations whose boundaries intersect with the 500' notification buffer are notified of an application. Consider sending notifications to adjacent neighborhood associations that don't fall within that buffer. This same method can be used prior to filing an application.

Citywide Organization Notification

Consider reaching out to organizations with citywide interests, such as health and human services, public and social advocacy groups, professional groups, environmental organizations, etc.

Information to Include on Meeting Announcements

The following, or something similar, should be included on all meeting announcements.

1. **Title: [Community Group Name] NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING**
2. **Date & Time**
3. **Location: include directions and/or room location specifics**
4. **Project Background: a brief description of the project**
5. **Meeting Goals and objectives: set meeting expectations**
6. **Contact information and accessibility statement for group member coordinating the meeting**
7. **Graphic or image**

1

Lexingdale Falls Neighborhood Meeting:

Discuss potential new development proposal with project lead Dan Dannerson.

2 3

Date: 08.24.20

Time: 6-7:30 PM

Location: PETville Public Library 2nd Floor Meeting Room (123 Maple Ln)

Zoom Meeting Link: us02web.zoom.us/

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About the Proposed Project:

Dan Develops LLC is proposing a new multi-family residential development for the properties located at 1200-1210 Sycamore Blvd, which would require a zone change from R-1B to R-3. The plan includes diverse housing options such as fourplexes and single-family attached townhomes.

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Meeting Goals & Objectives:

- Familiarize residents with development process & the different opportunities for input
- Inform residents of the zone change being proposed & any current details relating to the project
- Discuss current perceptions of neighborhood context/character and how development might fit in
- Gather input on proposal regarding general site layout, orientation access points, & proposed density

Pre-Meeting Video Recommendations:

- Imagine Lexington - Get to Know Your City's Latest Comprehensive Plan
- Zoning In on Lexington's Zone Change Process
- Understanding Neighborhood Character - What It IS, & What It IS NOT
- The Do's & Don'ts of Neighborhood Meetings

All of these videos can be found at lexingtonky.gov/planning/pre-meeting-videos

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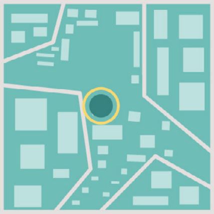
Directions & Room Location

- The PETville Public Library is located at 123 Maple Ln (see map)
- Free parking is accessible in the lot adjacent to the building.
- The meeting room is located at the top of the central staircase in the library foyer.



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Questions? Feel free to reach out!

Dan Dannerson - Project Lead

Email: dan@dandevelops.org **Phone:** (859) 555 - 0824

dandevelops.org

If you have a disability and require a reasonable accommodation to fully participate in this event, please contact Dan Dannerson before 08.22.20 via email or telephone to discuss your accessibility needs.

How can the public remain informed about a project?

Notifying stakeholders about the project meeting(s) is an important first step as a project team begins engaging citizens. Following this initial engagement, the residents, businesses, and community groups who are involved and/or invested in the project outcomes can continue to be informed through the distribution of additional informational materials. These materials may provide details of the development as it evolves, as well as updates related to the project's status as it moves through the planning process. If desired, this information could by continually distributed all the way through to the completion of construction.

There are a variety of ways for presenting and disseminating development information and project updates, similar to the methods of notification for meetings outlined previously. Key considerations when deciding the mechanism for updating stakeholders on a specific project include: What methods would best guarantee both efficiency and accuracy? What frequency should updates be made and shared with stakeholders?


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Project-Focused Content

Project Website

A commonly used practice on complex projects is to create a dedicated website. This can be a good repository for all of the public documents related to the project. It can also be a mechanism to acquire feedback from the public, respond to frequently asked questions, or promote outreach opportunities. Members of the community can subscribe to a project blog or video series to hear the latest updates.

Creation and maintenance of a website is a significant undertaking and a return on investment should be proportional to the desired outreach.

If a website is created the developer may want to consider informing Planning so that they can include it in the Development Snapshot (discussed in the **04. Process Section**).

Advantages: A project website can provide and host a great deal of information and help alleviate concerns before they begin to snowball. If it is created in a user-friendly manner it can help to reach the portion of the population that can't make a meeting or hearing, but who still want to understand what is happening in their neighborhood.

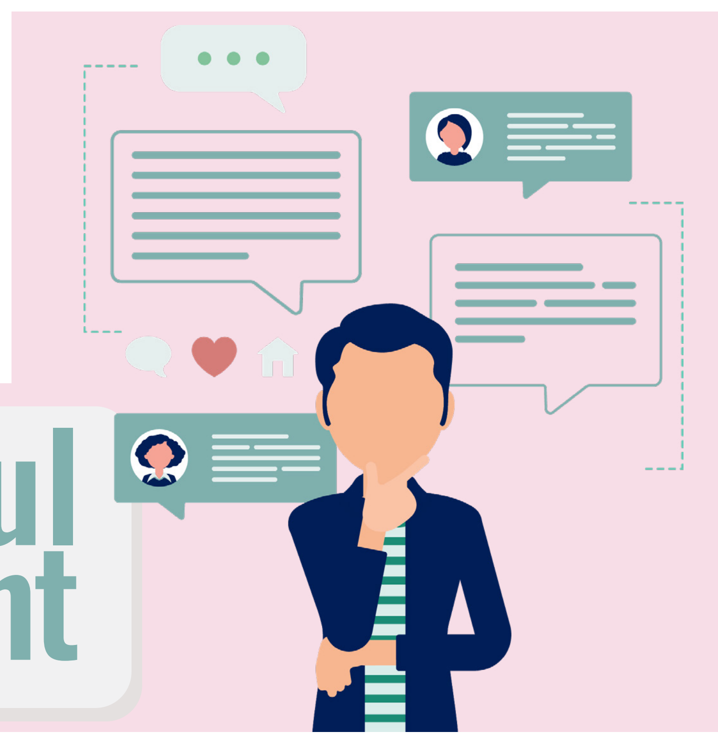
Disadvantages: A website is only as good as its content. If the website isn't updated on a regular basis, citizens will either disregard the project, or think that the developer is trying to hide something.

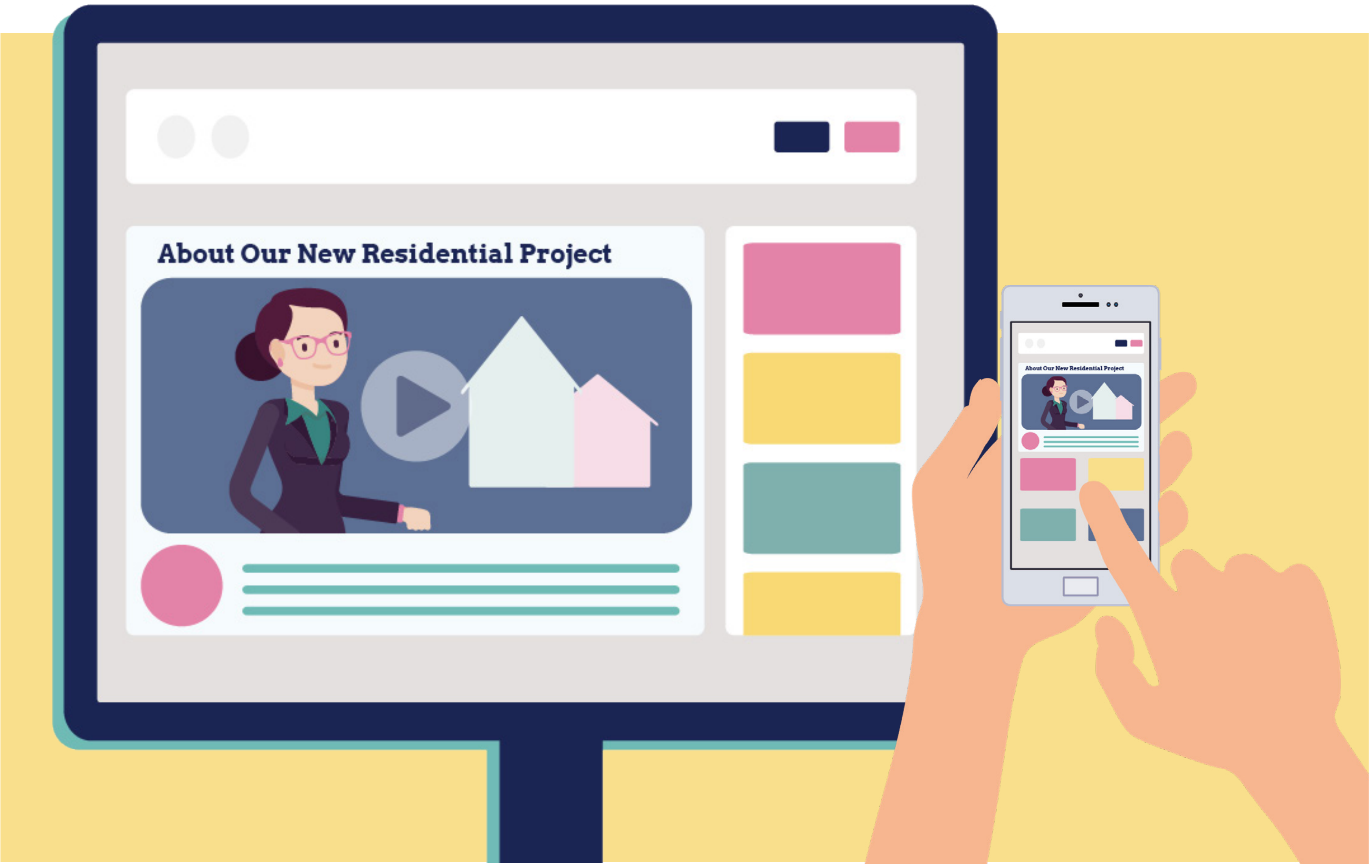
Social Media Account

Another option is the creation of a social media account for the project (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.). While these are good for providing quick bursts of information, they need constant content added to them to keep them relevant. Plus, any such account would need a fair amount of mentions within other groups/sites for people to find it.

Advantages: These work well for a series of quick information bursts or the spread of meeting announcements.

Disadvantages: If the project doesn't have a dedicated person on the team to handle social media then the job of creating content can be quite onerous, and is often left by the wayside, rendering that social media account obsolete. There is also the constant issue of trolling and spam if there are open response features, which adds another level of required monitoring/ censoring - although this can be minimized through a disclaimer about content censorship somewhere on the page.





Project Videos

The developer can create a series of videos with answers to frequently asked questions about the project and place them online for distribution, , possibly on a project website. For a basic version the cost would be relatively low to record and host. This may also be a good option if the project is in an area with lots of non-English speakers – it would be possible to record and have it available either dubbed or close captioned in multiple languages.

Advantages: The message remains consistent for everyone who listens to it. The information is accessible to a wider range of people than can attend a meeting.

Disadvantages: While people can get answers to some of their questions, they need to have an outlet for their feedback to be heard as well. Pairing it with some form of comment collection is suggested.

Mobile-Friendly Outreach

In working with these different types of media to share information about a project, prioritizing content and design that is mobile-friendly through responsive design and accessible can greatly increase the number of people the information can reach.

Studies have shown that people do the majority of their web browsing via mobile devices versus a traditional desktop or laptop; and, in many cases, although a household may not be able to afford a computer they will often have access to a smartphone.

Responsive design: noun -
includes information that will display accurately between a desktop and a mobile device, such as a handheld phone or tablet.

