



# Winnipeg

Public Open House Guidelines

For Development Proposals





## Public Open House Guidelines

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Prior to making any application for developments with the City of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Public Service strongly encourages all applicants to engage the community, including the Ward Councillor, in consultation. This engagement can range from talking to the adjoining neighbors to an informal open house for nearby residents and property owners to mediation with the most vocal community member(s) – depending on the scale and scope of the development. For larger or controversial developments an open house is recommended.

Please feel free to contact the Planning and Land Use Division if you have any further questions about open houses. Developers may also consider contacting a specialist in community consultation.

## The Benefits of Public Open Houses

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The benefits of this consultation can greatly enhance the development process. Formal public hearing can be inherently confrontational at times, and not the best forum for dialogue to occur amongst all the parties.

A majority of citizens receive information about a proposed development only from the signage or newspaper ad, or from other neighbours. Residents and property owners may then appear at the public hearing with a lack of information or with misinformation about the development, and oppose what they have heard through the community.

An open house allows the developer to inform citizens regarding the details of a project. An open house provides people a sense they are being respected enough to be asked for their opinions. An open house allows the developer to determine what issues (if any) may be raised that can then be addressed at the Public Hearing. An open house provides an opportunity for consensus to be reached.



## Guidelines

**The following are guidelines to assist applicants when arranging an open house.**

- Inform the Planner and Ward Councillor of the date, time & location of open house.
- Drop notifications into Canada post boxes within a 300 foot walking distance of the subject property.
- Advertise the open house in the local newspaper (Lance, Harold, Metro One, etc).
- Provide at least one (1) week notification prior to the open house.
- Avoid a date that falls on Statutory Holidays; Long Weekends; Fridays; Saturday Evenings; Sunday Evenings; Federal / Provincial / Municipal Election Days; Council or Community Committee meeting.
- Select a reasonable time of day - early weekday evenings such as 3 pm to 6 pm; or weekend afternoons, 2pm to 5 pm.
- Allow 2-3 hrs for the public to come and go as they please.
- Choose a 3rd party, neutral site in the neighbourhood such as a school, community club, arena, church, golf club, curling club, hotel / motel, halls / auditoriums, etc.
- Ensure signage is up in the chosen building on the date of the open house that directs people to the appropriate meeting space.
- Provide presentation material on large scale boards with site plans, building elevations, parking, landscaping, garbage container location, shadow study, traffic studies, balcony locations, out door lighting, etc.
- Allow people to circulate freely to review the presentation material.
- Ensure a few people are at the open house who are prepared to answer questions on all aspects of the proposal and be willing to listen to alternatives.
- Have an attendance sheet recording the names of participants and the general location of their homes (Street Name).
- Solicit feedback on the open house and on the development through an exit survey.
- Provide results on attendance (How many people? General location of their residence) and the exit survey (How many support? How many against?) to the Planner and Ward Councillor prior to the Public Hearing.
- You may consider providing refreshments.