

Public Open House Guidelines for Developers

The City of Winnipeg strongly encourages all applicants for land development projects to engage with the community, including the Ward Councillor, prior to making an application. Sharing information and gaining community feedback about a proposed development prior to the public hearing is an important part of the development process. Following are some guidelines to assist applicants when arranging an open house.

- The City of Winnipeg recommends the developer/applicant not set and advertise a public open house date until the appropriate District Planner and Ward Councillor have been given the opportunity to review and sign off on the project design details and the presentation boards/information.
- Once vetted through their offices, inform the District Planner and Ward Councillor of the date, time and location of open house.
- Drop notifications into Canada Post boxes within a 91.4 m/300 ft. walking distance of the subject property where the proposed development is to occur.
- Advertise the open house in the local newspaper (Lance, Harold, Metro, etc.).
- Provide all stakeholders at least one-week notification prior to the open house event.
- Avoid a date that falls on: statutory holidays; long weekends; Fridays; Saturday or Sunday evenings; federal, provincial, or municipal election days; or on City Council or Community Committee meeting dates.
- A public open house event should have a range of times and days to allow all to attend. Early weekday evenings such as 3 pm to 8 pm; and/or weekend afternoons from 2 pm to 5 pm are preferable.
- Allow at least two to three hours for the public/stakeholders to come and go as they please.
- Choose a third-party, neutral and accessible location in the neighbourhood such as a school, community club, arena, church, golf club, curling club, hotel, auditorium, etc.
- Ensure signage is posted at the main entrance and within the chosen building on the date of the open house to direct people to the appropriate meeting space.
- Provide presentation material on large scale boards with a description of the project details, site plans, building elevations, parking, landscaping, garbage container location, shadow study, traffic studies, balcony locations, outdoor lighting, etc.
- Allow people to circulate freely to review the presentation material.
- Consider providing refreshments.
- Maximize accessibility of and participation in your events, by considering the tips for designing your invitations and promotion material, selecting the venue and preparing and sharing your presentation as provided in "Guide to Accessible Meetings":
www.omssa.com/docs/OMSSA_Conducting_Accessible_Meetings.pdf
- Ensure a few people are at the open house who are prepared to answer questions on all aspects of the proposal, including being willing to listen to alternatives.
- Use an attendance sheet to record the names of participants and the general location of their homes (use street names).
- Solicit feedback about the open house and on the development by offering an exit survey.
- Provide a written report of the results to the City of Winnipeg outlining the date of the event(s), attendance (number of people; general location of their residence) and the results of the exit survey (number of people in support and against; general comments, both positive and negative) at least two weeks prior to the Public Hearing.