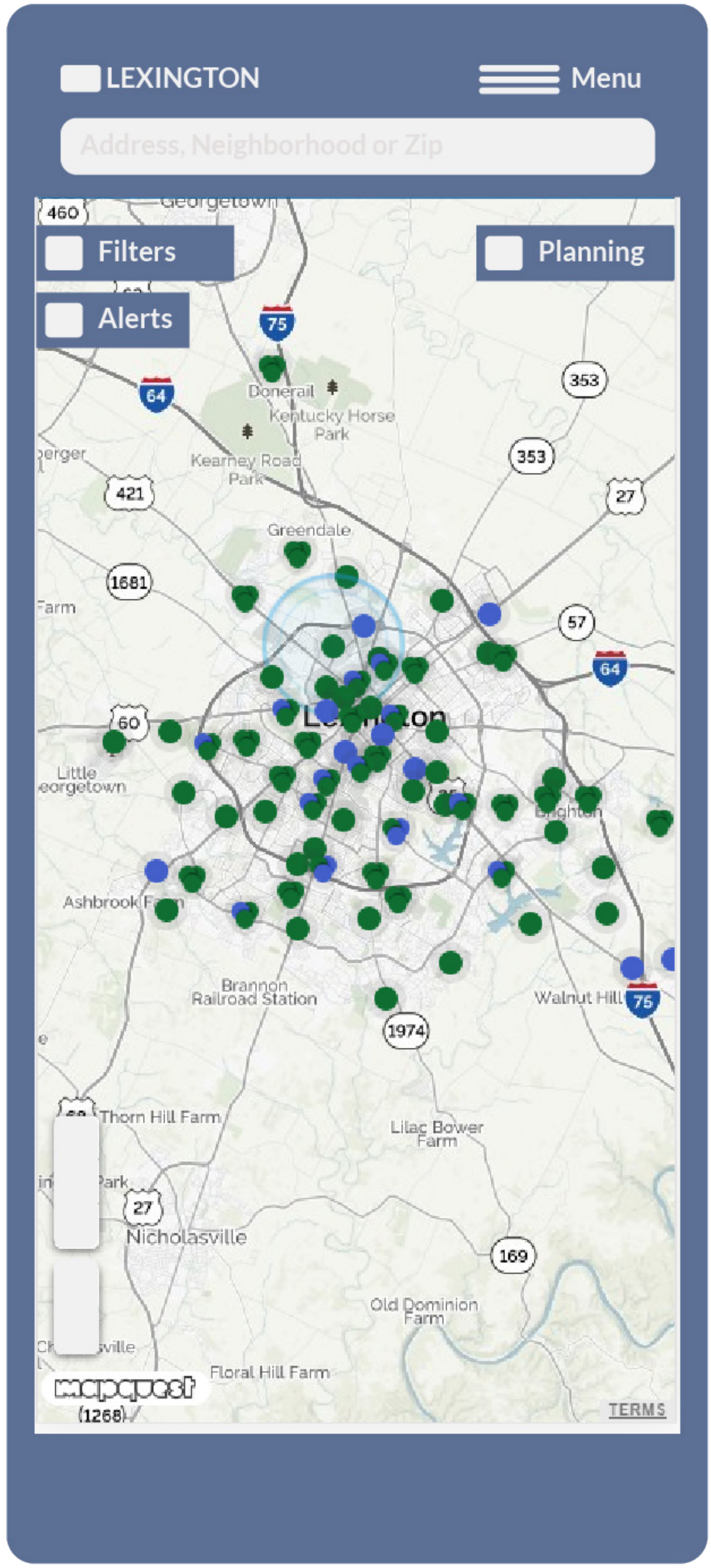
Planning Resources

BuildingEye

The software the City uses to map all planning and building permit applications is known as BuildingEye (https://lexingtonky.buildingeye.com/). The software specializes in GIS and data visualization, providing an easy to use interface for citizens to access building permits and planning applications in its current format, but with future potential to help track code enforcement, capital projects, public events, business licenses, and other civic activities 24 hours a day.

Users can view all open and completed planning applications and building permits from July 1, 2016 through today on an interactive map of the City. Users can filter by open or completed applications, date ranges, and application types, as well as search by keyword, application number of street address. By creating a login, citizens can set an alert and be notified when a new record is submitted either near a specific address or within a Council District.

Selecting a particular data point opens a window with the basic details of the project and a link to the Accela Citizen Portal for more information.



Geographic information system (GIS): noun -
a framework for gathering, managing, and analyzing data. Rooted in the science of geography, GIS integrates many types of data. It analyzes spatial location and organizes layers of information into maps.

Accela Citizen Portal

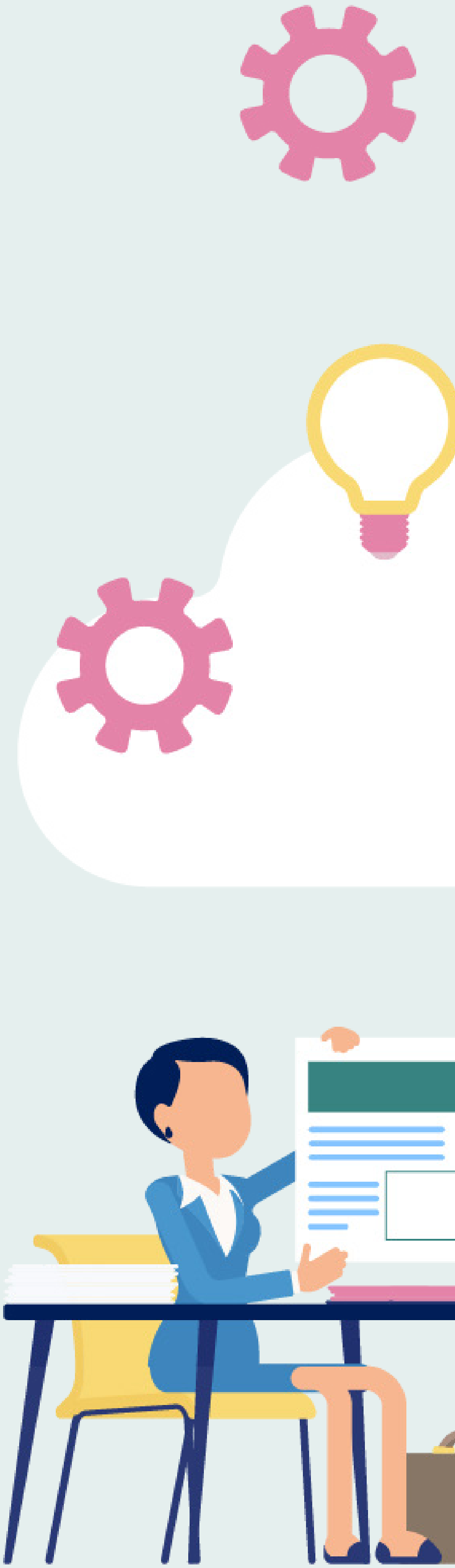
Accela Citizen Portal (https://aca3.accela.com/LEXKY/Default.aspx) has allowed Planning to move from a traditional counter and call center service to the Web, providing citizens with easy and convenient online access to the City's permit and land management information and activities.

All of the applications filed with the Division of Planning are done so through Accela, under the "Planning" tab. This is the first stop for all applicants, and is the repository for all relevant files, correspondences, plans and materials related to any given project. Some of the most searched items include:

- Project location
- Applicant, owner, and contact information, which can all be different
- General information on the current site and its use
- Proposed development type, zoning, and number of units
- Processing status, or where it is in the review process

Wheras BuildingEye is more oriented to the general public, Accela is aimed at the applicants, and there are some items which aren't available for public viewing, but it is the most comprehensive resource for project details besides a member of Planning staff.

How can a meeting be tailored to a community?



For many project teams, holding a public meeting isn't something they do on a regular basis. Therefore, this section helps lay out a step-by-step guide on how to approach holding a successful meeting, and provides meeting agenda and sign-in sheet templates for use by all. A matrix laying out different types of engagement is provided, showing how each stacks up to a desired level of public engagement and the amount of facilitation required to hold the meeting. Also provided is a list of potential meeting exercises. Although these aren't all-encompassing they represent a solid starting point to craft an engagement strategy.

While this toolkit focuses a great deal on the best practices of running a meeting from the project team's end, it is just as critical to lay out ground rules for how all meeting attendees should conduct themselves going into this type of public engagement.

Planning Your Meeting: A Step - by - Step Guide

When selecting a meeting strategy remember that there is no one-size-fits all solution. In some cases a single high-impact approach may suffice, and in other cases a multi-pronged approach might make more sense. It is also increasingly important to be mindful of social distancing during in-person meetings and equitable options for outreach among vulnerable and/or marginalized populations.

Before the Meeting

1 **Select a date and time for your meeting** that works for the largest number of participants. Consider consulting local neighborhood associations and residents, nearby businesses, a councilmember, or Planning staff. Try to be cognizant of other regular neighborhood or community organization meeting times (e.g. Wednesday evening bible study, parent-teacher night at the local school, etc.), major sporting events, etc.

Select evening meetings to accommodate with a nine-to-five work schedule. Consider a second meeting during daytime hours to accommodate senior citizens and people who work alternate shifts. Reserve weekend meetings for site visits, charrettes, or workshops.

Keep meetings to two hours at most unless there are extenuating needs to extend for something like a charrette or site visit.

Ideally, try to tap into an existing meeting or event to help guarantee attendance and reduce the number of meetings you are asking participants to attend.

2 **Select a location for in-person meetings** that accommodates the largest number of interested parties while maintaining proper social distancing. Preferably, the meeting would be 1) in close proximity to the project site, 2) ADA accessible, and 3) located near available parking and transit service.

Action Item:

- Consider the creation of a tool to aid citizens in finding an appropriate meeting location in the City.

3 **Create an agenda** to help set expectations. Outline the meeting goals and objectives in all forms of communication and include those on any forms of notification prior to the meeting, then reinforce those at the start of the meeting. <See the sample Agenda (page 52)>.

4 **Distribute meeting announcement(s)** to all addresses and PVA-associated owner listings, and any neighborhood associations within 500' of the project site. This will ensure all owners, renters, and business operators in close proximity are made aware to the best of your ability. It is also suggested to reach out to other parties and stakeholders that might have interest but aren't necessarily within the boundary, such as adjacent neighborhood associations, active community organizations, etc. <See previous section on Methods of Notification (page 18).>

During the Meeting

When at all possible try to pair in-person meetings with digital meetings. In most cases these can be run concurrently through the use of live video streaming and online webinar software.

5

In-Person Meetings

Set the stage by setting up the room to help facilitate a feeling of equality. Use smaller group tables or a circular formation when possible. Avoid an "us" vs. "them" situation by putting speakers at the same level as participants rather than on a stage or behind a podium.

If an in-person meeting is scheduled during a period of increased public health risk, consider providing masks, gloves, anti-bacterial wipes, etc. During the meeting, prop open all doors to allow minimal contact entry/exit if ADA buttons or push bars are not installed.

Digital Meetings

Set the stage by setting up the digital format based on the assumption that everyone is a first-time user of the software. Explain how to chat or ask questions, use of mute, and any additional tools used during the meeting like live polling, options to "raise your hand", or any mark-up or white board features.

Just as you would during an in-person meeting, make sure each person presenting has a clear video setup, that they are well lit, and that you can see their facial expressions clearly.

To accommodate users viewing on smaller screens, consider using large, legible fonts and less text per slide in your presentation.

6

Distribute meeting agendas prior to the start of the meeting via email or as a link to the meeting announcement. This can either be done as printed handouts or as something that is included at the start of the presentation, but reiteration of the meeting timeline and meeting expectations should be available. The time and format for questions should also be noted.

7

In-Person Meetings

Ask attendees to sign in and provide their basic contact information to help you keep track of how many people participated in the meeting. Assume that some people will either forget to sign-in, or will prefer to remain anonymous.
<See sample Sign-In Sheet (page 53).>

It is also highly recommended that everyone at the meeting wear nametags.

Digital Meetings

Ask attendees to register either in advance or as a log-in feature to the meeting. Similar to a hard-copy of the sign in sheet ask for only the information you think you will need. Anything beyond that and you may scare participants away.

Most online software will display on screen the names of participants the same way as they registered.

8

In-Person Meetings

Introduce all members of the project team as well as any City staff in attendance. This is particularly helpful for citizens to know who to ask questions of during/after the meeting. If the group of attendees is small enough have introduce themselves.

Digital Meetings

Introduce participating members of the project team. If the group is larger than 20 consider a software that allows the selection to display only the presenters. Take care to mention any other project team members or City staff that may be in the meeting, particularly if they will be compiling / responding to questions.

9 **Reference recommended ground rules** and outline the meeting expectations and outcomes. If you are using a facilitator, he or she will likely take over conducting the meeting from here. <See Use of a Facilitator in the Finding Common Ground section (page 12).>

10

In-Person Meetings

Explain how /when questions, comments, or feedback will be responded to based on the expected size of the meeting. If the meeting is smaller, consider running it more like an open dialogue. For larger meetings, it is suggested that if their is an opportunity for questions as a group that it be held to a specific time, such as at the changing of presenters, or following the presentation. There should always be the opportunity for one-on-one discussions with team members towards the end of the meeting.

Make an announcement if the meeting is being videotaped or recorded and whether that recording will be for use only by the team or for public consumption following the meeting to accommodate those that could not attend in person due to scheduling conflicts, time constraints, or mobility issues.

Digital Meetings

Explain how questions, comments, or feedback can be made and how / when they will be responded to based on the number of participants. If the meeting is smaller, 10 participants or less, consider running it more like an open dialogue. For larger meetings, it is suggested that project team members divvy up roles, and that a particular person be assigned to compiling questions and comments through the chat or Q&A dialogue boxes and distilling them down to the most frequently asked. Opportunity for one-on-one discussions with team members can be offered up at the end of the meeting through contact information provided on-screen.

