

Some Questions You May Have About Neighborhood Planning

What is a neighborhood plan?

A neighborhood plan is a guide for making future decisions about how the City should allocate resources in College Hill, what kinds of development activity is appropriate, and what issues College Hill residents and property owners are concerned about. It's a statement of what the neighborhood wants to achieve and become, as well as a roadmap to reach those destinations.

What will a neighborhood plan do?

The neighborhood plan will identify and document the physical, social, and economic trends and conditions present in College Hill, and will express a shared vision for the neighborhood's future, developed through a public engagement process. The plan will also identify goals and strategies that communicate the neighborhood's intended direction to residents, decision-makers, service providers, and business leaders.

Will a neighborhood plan tell me or my neighbors what to do, or what not to do?

A carefully crafted plan will express the neighborhood's goals, preferences, and priorities, but will leave flexibility to accommodate real world situations. The plan is a policy document, not a regulatory one. The City's zoning and other existing ordinances, combined with the full range of public services and resources form the mechanism for implementing the plan.

What if I disagree with what the plan says?

All stakeholders are urged to express their opinions throughout the planning process. The more input received, the more accurately the plan can reflect the viewpoints of all affected parties. Even if the final plan document is at odds with your personal vision, there may be opportunities to influence implementation of the plan, in ways that will be compatible with your preferences. If needed, the plan can also be amended to accommodate changing circumstances or new perspectives.

What will it take to develop a neighborhood plan for College Hill?

Developing a successful neighborhood plan usually takes 12 to 15 months and will require the engagement of many residents, property owners, and other stakeholders—including you. The work of developing the plan will be conducted through a series of evening and Saturday meetings, as well as the ongoing efforts of City staff to keep the process moving. But this is only the beginning. As the planning process unfolds, stakeholders will have opportunities to build partnerships and accumulate the social capital that can enable the neighborhood collectively to solve common problems. Ultimately, the more responsibility residents and properties owners invest in developing the plan, the greater the benefits to the neighborhood will be.

Will a neighborhood plan solve our problems?

A neighborhood plan is a tool that the neighborhood and the City administration can use to help improve conditions in College Hill, but the real solutions are to be found in the level of dedication that you and your neighbors put into each other and the plan development and implementation processes. Identifying, strengthening, and utilizing College Hill's existing assets and becoming effective at drawing on other resources will also be crucial parts of shaping the neighborhood's future to benefit its residents and property owners. The planning process and the resulting neighborhood plan can provide the structure and catalyst College Hill needs to attain this future.

What if I don't own property in College Hill, just rent?

Anyone who has an interest in the future of the College Hill neighborhood is a legitimate stakeholder in the planning process—your participation is important!

I don't know anything about planning, how will I understand what's going on?

City staff realize that planning can seem mysterious, technical, and intimidating. To help ordinary folks stay ahead of the learning curve and become comfortable discussing neighborhood planning issues, the planning process will include a strong educational aspect.