Neighborhood Planning

Toolkit

Making Irving the City You Imagined

2022
Introduction

Welcome to Irving’s Planning and Community Development Neighborhood Planning program!

Through this initiative, the city wants to help neighborhoods set a vision for how land should be used in their community. The goal is to enhance the quality of life for current and future residents, while preserving or improving the neighborhoods’ existing attributes.

The program will help neighborhood groups share information and make decisions along with the city to implement the community’s vision.

Working with the City of Irving’s Communications Department and Planning and Community Development Department, neighborhood associations will be invited to help explore possible land uses for their community and engage in a comprehensive planning process, which will help create a unified vision for the city.
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What is Neighborhood Planning

This process engages residents of a defined neighborhood in creating a vision for their future. The outreach will:

- Seek input on the desired future of each community.
- Use a grassroots approach to planning that draws ideas from those who know the community best – the residents themselves – to improve their quality of life and achieve a “neighborhood vision” that best serves their needs and desires.
- Engage in dialogue regarding land use, zoning and other development-related actions affecting their neighborhood.
- Educate residents about their community and promote engagement with the city.

The city’s 2017 Imagine Irving Comprehensive Plan encourages the use of neighborhood planning to:

- Preserve neighborhood character.
- Protect the interests and investments of longtime residents.
- Stabilize and enrich existing neighborhoods.
- Address the need for enhanced community services.
- Seek the interest of community stakeholders committed to discussing the future and helping guide positive change.

This planning process will focus on the future and the vision for a neighborhood’s land use, zoning, housing, transportation and similar long-term considerations. Any concerns about code compliance, police, traffic and other activities will be referred to the appropriate entity.
Who is Eligible to Participate

Any currently recognized and registered neighborhood association within the City of Irving may apply for participation in the program.

Planning and Community Development will work with the neighborhood association throughout the process.

The anticipated time from commencement to completion of the planning process is 12 to 18 months.

Checklist: Who are the People in My Neighborhood?

List individuals and organizations who need to be involved in helping plan the future of your neighborhood:

Registered neighborhood leaders

President _________________________ phone/email__________________________
Vice President _____________________ phone/email__________________________
Treasurer _________________________ phone/email__________________________
Secretary_________________________ phone/email__________________________

Other interested residents and businesses

_________________________________ phone/email__________________________
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How will the Program Work

The Planning and Community Development Department will offer the program to all interested neighborhoods. Other city departments will be engaged on an as-needed basis throughout the process.

Here are the roles of each city department:

Planning and Community Development

1. Assign a planning staff member to each participating neighborhood who will:
   • Serve as the primary city contact for the program.
   • Provide guidance to neighborhood leaders throughout the process.
   • Attend all scheduled meetings.
   • Guide discussions on city projects and private development affecting the neighborhood.

2. Prepare a Neighborhood Information Kit with demographic and other information about the community such as land use, census data, housing quality, city services and infrastructure, crime statistics, etc.

3. Maintain a centralized Neighborhood Planning Resource webpage for current projects to provide easy online access to:
   • Goals and strategies regarding housing and neighborhoods from the city’s Imagine Irving Comprehensive Plan.
   • Links to regional and national articles highlighting neighborhood planning.
   • Specific neighborhood project information and progress updates for active planning efforts.

4. Provide funding to selected neighborhoods to assist with meeting expenses for the planning process, such as printing, mail-outs and postage.
Communications Department

1. Promote the Neighborhood Planning Program to all currently registered neighborhood associations.

2. Encourage the formation of new neighborhood associations, especially in areas experiencing nearby development pressure.

Other Departments

Departments such as Traffic and Transportation, Capital Improvement Program, Water Utilities, Code Enforcement and others will be available as needed to assist with:

1. Kickoff/orientation meetings.

2. Field survey participation.

3. Preparation of needs assessment surveys.


5. Participation in presentations to the Irving City Council.

6. Implementation of plans.
Neighborhood association officials will lead the process, with city staff serving in a support and mentoring role.

A series of neighborhood public meetings will allow residents to present and discuss their ideas. Neighborhood leaders should:

- Provide an atmosphere that is welcoming, inviting and supportive for any input received.
- Stream all meetings in an interactive online format for those who cannot attend in person, if possible.
- Share meeting information through an online engagement tool for interested persons who cannot attend meetings.
- Keep copies of meeting discussions and post minutes of the meetings.
- Constantly seek resident interaction, recruit volunteers and maintain transparency in all interactions.
- Hold additional meetings with the neighborhood as desired or as needed to address special topics.

The Neighborhood Planning Resource webpage will serve as a central online source for upcoming meetings as well as posting of all meeting minutes, questionnaires, etc.

Participant neighborhoods are encouraged to host their own websites to present information on the process and to promote the effort among their members.
Elements of the Neighborhood Plan

To engage residents in creating a vision for the future, their plan should include, at a minimum, these elements:

- Data and analysis of current neighborhood conditions, including:
  - Pertinent U.S. census data.
  - Existing land use.
  - Current and planned infrastructure projects for the area.

- Summaries of input received from the field survey and all meetings held.

- The overall vision for the neighborhood.