At the outset of the meeting, if the meeting is being recorded and whether that recording will be for use only by the team or for public consumption following the meeting to accommodate those that could not attend due to scheduling conflicts or time constraints.

11 **Present an up front education piece** providing a level of understanding about what is to be covered in the meeting. Materials from the Planning education video FAQ series can be used as an introduction to the Planning process. <See the Process section on Video FAQs (page 73).>

12 **Stick to the agenda** and respect people's time by assigning time allotments to each agenda item and sticking to it. Always end meetings early or on time.

13 **Take open notes** or record the meeting to show that responses are being taken into account for future review.

14 **Thank the audience,** outline next steps, and restate contact information for any future questions.

Material adapted from the *City of Seattle's Tips for Successful Meetings*, *North Carolina Department of Transportation's Public Engagement Techniques*, *City of College Station Neighborhood Services' My Neighborhood Manual* and Lincoln, Nebraska *Urban Development Department's Neighborhood Association's How To's*.

After the Meeting

15 **Summarize and synthesize the team's impressions** as quickly as possible after the meeting. Project team members will have heard many different comments during the meeting and you want to be able to record those while still fresh. Document, digitize, and scan any materials from the meeting where notes were written down.

Place the recording of the meeting online within 24 hours of the meeting, and share the link and any opportunities for further feedback (especially for those who could not attend the meeting), to the project stakeholders.

16 **Follow-up on any assignments** or items that were promised to attendees.

Additional Considerations for Planning Your Meeting

- **Identify any meeting needs** including assistance for the elderly, accessibility concerns, etc. <See Increasing Access to Meetings for People with Disabilities section>
- **Provide translation services,** particularly if the project area shows a high percentage of non-English speakers. Be sure to include this service in any notifications, and make all printed materials available fully translated. *Resources: translation services can be found through Lexington's Global Lex program (lexingtonky.gov/global-lex).*
- **Feed the people** anywhere from light refreshments to a full meal. This is especially important when meeting times are during normal meal times. Advertising the availability of food in meeting notifications may prove to be an added draw.
- **Include children/young people in the meeting** by advertising and providing childcare services. Better yet, consider including them in the meeting by having exercises designed for them.
- **Cut the jargon,** speak at an eighth grade level, and assume that most people in the room don't understand typical development speak or industry acronyms. While it is important to sound well-informed, it is perhaps more important to be understood <See Work to decipher jargon in the Process section (page 72).>
- **Prepare your team with answers** for the following most frequently heard concerns:

Traffic

Parking

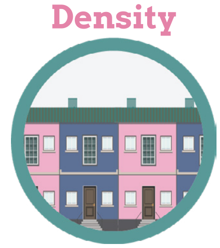
Stormwater

Noise

Bike/Ped Safety

Greenspace

Density



Increasing Access to Meetings for People with Disabilities

The goal should be for more equitable access to meeting events, which includes people with disabilities, impairments, limitations, and participation restrictions. To that end an accessibility/accommodation statement such as the one below is recommended in any meeting notifications.

"If you have a disability and require a reasonable accommodation to fully participate in this event, please contact [name] before [event date] via email [email address] or telephone [number] or TTY [number] to discuss your accessibility needs."

In terms of any in-person meetings or materials consider the following:

ADA-accessible meeting locations –

while most meeting locations meet the ADA standards, there may be occasions where the nearest, most convenient meeting location to the project site doesn't. Confirm that the room where the meeting is being held, the path to that room, and the restrooms meet universal design standards.

Scheduled breaks –

for multi-hour meetings are suggested to accommodate those people with chronic illness.

Video-conferencing / online meetings –

to allow those people with impairments to still attend remotely. Be aware that a person's ability, physical or otherwise, to use the technology to participate in an online meeting may be limited. In that case, it will be important to reach out to that person's "circle of support" for their help in getting that person set up for the meeting.

Food sensitivities –

[such as peanuts, tree nuts, seafood/shellfish and gluten] should be considered if serving food at meetings. List ingredients if possible.

Effective Written Communication –

meeting materials could be made available upon request in an alternative format such as large print (18pt or greater), raised print, or Braille. *Resources: Braille or raised printing services can be found through the National Federation for the Blind (www.nfb.org).*

Effective Verbal Communication –

if lots of visual imagery is shown during the presentation the speaker should also spend a few moments describing the visual. For the hearing impaired, consider the use of an ASL interpreter. *Resources: local interpreters can be found through the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (www.kcdhh.ky.gov).*

In the case of an online meeting, many platforms now include a live closed captioning option.

Material adapted from the Institute for Local Government's "Increasing Access to Public Meetings and Events for People with Disabilities."

10 Etiquette Rules for a Public Meeting

All parties, from the project team to members of the public, should conduct themselves in the following manner to keep the meeting at its most productive, understanding that people have differing interests and goals. Seek to identify common denominators and creative solutions that are agreeable for everyone..

Action Item:

- Create an etiquette handout for use in meetings

1. Show up on time & come prepared
2. Review the meeting agenda and be sure you understand the objectives/goals of the meeting
3. Come to the meeting with a positive attitude
4. Be a good listener with an open mind, and respect other people's point of view
5. Ask questions
6. Allow others time to speak and not interrupt or monopolize the discussion
7. Contribute to the meeting
8. Attack the problem, not the person
9. Keep to the topic of the meeting
10. Maintain your cool (this includes your tone and body language) and don't take things personally

Do's & don'ts to consider prior to attending a meeting:

Urban Services Boundary: noun - an Urban Services Boundary (USB) is a jurisdictional boundary established to direct urbanization and higher density development to the area inside the boundary (Urban Service Area). The boundary might also specify to which areas public services will be expanded. The area outside the boundary remains lower density rural/agricultural and usually does not have expansion of public services planned in the immediate future. Lexington was the first city in the nation to adopt a USB in 1958.

All Parties

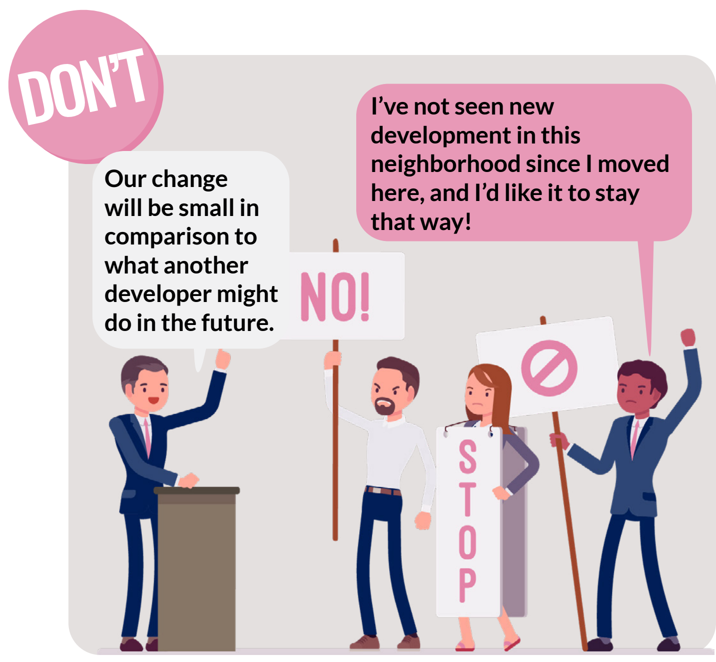
- Consider the larger scale of the decisions made as a City to hold the Urban Service Boundary in conjunction with increasing intensity and encouraging growth.
- Understand that staff will look at technical aspects that are often points of concern, such as traffic and stormwater runoff, and provide recommendations.
- Acknowledge the next steps in relation to the rezoning process.
- Don't use scare tactics and ultimatums.

Developers

- Acknowledge that change is difficult.
- Have empathy in how you communicate. "everyone lives somewhere."
- Understand the wealth of knowledge the public brings to the table.
- Try to dig down to the core issues of people’s concerns.
- Don't arrive with a completed project and expect for engagement to feel collaborative.

The Community

- Arrive with an open mind and listen first.
- Come prepared with feasible alternatives or solutions.
- Find real issues with facts to back it up.
- Consider that at the end of the day there are rights inherent to private property, as well as a property owner or developer's needs to still make money.
- Don’t make assumptions.
- Don’t assume the worst case scenario.



Online Meeting Tips

Embracing virtual engagement as an effective method for connecting with project stakeholders establishes more varied, and oftentimes more accessible, opportunities for communication. When using online platforms in place of, or in addition to, in-person meetings, there are a few details to consider during both the planning and implementation process that are unique to the technology being used and the best practices for conducting meetings in a digital setting.

The Online Team

Divide the team responsibilities so that a team member is assigned to perform each task below. There can be overlap, but the larger the meeting the better it will work if there is a single team member per task.

Moderator / Facilitator

- Keeps the meeting moving and on schedule
- Receives and asks audience questions

Presenter / Panelist

- Presents the details of the project / subject matter
- Responds to audience questions

Question Compiler

- Compiles, distills, and prioritizes all questions and comments as they come in throughout the meeting
- Passes questions along to the moderator /facilitator to ask of the presenters

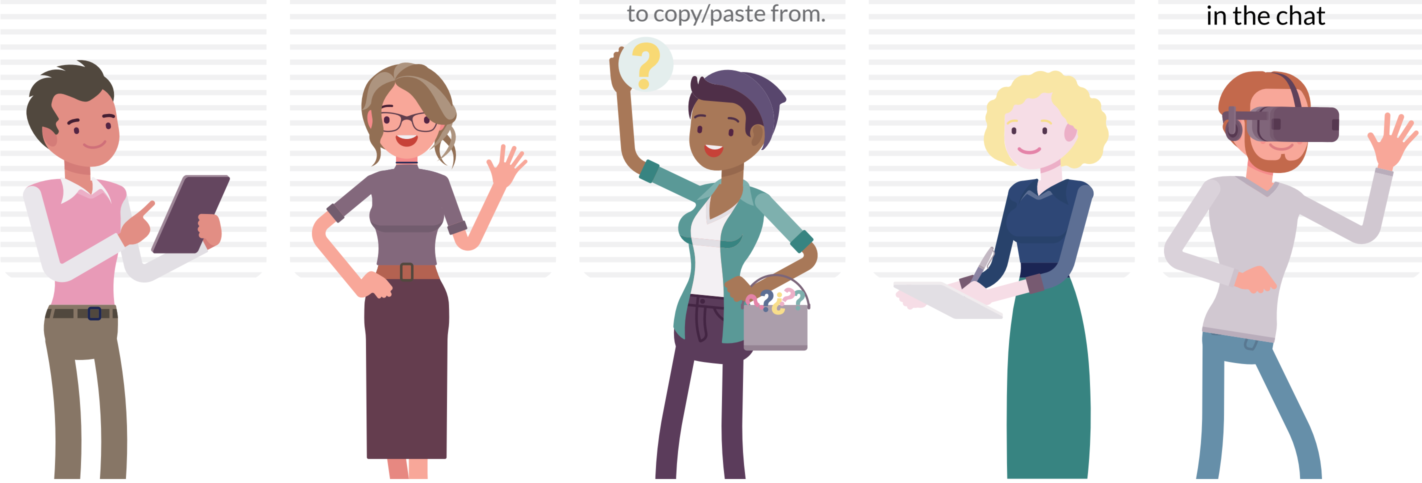
*If possible, this person can also thank and acknowledge receipt of response throughout the meeting. It may be helpful to have a script of pre-written replies to copy/paste from.

Note Taker

- Takes notes throughout the meeting
- Records questions and responses arising from the online chat

Tech Leader

- Helps set up and run technical support for the meeting. for the meeting
- Sets up a rehearsal prior to going live
- Changes slides, flips between documents, and administers host and sharing capabilities
- Helps to monitor the chat for inappropriate comments and respond to any technical issues in the chat



Useful Features of Online Platforms

- Requiring **attendee registration** creates an easy digital record of who was at the meeting. Asking for additional information like zip code or affiliation can provide a snapshot of where participants are coming from and what some of their concerns may be.
- A **chat** feature allows attendees to ask questions throughout the meeting without interrupting the speaker. Chat settings can also be disabled if unnecessary, or limited to view by certain people.
- The **"hand raise"** feature works in small to medium-sized groups (typically no more than 20-30 participants) to help maintain order and allow quieter voices to be heard.
- Some software allows attendees to **"upvote"** certain questions that they feel strongly about, which can also cut down on the number of repetitive questions that have to be compiled.
- **Emoticons** such as hearts and thumbs-up signs are available on certain platforms so that attendees can show their support of a particular comment or measure during the meeting.
- **Live polling** of participants can help a meeting feel more interactive. If able, this may also allow you to react to the audiences concerns.
- **White board and mark-up** features allow everyone to see notes being taken in real time. It also provides a level of collaboration similar to rolling out a printed plan to discuss. This feature is best used in small groups.
- **Gallery view** allows people on the video call to see "the faces in the room" as you would in person.
- Administrative ability to **mute** or **disable the camera** for everyone, or selectively unmute certain people can be very helpful in a large meeting, and prevents cases where a participant's microphone is left on. It can also prevent unwanted hackers from trying to take over a meeting.

General Best Practices for Online Meetings

For online team members (Facilitator, Presenter, etc.)	For meeting attendees

- Arrive and start on time. Those hosting the meeting should start the event at least 5 minutes prior to allow attendees to join.
- At the start of the meeting, the facilitator should introduce themselves as well as the meeting topics and guest(s).
- Anyone speaking/presenting should give an introduction of themselves, their professional affiliation, and project role.
- Clearly present the agenda - and stick to it! This also applies to attendees, who should do their best to align questions/concerns with the topic(s) at hand.
- The facilitator should always direct questions or comments to a specific participant to avoid dead air and confusion over who is to respond.
- Pay attention and adhere to the guidelines given by the facilitator on how/when you may ask questions. Some hosts may use a chat box feature while others, particularly for smaller meetings, may call on people who wish to voice questions directly.
- All participants should maintain respectful dialogue. Facilitators must be proactive in requesting any participants modify their behavior if seen as disruptive, threatening, or inappropriate. If such behavior persists, the facilitator may mute individuals at his or her discretion.
- If you are not speaking, please mute your microphone to prevent interception of any ambient/background noise.

Digital Limitations

Presentation information is often more difficult to see on a screen, and it is safe to assume that many attendees will be using a tablet or phone rather than a computer to participate, therefore:

- It is often helpful to distribute meeting materials either in advance of, or at the start of, the meeting so that attendees have time to take a more in-depth look.
- Screen size limitations warrant a thoughtfulness to how much information gets placed on each slide. Think less content, higher contrast!
- In smaller meetings, typically less than ten participants, remember that the conversation still goes both ways. It is easier to ramble on when you can't see the faces or the body language of the people you are speaking to.
- Try to match the software to the scale of the meeting you are hosting. For instance a large meeting is probably best suited to a webinar, while one-on-one or small group meetings may still work best via a traditional conference call or screen sharing option, rather than the need for a full video set up.
- Prepare to be flexible in how you are presenting. Similar to watching people get distracted during an in-person meeting, seeing participants drop off a call may mean the need to speed up a part of the presentation, or begin taking questions or comments early.

Equity Concerns

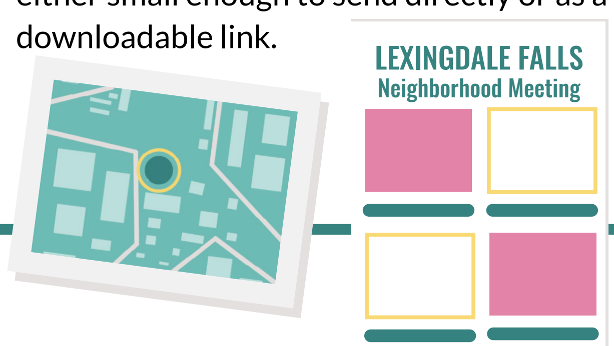
While using digital technology can help to greatly expand the reach of a project by capturing people that may otherwise be prevented from attending a meeting in person, there are still considerations to be made in regards to extending that reach:

- While the majority of people have access to some form of technology, most commonly in the form of a smartphone, that does not mean that they have access to unlimited data or WiFi. There is no optimal solution to this problem yet, but one option is to set up temporary mobile hotspots in targeted locations for the meeting.
- Don't assume everyone has the means to, or is comfortable with getting on a video call. Make sure whatever online meeting software you are using has an option to dial into a local or toll-free number. By providing meeting materials ahead of time participants can still follow along.

Two Final (Essential) Tips

- Always have a backup plan, because things are always likely to go wrong if you don't have a plan in place.

- Be prepared to email out the presentation materials at any time during the meeting to participants – so have them packaged, and either small enough to send directly or as a downloadable link.



Methods of Engagement

There are various methods of engagement that may be useful when working with the public on a proposed project. Short descriptions of some options are provided here, with expanded explanation of these and/or additional options on the [Planning website](#).

Action Item:

- Maintain a list of meeting types on the Planning website

Icon Key:

Engagement type could be made available online for those who can't participate in-person

Engagement type could include/adapt exercises tailored for children/families

Briefing / Press Conference

A meeting held to provide key information on a project. Typically, this is run as a presentation in front of a large audience, and/or the media, possibly allowing for question and answer at the end. This method only touches on the "Inform" portion of the Spectrum because it fails to engage citizens, and works to separate the development team from the community. It is however, a good means of delivering information in a timely fashion.

Employer Breakroom Presentations

Host a mini workshop or presentation in a borrowed employer break or conference room near the project site. This works similar to a targeted focus group. This meeting type can be used to elicit responses similar to a focus group or user group, and can even be run as a brown-bag lunch.

Public Meeting

A public meeting brings a diverse set of stakeholder groups together to share project-specific information and discuss issues. The project team will make a presentation and participants are often allowed time to ask questions or make a statement. Practitioners are moving away from this more traditional form of engagement in favor of something more collaborative.

Online Meeting

An online meeting is similar to a standard meeting, but all participants sign in individually or as groups to either watch a person (people) presenting or to view a presentation. It is a web-based meeting or conference format that allows people to see and hear each other, and the host can even choose to take and answer questions throughout or at the end of the meeting similar to a live format. There is a perceived decrease in personal contact between the community and the developer, but a greater number of people can attend.

Charrette

A charrette is an intense period of design activity often marked by several meetings held over three to five days, in which the design team meets with stakeholders, citizens, experts, etc. in an iterative design approach. While a charrette can sometimes be a heavy lift to prepare for and pull off, it can yield impressive results and incorporate a large number of participants. If the results are truly collaborative, a charrette can allow participants to feel more engaged, which can create more buy-in for the project. A charrette isn't always appropriate and is best for sites with a great deal of complexity.

Focus Group

A diverse group of people, typically no more than 20 assembled to participate in a guided project discussion. It differs from a Stakeholder Advisory Committee in that a Focus Group typically meets with the project team one, possibly, two times, to answer targeted questions on a specific topic.

Open House

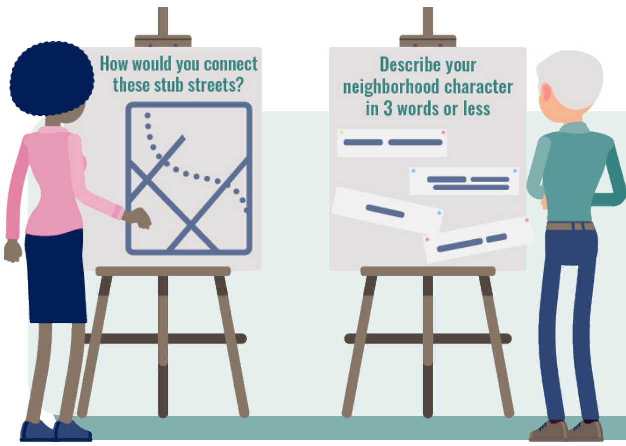
An open house is a style of meeting where there is no set presentation, but instead there may be topical stations or tables set up to allow people to ask specific questions. This also allows people to interact one-on-one with members of the project team.

Pop-Up Studio

A pop-up studio occurs when the project team sets up a temporary work space either on or near the project site, or during an event, and allows the public to come and go during open studio hours. Similar to a charrette, a pop-up studio allows the community to see the designers respond to comments in a short period of time. While a pop-up studio can sometimes be a hard work to prepare for and pull off, it can yield impressive results. If the results are truly collaborative, a pop-up studio can allow participants to feel more engaged, which can create more buy-in for the project. A pop-up studio isn't always appropriate and really works best for sites with a great deal of complexity, and projects where it is best to go to where the people are, rather than make them come to you.

Stakeholder Advisory Committee

A stakeholder advisory committee is a representative group of people with a direct interest in the outcome of the project in question. They are selected by the project team and meet regularly to discuss issues of common interest. Suggestions of membership can come from Planning staff, a councilmember, or from other members of the group, but diversity is critical. It is used to achieve a basic level of local input, but shouldn't be considered the opinion of the entire neighborhood/ community <See Section 01. Finding Common Ground (page 8).>



Visioning Workshop

Similar to an open house, but more interactive, participants are asked to take part in a series of exercises on specific aspects of the project. These can be done as stations that the public move through set up around the room or at tables where the exercises change on a set interval.

Comment Cards

Comment card boxes are a good way to ask a limited number of survey-style or open-ended questions, and potentially garner a large number of responses. However, this only allows the team to ask questions, but doesn't allow an in-depth description of the project, answer participants' questions, or provide a mechanism for response.

Online Forum

An online forum or discussion group allows the development team to ask questions or post designs to garner feedback from a large number of people, and participants can exchange open messages. For a forum to work well though there should be a steady stream of information or questions coming from the developer for people to respond to.

Online Survey

An online survey is a questionnaire that a large audience can complete over the Internet, similar to a traditional survey or comment cards. Survey questions must be targeted and to the point to actually be useful. Ask leading questions/avoiding bias in phrasing to get the most usable results. A survey must be relatively short to ensure people actually finish it.

On-Street Interviews

On-the-street interviews can clarify how people use a space. It is also a great way for the project team to help spread the word about the project while interacting one-on-one with members of the community.

Site Visit / Tour

Site visits are trips taken either walking, by bike (scooter, etc.), or by van/bus by community residents, officials, agencies, and consultants to proposed or actual project areas, impacted areas, or affected properties. They are helpful for the community to explain points of interest and for developers to provide a better sense of how their development will work in context. It allows the developer to go directly to where the people are. Accommodations may need to be made for those attendees with limited mobility.

Overview of Engagement Types

The matrix of engagement types is provided as reference, in addition to the brief descriptions of the previous pages. Engagement types are organized by the level of guidance required on the developers part – for example, will meeting organizers be talking at an audience (led), or are they fully-immersed in helping lead and guide interactive exercises (facilitated), or will they just let conversations and ideas flow freely (open-ended)? Each meeting type is also shown relative to where it typically falls on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation, a tool helping to illustrate the full range of participant involvement options. <See the 01. Finding Common Ground Section>. The applicant should try to choose at least one, or pair several, to exceed the Inform column.

Engagement Type	Public Engagement Goal			
	Inform *Keep the public informed.*	**Consult** *Keep the public informed, listen to concerns, provide feedback on public influence on the decision.*	**Involve** *Work with the public to ensure their concerns are reflected in the alternatives, provide feedback on public influence on the decision.*	**Collaborate** *Look to the public to help formulate solutions and incorporate their recommendations to the max. extent possible.*
Led - single-sided presentation style meeting with limited participation by attendees				
Briefing / Press Conference	✓			
Employer Breakroom Presentations	✓	✓		
Public Meeting	✓	✓		
Online Meetings	✓	✓		
Facilitated - guided meeting, participants are asked to respond or give feedback on specific items				
Charrette	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus Groups	✓	✓		
Open House	✓	✓		
Pop-Up Studio	✓	✓	✓	✓
Stakeholder Advisory Committees	✓	✓	✓	✓
Visioning Workshops	✓	✓	✓	
Open-Ended - meetings with no set outcomes, whose purpose is to gather information				
Comment Boxes		✓		
Online Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓
Online Survey		✓		
On-Street Interviews		✓		
Site Visit / Walk/Bike Tour	✓	✓	✓	

Meeting Exercises

There are a myriad exercises being used by today's meeting planners. The following is a sampling of possible exercises appropriate for different phases in a project's development. The key thing to remember is to keep meetings fun, interactive, and engaging, while still providing a forum for everyone to voice their ideas. Short descriptions of some options are provided here, with expanded explanations of these and/or additional options on the [Planning website.](#)

Action Item:

- Maintain a list of meeting exercises on the Planning website

Neighborhood Character

A great way to set the right tone in a meeting is to first try to understand what makes their little corner of the City unique and special. Using exercises that let people talk about all of the good things about the community and their "sense of place" sets the groundwork to hear their concerns about a specific project, and helps provide a better sense of understanding to the project team.

Photo Journalist

Community members are tasked with going out to the site and surrounding neighborhood and taking photos on their phones, or cameras provided, of places that are of special significance or areas of concern that could impact a project.