- Clear, achievable, measurable goals and objectives for implementation, which can include:
  - Changes in the city’s future land use plan for the area that will support desired rezoning and prohibit elements that the community feel are incompatible with the defined vision.
    - Targeted economic development efforts and incentives.
    - Code Enforcement preferred focus areas or programs.
    - Connection to housing rehabilitation and preservation funding.
    - Requested parks and green space.
    - Construction of sidewalks, light posts, landscaping or other streetscape items.

City staff will assist in the formatting of the plan and provide maps and other requested items. Additional material may be included to support the neighborhood’s vision.

The final plan also will be posted on the Neighborhood Planning Resource webpage maintained by the city.

Note: Requests for capital improvements or infrastructure projects such as street or drainage improvements will be noted and referred to the City Manager’s Office for consideration for project planning and funding.
To properly conduct the planning process, neighborhood leaders should follow this outline:

1. Notify all neighborhood members of the upcoming planning process and the initial kickoff meeting online and through newsletters, door hangers and mail-outs.
2. Arrange for city staff to attend the meet-and-greet with residents.
3. Present the overall planning process, including the parameters for the planning project.
4. Briefly explain the process for funding of public projects and how to submit code concerns, as needed.
5. Address questions and gather input about general concerns and vision for the neighborhood.
6. Seek volunteers to participate and champion the process.
7. Define the next step to conduct online and field research.

List of Topics Raised

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Lead/Champion

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Priority

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Activity: Conduct Online and Field Research

- Conduct historical research of the area and familiarize the neighborhood volunteer project team with area demographics (planning staff will make this information available through a Neighborhood Information Kit).

- Select a field survey team (neighborhood leadership team, resident volunteers, city staff) and conduct an “on the ground” assessment of conditions in the neighborhood, both private property and public right-of-way.

- Meet with area business owners for their input.

- Compile all collected data into an accessible database for access.

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Before the meeting, prepare a neighborhood needs assessment questionnaire and distribute it in advance to all members online and through newsletters and mail-outs. Set a deadline for input to be received and review the responses before the second meeting.

City staff will use online engagement software to provide an additional method for information and feedback and post links on the neighborhood’s webpage.

1. Discuss the compiled input results with the entire neighborhood group.
2. Address questions from group members.
3. Define the next step.

List of Topics Raised

Lead/Champion

Priority
Prioritization Exercise

Meeting 3

With city staff assistance, prepare a preliminary needs assessment report from all the research and input received to date. Post the report to all interested parties in advance of the meeting date.

City staff will use online engagement software to provide additional information to assist with prioritization and feedback on the neighborhood’s webpage.

1. Using information gathered from data sources, the neighborhood field study and the survey questionnaire, complete a dot exercise or other method to prioritize input and gather consensus on preferences by identifying the top five needs.
2. Consider potential action items and steps toward finalizing the vision and priorities of the neighborhood’s Action Plan.
3. Address questions from group members.
4. Define the next step to finalize the Action Plan.

List of Topics Raised

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Lead/Champion

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Priority

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Finalize Action Plan

Meeting 4

With city staff assistance, prepare an Action Plan prior to the meeting that includes the preliminary needs, assessment report and prioritization. Post the report to all interested parties in advance of the meeting date.

City staff will use online engagement software to provide additional information to assist with prioritization and feedback on the neighborhood’s webpage.

1. Review and edit the Action Plan with input from the neighborhood group.
2. Address questions from group members.
3. Discuss possible meeting dates to review the plan with the City Manager’s Office and present it to the Irving City Council.
4. Define the next step.

List of Topics Raised

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Lead/Champion

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Priority

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Present Action Plan

1. The neighborhood leadership team and city staff will present the Action Plan to the City Manager’s Office.
2. Recommendations from the City’s Manager’s Office will be incorporated into the Action Plan.
3. The neighborhood leadership team will present the Action Plan to City Council at Work Session, (with staff support. Attendance of neighborhood residents and business owners should be encouraged.
4. Input from the City Council will be incorporated into the final Action Plan.
5. If changes from the City Council are significant, a formal meeting of the neighborhood association should be announced and conducted to seek consensus on the changes.
6. With staff consensus, the start date for Action Plan implementation can be formalized.

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Meeting Date with City:    Presentation Date to City Council:

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# Go!

## Implementation

1. The neighborhood should hold a celebratory meeting for all residents on the start date for the Action Plan.
2. The city will assemble a staff implementation team to work with neighborhood leaders throughout the implementation process.
3. The neighborhood leadership team, with staff support, will present milestone updates to the Irving City Council as the work progresses.

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<tr>
<th>Action Items</th>
<th>Issue Addressed</th>
<th>Lead</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
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Conclusion

The overall planning process is expected to educate residents about their community and provide an opportunity that they might not otherwise have to meet and work with their neighbors.

The city will use the neighborhood’s Action Plan to help guide future land use decisions by the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Irving City Council as they consider zoning requests within the neighborhood.

Additionally, other projects identified through the neighborhood planning process will be provided to the City Manager’s Office for consideration as the city prepares annual budgets and bond programs.

The plan will help inform and guide resources to assist the neighborhood in achieving its overall vision.

Finally, it is hoped that this endeavor will encourage a lifelong commitment of engagement with the city, perhaps even inspiring some participating residents to pursue leadership opportunities and volunteer for service on the various city boards and commissions.