Live, Work, Play Maps

Using different colored dots participants are asked to note where they live, work, and spend their time. This is less about the project and more about taking the pulse of the people in the room. Additional, more specific location related questions can be asked that could aid the project team such as areas of traffic build up, significant natural features, etc,

Interactive Mapping

Interactive mapping allows community members to actively go into mapping software and mark areas of concern or opportunity within their existing community or around a proposed development site (once it is interposed on an aerial), and add comments to site-specific locations.

SWOT Analysis

(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) is a strategic planning technique used for evaluating almost anything. For the purposes of planning it can help analyze existing conditions all the way to the success of a proposal. **Strengths** are characteristics of the neighborhood or project that give it an advantage over others. **Weaknesses** are characteristics of the neighborhood or project at a disadvantage relative to others. **Opportunities** are elements in the environment that the neighborhood or project could exploit to its advantage. **Threats** are elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the neighborhood or project.

Visioning

Visioning exercises are really helpful if the project is still in an exploratory stage. These are usually fun, big picture brainstorming exercises so it does help to set certain parameters, such as “imagine the site has been built” avoids the inevitable request for unbuilt park space, or “imagine a part of the site has to be for housing”.

Bumper Sticker

(aka Tag Line) asks participants to envision a bumper stickers saying or tag line for their ideal project. This pushes the community to get to the root of their sentiments.

Common Ground

Using small breakout groups of no more than six have them create a couple of lists using only the items they all agree with. The first is all the things they love about their neighborhood, which breaks the ice and helps establish those items that are percolating to the top as the most important to each group. The second is a list of the concerns they have related to the project.

Draw Your...

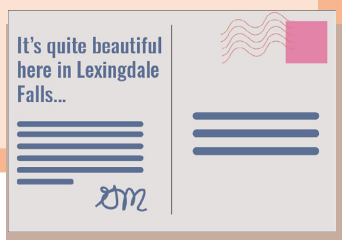
This is an open-ended exercise in which each participant is tasked with drawing their vision for XYZ, whether that is a vision for their neighborhood, a park, the way a building interacts with its surroundings – it can really be any point of contention. This exercise works best for getting kids involved since they aren’t as inhibited as most adults.

Pitch Your Idea

Each person or group is asked to create a short market pitch for what their ideal development would be. Setting parameters helps to get more constructive feedback, such as “Imagine this property must have a building on it, and imagine part of that has to include housing...”

Postcard from the Future

Each person is asked to imagine they are 10 years in the future sending a postcard back to the present. In that future they are describing a fully built out vision of their ideal project.



Role Playing

Participants act out characters in a predefined “situation” dealing with controversial aspects of a project, followed by an evaluation of the interaction and statements made. Role playing allows people to take “risk-free” positions and see from different viewpoints, while forcing active participation. It also helps to reduce tension in a stressful situation and can be used as a good ice-breaker.

Alternatives Analysis

If a project is further along in its creation, the project team can use this time to weigh certain options (or alternatives) that they are considering, and to do that using the input from the public. Asking the public their opinion is powering, but shouldn't be entered into unless the project team is actually willing to consider it, or they run the risk of creating pessimism with the project.

Breakout Groups

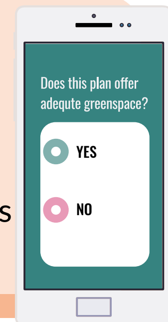
In a meeting perhaps with a large audience, the benefit of breakout sessions is that they serve as an opportunity for attendees to participate more actively. It allows each group to delve into either assigned topics, or topics of their choice. Breakout groups come in all shapes and sizes, ranging from a facilitated discussion to mapping exercises.

Building Blocks

Using toy blocks or three-dimensional model buildings and a map, both to a given scale, participants can work to lay out the site, and investigate alternatives. This aids in discussions of density, circulation, building spacing, and open space.

Handheld Instant Voting

Handheld voting devices can allow instant surveying of participants. This is particularly helpful when asking yes/no questions, or selecting between alternative plans or portions of plans.



Interactive Analysis Tool

Interactive analysis tools are exploratory tools that allow users to investigate aspects of a project by manipulating inputs such as location, size, and design and see the costs and impacts of each variation.

Survey (Paper or Online)

Surveys can be completed prior to, during, or following a meeting, and can range in complexity. They are particularly helpful when determining neighborhood preferences, or selecting between alternatives.

Tactical Planning

Involves going out to the site and demonstrating physical concepts which are often hard to grasp in a meeting space, such as viewsheds, grade changes, height, feeling of enclosure, etc.

Visual Preference Survey

(aka Visual Character Survey) A specific type of survey that uses visual examples (renderings or images from the proposed project or precedent/comparative images) to get at the community's preference for items such as architectural style, signage, building setbacks, landscaping, amenities, surfaces finishes, and other design elements.

Implementation

Typically, the following exercises are used as a project is more thought out, and really deals with prioritizing certain aspects of the design. Inviting the public to participate even in this later stage of the development's planning can still be effective if their opinions are genuinely taking into account.

Budgeting Priorities

Used to identify a priority list for items within a project, participants are given a set amount of play money and asked to "spend" it on the items of highest value to them. This is a great way to collectively rank critical items among a large group of people.

Marooned

This exercise asks meeting participants to imagine they are marooned and this project is an island. As a group, typically more effective in a smaller meeting or breakout groups, they are asked to work together to come up with the top 3-5 aspects of the plan that are most important to have on the island.

Traffic Light

Using colored dots (they can be unlimited or a set number per person) each participant makes judgment calls on possible alternatives, or project options. A green dot signifies a good idea, a yellow dot signifies an idea that may work, and a red dot signifies something they are opposed to.

Lexingdale Falls Neighborhood Meeting Agenda August 24, 2020

About the Proposed Project:

Dan Develops LLC is proposing a new multi-family residential development for the properties located at 1200-1210 Sycamore Blvd, which would require a zone change from R-1B to R-3. The plan includes diverse housing options such as fourplexes and single-family attached townhomes that will fit seamlessly into the surrounding low-rise single-family neighborhood of Lexingdale Falls.

For additional information on each zone see: lexingtonky.gov/zoning-ordinance

Meeting Goals & Objectives:

- Familiarize residents with development process & the different opportunities for input
- Inform residents of the zone change being proposed & any current details relating to the project
- Discuss current perceptions of neighborhood context/character and how development might fit in
- Gather input on proposal regarding general site layout, orientation access points, & proposed density

Agenda:

- Intro to planning & development process
- Presentation on proposed project
- Meeting exercise
- Discussion
- Wrap-Up

Supplemental Materials:

- Imagine Lexington - Get to Know Your City's Latest Comprehensive Plan
- Zoning In on Lexington's Zone Change Process - "Zoning Process 101"

All of these videos can be found at lexingtonky.gov/planning/pre-meeting-videos

Questions? Feel free to reach out!

Dan Dannerson - Project Lead

Email: dan@dandevelops.org

Phone: (859) 555 - 0824

dandevelops.org

Join us virtually! You can access this meeting LIVE on Zoom:
us02web.zoom.us/

Lexingdale Falls Neighborhood Meeting Sign-In August 24, 2020

Name:	Affiliation:	Email: (only if you would you like to receive project updates via email)	Phone Number: (only if you would you like to receive project updates via text)

How can the Division of Planning's processes become easier to understand?

During the development of this Public Engagement Toolkit, it became apparent that increasing an understanding of the process and making the Division more approachable and open was equally as important as the consensus-building and engagement efforts outlined in the previous sections.

An increase in understanding often meant a simplification of how Planning presented and explained materials. The creation of a Development Snapshot, or a single, one-page project synopsis helps to meet one of the major goals of this Public Engagement Toolkit, which was to help increase transparency. Planning also looked for other opportunities to help decode information for the average citizen, including updating the method and appearance of how meeting notifications are delivered, and creating handouts for each of the meetings during the Planning process.

Development Handbook

A substantial overhaul and redesign of the Development Handbook is set to come out in the Summer of 2020. The original "Developer's Handbook" was intended to give an introduction to how the development review process unfolds in the City . This new Development Handbook will be a guide for developers, citizens, and decision makers alike to more succinctly outline the City's development approval process and make it more user-friendly to someone not familiar with Planning's system, such as a community member or outside developer.

The actual approval processes will be discussed in greater detail within the Development Handbook, however the following should help decipher and give a general outline of what is occurring at key points along the way.

Use of a Development Snapshot

Creation of a simple, one-page Development Snapshot for every development could help to:

- Act as a user-friendly landing page for information on current development applications. This is in place of sending the average citizen to the Accela Citizen Portal (the City's site for tracking applications and permits across multiple divisions), a website geared towards the developer.
- Provide both the Development Team and Planning staff a simple, reliable, and consistent handout that hits the highlights of a project.
- Supplement the notification materials required by Planning services to anyone within the 500' buffer of new development or rezoning.

How would it work? The Snapshot can be generated using the same inputs required for a developer to submit an application. Initially, a single static Development Snapshot would be created by Planning staff for each project at the time of application, but the eventual goal is for this to be a live document that would update as the status of a project changes and moves through the process. If enough interest is shown by the development community, Planning may consider creating a simplified template for outside engagement efforts prior to the filing of the application for use by the development team.

Components to be Included in Development Snapshots

1 Date of most recent update/revision

- Gives information on how up-to-date the snapshot is

2 Developer name, address, contact info, & ownership status

- Allows those interested in the development to reach out with questions & comments
- Ownership status indicates whether a property may have contingency requirements associated with a potential rezoning.

3 Short description of project

- Summarizes a bite-sized description of the project & its surrounding context; helpful for readers to see at or near the top of the page

4 Application Details

- Outlines details of the subject property, such as acreage & current/proposed zoning
- Indicates intended Place-Type and Development Type from Placebuilder
- Offers more robust description of intended land use/density than the summary at the top

5 Proposed public engagement

- Lists the different engagement strategies that the developer has offered/plans to offer to the public

6 Map of properties/zoning within the 500' notification area

- Illustrates surrounding zoning & existing development pattern

7 Aerial view of existing property

- Provides visual of existing development patterns with regard to open space, impervious surface, & connectivity

8 Status/Development Process

- Allows reader to see where the application is in the development process at the time of the date listed above

9 Development Plan

- Shows the most current associated plan

Action Items:

- Link the Development Snapshot to BuildingEye and the Accela Citizen Portal.
- Make the Development Snapshot a live document that updates as project status changes.

Development Snapshot (Sample)

1

UPDATED 10.05.2019

2

3

F2 Companies

574 ANGLIANA AVE.

Multi-family apartment housing development in place of an existing tobacco storage warehouse.

Applicant

F2 COMPANIES
6253 RIVERSIDE DRIVE, SUITE 150
DUBLIN, OH, 43017

mike@f2companies.com

Current Property Owner ☑

4

Application Details

Acreage: 5.6 net (5.91 gross) acres

Current Zoning:
Warehouse/Wholesale Business (B-4) Zone

Proposed Zoning:
High Density Residential (R-5) Zone

Place-type / Development Type:
2nd Tier Urban*
For More information about the 2nd Tier Urban Place-Type see Imagine Lexington pages 279-290.

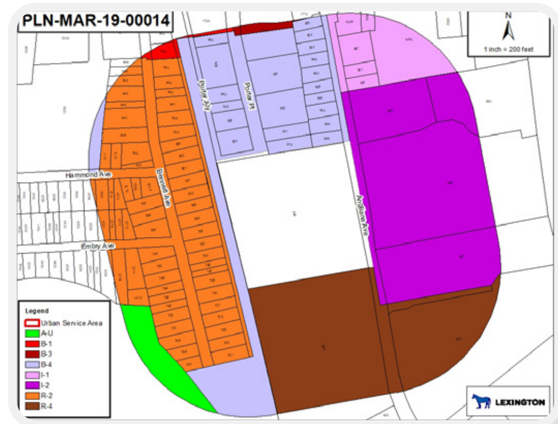
Description:
The proposed development includes six (6) multi-family apartment buildings, with a total of 385 dwelling units. The proposed development represents a density of 68.75 dwelling units per acre. Associated with the dwelling units, the petitioner is seeking to include resident amenities on-site.

5

Public Engagement

- Neighborhood Mailing
- Public Meeting 09/26/19
- Other
- Something else

6



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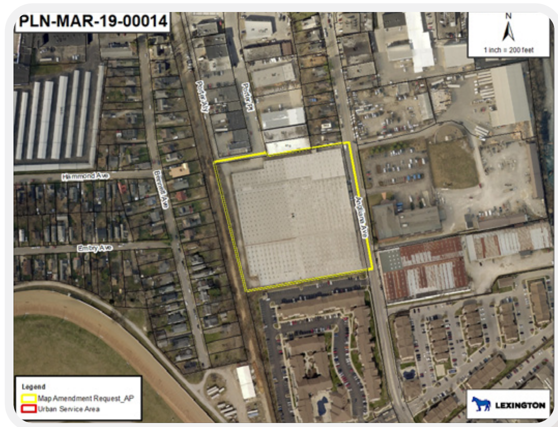

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Status

- ● Public Engagement
- ● Pre-Application Meeting
- ● Application Review
- ○ Planning Staff Review
- ○ Technical Review Committee
- ○ Zoning/Subdivision Committee Meetings
- ○ Planning Commission Hearing
- ○ Urban County Council Meeting

DISCLAIMER: Plans are subject to change. Visit the Accela Citizen Portal (lexingtonky.gov/plans) or contact Planning for the latest information.
You can also visit madeupwebsitehere.com for additional project information directly from the developer.

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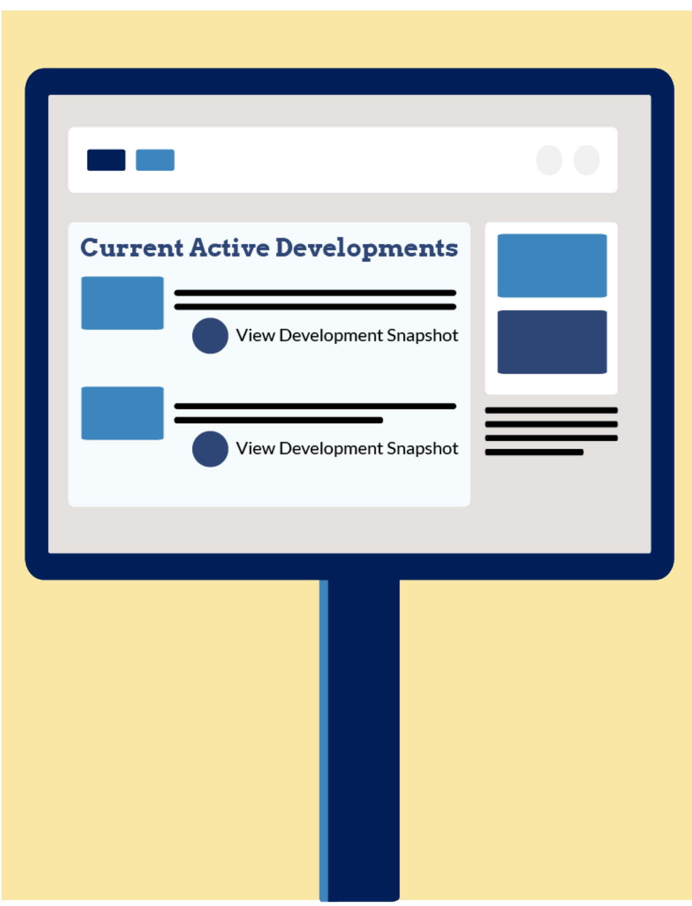
9 Not shown, on reverse

Development Snapshot, cont.

To create a single point of information, a series of links on Planning's website lists all of the active Development Snapshots "in the hopper" as well as all those postponed with potential new hearing dates. The Development Snapshots now act as an initial landing page for each rezoning application, with a link to the Accela Citizen Portal for more detailed information.

This may also be a good tool for use with BuildingEye, the software the City uses to map all planning and building permit applications. Currently, a user can select a mapped address and they will be redirected to the Accela Citizen Portal entry for additional information. Using the Development Snapshot as an interim step could provide just the right level of information for the majority of people who are just curious to see what is on the development horizon for the city.



Engaging on a Broader Scale

Widen Planning's notification demands

Currently, the Division of Planning provides notification to the owners listed through the PVA and to neighborhood associations within the 500' notification buffer, which is already in excess of state requirements. In the future, Planning intends to include all addresses within the 500' radius of a proposed zone change. This new method would include renters and business owners who may not own their buildings but are still stakeholders.

In addition, all transit stops within the 500' buffer would have a notification announcement posted on site through the end of the hearing period.

Action Item:

- Expand notifications to all addresses within the 500' radius of a proposed zone change
- Post notification of zone change to transit stops within 500' buffer

Make notification letters more useful

Inclusion of the Development Snapshot (described in Section 03 Informational Materials) in the rezoning notification mailing will help provide more consistent and in-depth project-specific information, in an easily digestible format.

Use social media for updates

By using Planning's social media platforms, the community can stay informed on the latest decisions on major cases.

Use existing Lexcall / 311 Alerts system

LexCall / 311 is the City's centralized service and information call center. 311 Alerts is a system that allows residents to sign up for email notifications about city services and programs. Residents may register to receive notifications on waste and leaf collection, sanitary sewer overflows, and event alerts. Though it does not currently, the system could also be used to send out notifications on upcoming meetings and hearings, which would be specifically targeted to a certain geography.

Action Item:

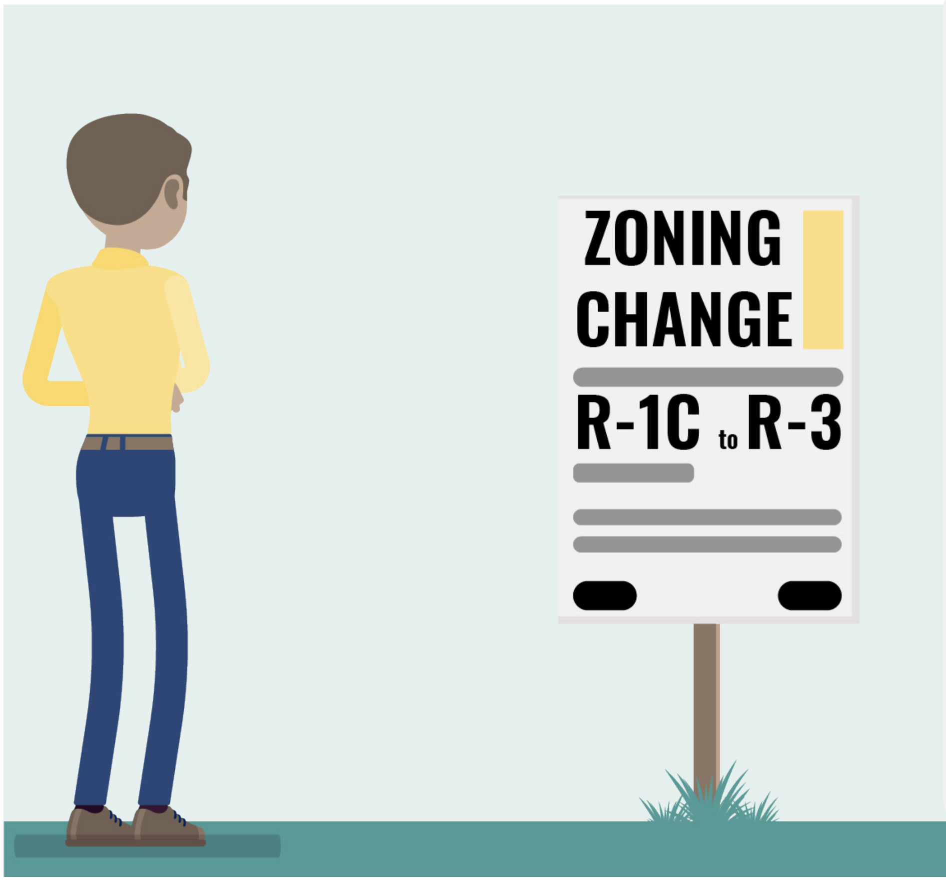
- Consider LexAlerts as an additional method for Planning staff to notify potentially interested citizens on Planning Commission Hearings.

Create Accessible/noticeable Planning-related signage

Updates to the current Planning signage, which is required as part of each rezoning, could make signs more visible and impactful to passers-by, as well as providing more case-specific information.

Action Item:

- Update Planning signage for upcoming zoning changes to enhance visibility, legibility, & clarity of case-specific information.



Elements to be included on zone change signage...

1. Existing & proposed zoning category
2. Date, time, & location of public hearing
3. Contact Info for Planning
4. Website link to active developments
5. LFUCG & Imagine Lexington branding

Increasing Meeting Transparency

As part of Lexington's unique rezoning application approval process, there are several key meetings that the project team must go through, and which the public are either able to attend as an observer or encouraged to take part in if they so choose. The first three meetings are focused on providing staff recommendations and conditions to the project team. These meetings are:

- **Technical Review Committee (TRC)** – composed of a wide variety of professionals from different divisions of City government as well as related utilities and agencies. The focus of this meeting is the technical aspects of a plan and recommend approval, referral, postponement, or disapproval to the Subdivision Committee.
- **Subdivision Committee** – composed of half the members of Planning Commission and representatives of the Divisions of Traffic Engineering and Engineering. Their job is to review a proposed plan and consider the outcomes of the TRC, then pass on a recommendation to the full Planning Commission of approval, referral to the full Commission, postponement, or disapproval.
- **Zoning Committee** – composed of the other members of Planning Commission. Their job is to review any proposed zone change or zoning ordinance text amendment, then pass on a recommendation to the full Planning Commission of approval, referral to the full Commission, postponement, or disapproval.

The developer or the representative of the developer, typically an engineer and/or lawyer, is strongly advised to attend to answer questions from all of the committees. These meetings are not part of the state statute, but are unique to Lexington's process, to aid in the making of an informed ruling on the part of the Planning Commission. While these meetings are open to the public they are typically for interested parties to observe the committee's decision process. Members of the public, who are present at these meetings, may make a brief statement directly to the committee; however, these meetings are not public hearings. The Chair may impose a time limit on those statements.

In the case that these Committees are being held digitally, a link for the online meeting will be listed in the agenda in advance of the meeting.

The following meetings are intended as public forums to hear a project:

- **Planning Commission Hearing** – the opportunity for Planning staff to present their findings, the developers to make a presentation, the public to comment, and the Planning Commission to ask questions before they make a recommendation of approval, postponement, or disapproval.
- **Council Hearing** – the Council can either ratify the recommendation made by the Planning Commission or have their own Public Hearing to review the proposed zone change. A request to hold a Public Hearing can be made to the subject property's Councilmember, or a petition can be made to the Council as a whole. Should there be a Public Hearing, the Planning staff would present the recommendation of the Planning Commission to the Council, who will make a ruling of approval or disapproval.

Charting Public Input Opportunities

Status of Proposal

- Public Engagement
- Pre-Application Meeting
- Application Review
- Staff Review
- Technical Review Committee
- Zoning/Subdivision Committee Meetings
- Planning Commission Hearing
- Urban County Council Meeting

Engagement loop may be ongoing

Engagement between the applicant and the public

- Any engagement efforts will be noted in the case file for that development
- Any public comments are off the City's official record

Committee meetings are to aid Planning Commission in their ruling

- Internal meeting open to the public
- Public comment/input is limited and off the City's official record

Correspondence (emails/letters) in support or opposition

Applicant, staff, and public present their sides to the Planning Commission

- Full Hearing becomes City's official record

*Spacing along line is used to indicate relative time passing between each status point.

On or off the record?

Brown	Public **attendance** is welcome, but public **input** is limited and off the official record
Pink	Public **input**, both written and spoken, are recorded on the official record

Improve Planning-led meetings

The following have been instituted in an effort to improve Planning's processes and help decode those meetings held by the Division:

- **A one-page handout:** made available alongside the agenda, explains the function of each committee or hearing, the members of that committee, the way the meeting is run, and the expected outcomes. These handouts (samples beginning on page 64) will particularly help set expectations for developers unfamiliar with Lexington's process, and members of the public interested in a particular project.
- **Name plates:** for each committee member so that developers unfamiliar with the process or members of the public observing in the room can identify who is providing comments on certain issues.

Action Item:

- Create name plates/tags (or represented agency) for TRC.
- Consider a different room layout or a larger venue for Committee meetings.

Something that was stated as an issue during the toolkit creation was that the timing of Planning-related meetings and hearings were inconvenient for the majority of people, as they occurred during the day. Planning is regularly looking at ways to better accommodate all those citizens who want to be involved. The following decisions were made:

- Technical Review Committee, Subdivision Committee, and Zoning Committee all require many members of City staff and outside agencies to participate. These meetings are geared towards internal, technical review of plans, but anyone unable to attend those meetings is always welcome to speak to a Planning staff member to get a rundown of what occurred.
- Planning is considering ways to improve the Planning Commission hearing process and make the meetings more accessible. This may be accomplished by shifting the times of meeting, or it may include the use of technology to engage more of the community.

Action Item:

- Develop a Planning Commission Meeting and Hearing process that is more open and inclusive to all interested parties.

Page intentionally blank.

What is the Technical Review Committee?

The Technical Review Committee (TRC) focuses on reviewing the technical aspects of a plan with each member focusing on specific items related to their field of expertise. This ensures that a plan is fully functional and in compliance with the various standards and regulations that guide development. The Technical Committee's members, and their expertise, are relied upon by the Planning Commission when they make decisions about future development.

Where does TRC fall in the approval process?

- Public Engagement
- Pre-Application Meeting
- Application Review
- Planning Staff Review
- Technical Review Committee
- Zoning / Subdivision Committee Meeting*
- Planning Commission Hearing
- Urban County Council Decision*

TRC typically meets the last Wednesday of every month, at 8:30 a.m. in the Division of Planning Office, 101 East Vine Street, 7th floor Conference Room. This is the first committee review of a plan that will take place following application, usually about 3 weeks after the plan is filed.

*The Zoning Committee and the Urban County Council may view and discuss a plan that was filed in conjunction with a zoning change, but do not take any action.

How is the meeting run?

TRC is staffed and facilitated by the Division of Planning, and plans are reviewed on a first come, first served basis on the applicant's arrival. Either the applicant or the representative of the applicant, typically engineer and/or lawyer, is strongly advised to be at this meeting. A member of Planning presents the basics of each plan and then the committee members discuss any specific concerns or issues they found in their review of the plan. Committee members are asked to review the plan and submit any conditions or comments regarding the plan prior to TRC. During the committee's meeting, TRC members may ask the applicant (or their team) specific questions or provide feedback on what revisions will be needed to meet the city's requirements. The TRC members will need to provide a "sign-off" indicating the plan meets all of the requirements for a particular division, agency or utility if the plan is approved by the Planning Commission. The TRC can recommend:

Who is on the TRC?

Consisting of a wide variety of professionals from many levels of City government and development-related utilities and other agencies*:

- Division of Planning
- Division of Environmental Services
- Division of Traffic Engineering
- Division of Engineering
- Division of Fire and Emergency Services
- Division of Parks and Recreation
- Division of Waste Management
- Division of Water Quality
- Addressing/E-911 Office
- Lexington Police Department
- Division of Building Inspection
- Windstream
- Kentucky Utilities
- Kentucky American Water
- Columbia Gas
- U.S. Postal Service
- Health Department
- Fayette County Public Schools
- Kentucky Transportation Cabinet District 7
- USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service

*Committee membership list is available by request from Planning staff

- Approval
- Referral
- Postponement
- Disapproval

From here, the plan progresses forward in the process to be reviewed by the Subdivision Committee, or in cases that a Development Plan is associated with a zone change, it will also be discussed at the Zoning Committee the following Thursday (typically the first Thursday of the month). The applicant can choose to make revisions and resubmit to Planning staff prior to the Thursday committee meeting, or the Planning Commission hearing, in hopes of getting to an approval recommendation, if the plan is not there yet.

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What does the Technical Review Committee (TRC) review?

On any given day, the Technical Review Committee may review any or all of the following:

	Purpose	TRC Role
Preliminary Subdivision Plan	Depicts lot layout, street details, utility information, etc., as part of a proposed subdivision	Determines if Plan is in compliance with Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations based on each committee member's area of expertise; makes recommendation to the Subdivision Committee
Final Subdivision Plat (aka Final Record Plat) *These are heard by the Planning Commission under certain circumstances, though are typically handled administratively*	Depicts all substantially complete infrastructure improvements, and legal lotting on the site	Determines if Plan is in compliance with Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations based on each committee member's area of expertise; makes recommendation to the Subdivision Committee, if necessary
Preliminary Development Plan (aka Zoning Development Plan)	Typically included with a zone change request; provides conceptual depiction of buildings, parking, open space, roads, access points, etc., on a site proposed for rezoning	Determines if Plan is in compliance with Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations based on each committee member's area of expertise; makes recommendation to the Subdivision Committee and is viewed by the Zoning Committee
Final Development Plan	Provides exact depiction of all property improvements, including buildings, parking, open space, roads, access points, etc. on the development site	Determines if Plan is in compliance with Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations based on each committee member's area of expertise; makes recommendation to the Subdivision Committee
Reapproval Items	Provides an applicant the opportunity to re-submit any plan which was previously certified, but for which building permits have not been obtained	Determines if the time elapsed since original approval has necessitated changes to the plan for health, safety, and welfare concerns, or because applicable ordinances or regulations have changed
Postponed Items	Any items that were postponed, either from a previous meeting or indefinitely at some point in the past. TRC review is not required unless a plan has significantly changed from its original version	If a plan has significantly changed, TRC will provide updates to their original comments, based on their areas of expertise

LEXINGTON Planning

This document is intended for general information purposes only. For more details about a specific project, please Division of Planning staff..

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What is the Subdivision Committee?

The Subdivision Committee functions to review a proposed plan and consider the outcomes of the Technical Review Committee (TRC), then pass on a recommendation to the full Planning Commission.

Where does Subdivision Committee fall in the approval process?

- Public Engagement
- Pre-Application Meeting
- Application Review
- Planning Staff Review
- Technical Review Committee
- Zoning / Subdivision Committee Meetings*
- Planning Commission Hearing
- Urban County Council Decision*

This committee usually meets in the morning on the first Thursday of each month, at 8:30 a.m. in the Division of Planning Office, 101 East Vine Street, 7th floor Conference Room. This is typically one week following the TRC, and one week prior to the Planning Commission's meeting devoted to development plan and subdivision requests.

For plans that are submitted in conjunction with a zone change request, the Commission's review is heard at the time the zoning is reviewed, three weeks following the Subdivision Committee meeting.

*The Zoning Committee and the Urban County Council may view and discuss a plan that was filed in conjunction with a zoning change, but do not take any action.

Who is on the Subdivision Committee?

This committee is composed of six members of the Planning Commission, and representatives of the Divisions of Traffic Engineering and Engineering. Certain additional members of Planning staff and the TRC may also be present.

How is the meeting run?

The Subdivision Committee meeting is organized by an agenda, which is ordered based on the complexity of the discussion items reflected on the staff report. Either the applicant or the representative of the applicant, typically engineer and/or lawyer, is strongly advised to be at this meeting. A member of the staff presents the basics of each plan and the outcomes of the TRC. The committee members discuss any specific concerns or issues they may have. During the committee's meeting, members may ask the applicant (or their team) specific questions or provide feedback on what revisions will be needed to meet the city's requirements.

The Subdivision Committee can recommend:

- Approval
- Referral
- Postponement
- Disapproval

From here, the plan progresses forward in the process to the Planning Commission Meeting on Subdivision Items, on the 2nd Thursday of the month at 1:30pm in the Council Chambers.

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What does the Subdivision Committee review?

On any given day, the Subdivision Committee may review any or all of the following:

	Purpose	Subdivision Committee Role
Preliminary Subdivision Plan	Depicts lot layout, street details, utility information, etc., as part of a proposed subdivision	Reviews the recommendation of the TRC and provides feedback to the applicant; makes recommendation to the full Planning Commission
Final Subdivision Plat (aka Final Record Plat) *These are heard by the Planning Commission under certain circumstances, though are typically handled administratively*	Depicts all substantially complete infrastructure improvements, and legal lotting on the site	Reviews the recommendation of the TRC and provides feedback to the applicant; makes recommendation to the Planning Commission, if applicable
Preliminary Development Plan (aka Zoning Development Plan)	Typically included with a zone change request; provides general depiction of buildings, parking, open space, roads, access points, etc., on a site proposed for rezoning	Reviews the recommendation of the TRC and provides feedback to the applicant; makes recommendation to the Planning Commission
Final Development Plan	Provides exact depiction of all property improvements, including buildings, parking, open space, roads, access points, etc. on the development site	Reviews the recommendation of the TRC and provides feedback to the applicant; makes recommendation to the Planning Commission
Reapproval Items	Provides an applicant the opportunity to re-submit any plan which was previously certified, but for which building permits have not been obtained	Determines if the time elapsed since original approval has necessitated changes to the plan for health, safety, and welfare concerns, or because applicable ordinances or regulations have changed; if plan has changed, makes a new and/or updated recommendation to the Planning Commission
Postponed Items	Any items that were postponed, either from a previous meeting or indefinitely at some point in the past. TRC review is not required unless a plan has significantly changed from its original version	If a plan has significantly changed, the Subdivision Committee can review it and provide a new and/or updated recommendation to the Planning Commission
Subdivision Regulations Amendment (SRA)	Provides a means for the Planning staff, decision-makers, or a public applicant to update the text of Subdivision Regulations, based on the needs of the community as a whole, not the use of a specific property	Determines if the proposed change to the Subdivision Regulations is in agreement with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and consistent with other regulations; makes recommendation to the Planning Commission

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What is the Zoning Committee?

The Zoning Committee functions to review any proposed zone change (map amendment requests) or zoning ordinance text amendment, then makes a recommendation to the full Planning Commission.

Where does Zoning Committee fall in the approval process?

- Public Engagement
- Pre-Application Meeting
- Application Review
- Planning Staff Review
- Technical Review Committee
- Zoning / Subdivision Committee Meetings
- Planning Commission Hearing
- Urban County Council Decision

This committee usually meets in the afternoon on the first Thursday of each month, at 1:30 p.m. in the Division of Planning Office, 101 East Vine Street, 7th floor Conference Room. This is typically one week following the TRC, and three weeks prior to the Planning Commission's meeting devoted to zoning items.

In most cases, Preliminary Development Plans are submitted in conjunction with a zone change request. While the Zoning Committee does look at the Preliminary Development Plan, it is utilized as supporting material for the discussion regarding the zone change. The Subdivision Committee makes a recommendation regarding the Preliminary Development Plan.

Who is on the Zoning Committee?

This Committee is composed of half of the members of the Planning Commission. Certain additional members of Planning staff may also be present.

How is the meeting run?

The Zoning Committee meeting is run based on a first come first serve basis. Either the applicant or the representative of the applicant, typically engineer and/or lawyer, should be at this meeting. A member of the Planning staff presents the basics of each zone change application and the associated development plan, followed by a brief response by the applicant or their representative. The Committee members discuss any specific concerns or issues they may have. During the Committee's meeting, members may ask the applicant (or their team) specific questions or provide feedback on what revisions will be needed to meet the city's requirements, and indicate if additional information is desired for the public hearing.

The Zoning Committee can recommend:

- Approval
- Referral
- Postponement
- Disapproval

From here, the application progresses forward in the process to the Planning Commission Meeting on Zoning Items, on the 4th Thursday of the month at 1:30pm in the Council Chambers.

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What does the Zoning Committee review?

On any given day, the Zoning Committee may review any or all of the following:

	Purpose	Zoning Committee Role
Zoning change (aka Map Amendment Request)	Provides a developer the means to change the zone of a property to accommodate a desired use and different residential density	Determines if the proposed zone is in agreement with the Comprehensive Plan; makes recommendation to the full Planning Commission
Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment (ZOTA)	Provides a means for the Planning staff or a public applicant to update the text of Zoning Ordinance based on the needs of the community as a whole, not the use of a specific property	Determines if the proposed change to the Zoning Ordinance is in agreement with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and consistent with other regulations; makes recommendation to the Planning Commission
Overlay Zones	Provides for the creation of special zoning districts, placed over an existing zone, which identifies special provisions; often relate to the adoption of design standards to conserve and protect neighborhood character	Determines if the proposed overlay zone is in agreement with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and consistent with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance; makes recommendation to the Planning Commission

What is the Planning Commission Hearing?

The Planning Commission Hearing is the official venue for the Planning Commission to approve subdivision plats and development plans and make recommendations to City Council for zone change requests; as well as, review and adopt the City's comprehensive plan.

Where does the Planning Commission Hearing fall in the approval process?

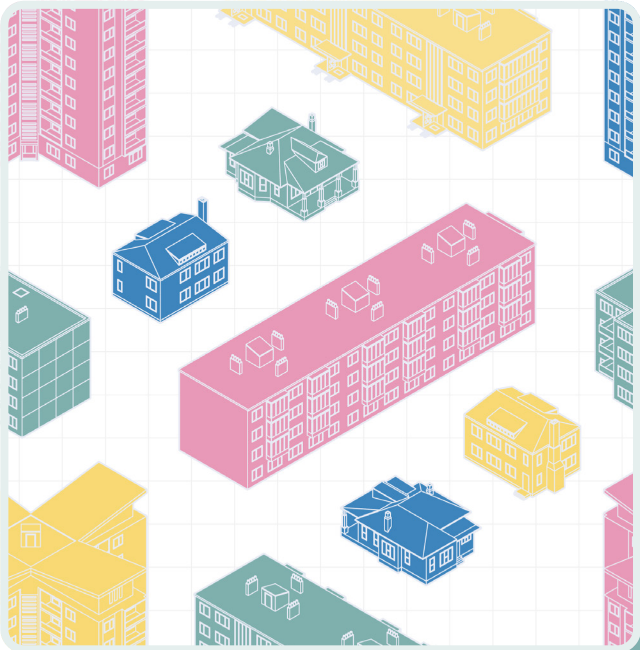
- Public Engagement
- Pre-Application Meeting
- Application Review
- Planning Staff Review
- Technical Review Committee
- Zoning / Subdivision Committee Meetings
- Planning Commission Hearing
- Urban County Council Decision

This Planning Commission usually meets in the afternoon on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month, at 1:30 p.m. in the Government Center, 200 East Main Street, 2nd Floor Council Chamber.

The Public Hearing on the second Thursday is focused on subdivision items that do not involve zone changes and occurs one week following the Subdivision Committee meeting. The Public Hearing on the fourth Thursday is scheduled for zoning cases, include zone changes (map amendment requests) and zoning ordinance text amendments, and occurs three weeks following the Zoning Committee meeting.

Who is on the Planning Commission?

The Planning Commission is made up of 11 volunteer members appointed by the Office of the Mayor. They come from diverse backgrounds, but all are Lexington residents.



How is the meeting run?

The Planning Commission Hearing is run directly from the distributed agenda. A member of the Planning staff presents the staff report and the Zoning and/or Subdivision Committee's recommendations for each case. Either the applicant or the representative of the applicant, typically engineer and/or lawyer, is then allowed to make a presentation. Following that, any other interested parties either in favor or opposition are allowed to state their case. The applicant and staff are both provided the opportunity to respond to those comments. All statements are given a time limit outlined by the Planning Commission's adopted bylaws and printed on the agenda.

The Planning Commission then deliberates and can vote:

- Approval
- Postponement
- Disapproval

In the case of a zone change or text amendment, the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the Urban County Council. Within 90 days of the day of the Planning Commission decision, the Council can either ratify the recommendation made by the Planning Commission or have their own Public Hearing to review the proposed zone change. Requests for additional time must be made to the staff at least two days in advance.

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What does the Planning Commission review?

On any given day, the Planning Commission may review any or all of the following:

	Purpose	Planning Commission Role	Can building take place?
Preliminary Subdivision Plan	Depicts lot layout, street details, utility information, etc., as part of a proposed subdivision	Determines if Plan is in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations; if so, approval is granted in a ministerial action	No building permits may be granted; nor may lots be sold or transferred, but site improvements can be undertaken
Final Subdivision Plat (aka Final Record Plat) *These are heard by the Planning Commission under certain circumstances, though are typically handled administratively*	Depicts all substantially complete infrastructure improvements, and legal lotting on the site	Determines if Plan is in compliance with the Subdivision Regulations and, if applicable, a previously approved Preliminary Subdivision Plan; if so, approval is granted in a final ministerial action. Last official consideration of a major subdivision by the PC	Yes; once plan is signed or "certified" by PC Secretary or designee (Planning Director)
Preliminary Development Plan *(aka Zoning Development Plan)*	Typically included with a zone change request; provides general depiction of buildings, parking, open space, roads, access points, etc., on a site proposed for rezoning	Considers whether Plan is in agreement with the Comprehensive Plan and consistent with Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance, acknowledging its preliminary nature and that PC approval of a Final Development plan will be required prior to any development on the property	No
Final Development Plan	Provides exact depiction of all property improvements, including buildings, parking, open space, roads, access points, etc. on the development site	Considers whether Plan is consistent with any approved Preliminary Development Plan, and compliant with Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations; if compliant, approval is granted in a final action. If plan differs significantly, applicant will be expected to justify changes, and Commission will take that into consideration	Yes
Zoning Map Amendment *(aka Map Amendment Request or zone change)*	Provides a developer the means to change the zone of a property to accommodate a desired use	Determines if the proposed zone is in agreement with the Comprehensive Plan; makes recommendation to the Urban County Council	N/A
Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment (ZOTA) or Subdivision Regulation Amendment (SRA)	Provides a means for the Planning staff, decision-makers, or a public applicant to update the text of the Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Regulations, based on the needs of the community as a whole, not the use of a specific property	Determines if the proposed change to the Zoning Ordinance or Subdivision Regulations is in agreement with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and consistent with other regulations; makes recommendation to the Urban County Council	N/A
Overlay Zones	Provides for the creation of special zoning districts, placed over an existing zone, which identifies special provisions; often relate to the adoption of design standards to protect neighborhood character	Determines if the proposed overlay zone is in agreement with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan and consistent with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance; makes recommendation to the Urban County Council	N/A

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Educational Component

Work to decipher jargon

Planning staff and developers could both work harder to not use so much field-specific jargon.

An additional tool that may be of particular relevance is the Urban Design Decoder - A guide for navigating the jargon designers use when describing Lexington's urban fabric. This glossary helps to simplify broader concepts, such as open space, setbacks, and mobility.

Also, Planning has created a glossary to include many of the typical terms used in the development process and can be found on the Planning website. This glossary is constantly being updated with new terms.

Urban fabric: noun -
the form of a city, emphasizing building types, roadways, and public/open spaces, but not necessarily dealing with the related function.

Action Items:

- Make Urban Design Decoder available on the Planning website
- Create and update a development glossary on the Planning website

Produce Videos / Podcasts on Planning FAQ topics

As a means to regularly educate and engage citizens about the Planning process, as well as helping walk developers through steps to approval, Planning creates content for a series of brief videos or podcasts. These are regularly made accessible on-demand via our websites (Division of Planning and Imagine Lexington). Videos ideally run between 3-5 minutes and feature closed-captioning. The video content is strongly recommended for developers to use in their public outreach. A consistent video opener to a meeting can help set expectations on both sides.

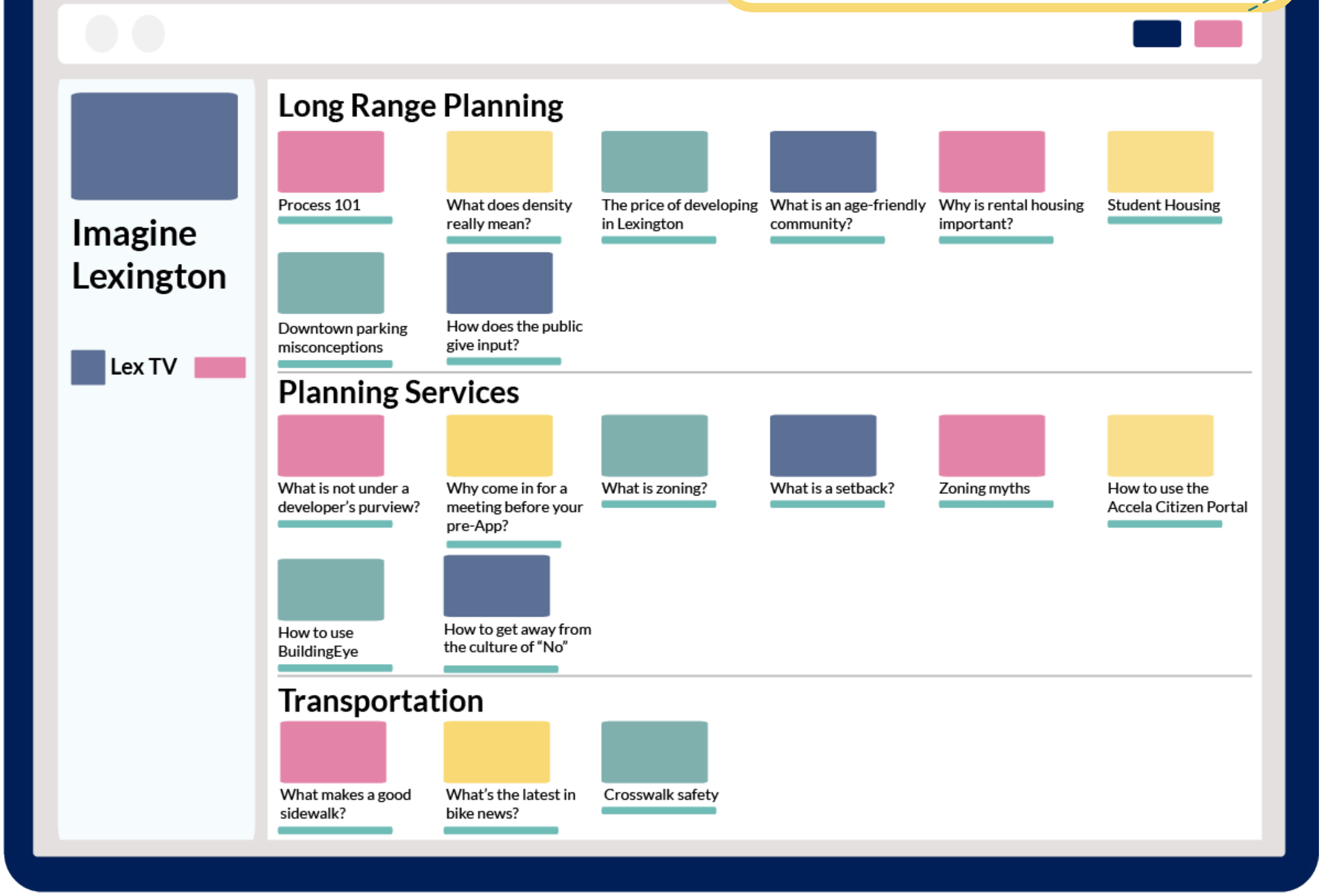
The videos of particular relevance to rezoning projects are:

- What is Imagine Lexington?
- How does the Placebuilder work, and how is a Place-Type selected?
- What is the City's process for rezoning?
- What is covered under a zone change AND what isn't?

These could be distilled down into a "**Process 101**" video for use during public engagement.

Action Item:

- Create a video /podcast series answering Planning FAQs.



Provide on-demand neighborhood / community training

As civil servants, it is the job of Planning to be of service to the community. In that vein, the Division of Planning is increasing their outreach and educational presence by encouraging neighborhood associations and community groups to ask Planning staff to come speak to them about relevant topics and issues. A good starting place will be to look at what topics are covered in the video / podcast series with the thought that each could be expanded upon.

Furnish developers with site/neighborhood history

In collaboration with CivicLex, and On The Table, a series of Neighborhood Snapshots is being created that provide the highlights of neighborhoods throughout Lexington. Additionally, staff is always available to discuss past development successes and failures in an area as well as site specific constraints and issues.

Action Item:

- Collaborate with CivicLex, and On The Table, to create a series of Neighborhood Snapshots that provide highlights of each neighborhood.

Planning Resources

Planning Staff

Planning staff is the most important resource for all three pieces of the development triangle:

1. The Applicant
2. The Public
3. Decision Makers

The primary role of Planning staff is to help all three of those groups navigate the development process. Typical day-to-day responsibilities that some people might not know about include:

- Answering any and all questions ranging from details of a specific project to generalities about zoning, and everything in between.
- Giving advice to potential applicants before they even apply, or go through a pre-application meeting, when they are still in the exploratory phase.
- Walking new (and even experienced) development teams through the steps of application.
- Attending public meetings at the request of the project team or the community to help explain the application process or update neighborhoods on the latest Planning-related efforts.
- Maintaining continual professional development to stay current on the latest planning trends and best practices.

For the most up-to-date information on a specific project the suggestion is always to reach out to a member of Planning staff, either over the phone, via email, or in person.

Division of Planning Office
Phoenix Building – 7th Floor
101 E. Vine St., Lexington, KY 40507
Hours: Monday – Friday: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Email us: planningmailbox@lexingtonky.gov
Phone: (859) 258-3160

Documents & Resources for Further Reading

Imagine Lexington

The 2018 Comprehensive Plan, Imagine Lexington, is designed to create a vision and strategy that will allow Lexington to grow and prosper while preserving, protecting and enhancing existing neighborhoods, downtown and the rural Bluegrass cultural landscape. Imagine Lexington is the next chapter in our city's history and offers the opportunities for everyone to be involved in shaping the future of our community.

The Placebuilder

An element of Imagine Lexington created to provide guidance for both developers and the public during the zone change process. The Placebuilder includes development criteria that should be considered for each development proposal in Lexington.

LFUCG Zoning Ordinance

LFUCG Land Subdivision Regulations

Other Plans & Resources

Access other plans and resources developed by both Planning and other LFUCG divisions. These additional plans are pertinent to the development process and can provide additional context to recommendations within the 2018 Comprehensive Plan and related documents.

Do you have questions or feedback regarding the PET Toolkit or other planning topics?

Division of Planning Office

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Stay up-to-date on the PET Project & other Division of Planning Projects on social media!

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