

Neighborhood Bill of Rights

Lacey Lingelbach

City of Gainesville Fellow

Office of the Clerk of the Commission

General Policy Committee Meeting

March 12th, 2020

Neighborhood Bill of Rights

- Goal: To create and improve formal pathways for community engagement and communication between the City and its organized neighborhoods
- Jurisdictions that have adopted a Neighborhood Bill of Rights:
 - City of Jacksonville
 - St. John's County
 - City of Clearwater

Proposed Neighborhood Bill of Rights

The Division of Rights:

- Rights to Consistent Customer Service
- Rights to Timely Notification
- Right to a Neighborhood Grant Fund

Rights to Consistent Customer Service



* Prompt, courteous, informed responses to all questions regarding City business. Replies, if only to report that inquiries or research are underway and a full response will be forthcoming at a later time, should be made within one working day of the original neighborhood contact.

- **Affects: All City Departments and Offices**
- **Other Jurisdictions: Commonly adopted**
 - Time of expected response
 - 1 day - City of Jacksonville, FL
 - 10 days – City of El Paso, TX
 - No specific time - City of Clearwater, FL

Rights to Consistent Customer Service



* A timely personal response from its district commissioner or that commissioner's aide to questions directed to the City Commission office.

- **Affects: Commission and Office of the Clerk of the Commission**
- **Other Jurisdictions: Commonly adopted**

Rights to Consistent Customer Service



* Opportunity for formal input into the annual budget process, including the opportunity to express preferred City government priorities, suggested capital improvement projects, and other statements that fairly represent the opinion of a majority of the neighborhood's residents.

- **Affects:** All City departments involved in annual budget process (i.e. Department of Budget and Finance)
- **Other Jurisdictions:** Commonly adopted

Rights to Consistent Customer Service



* The opportunity to participate in the design of publicly-funded projects within or adjacent to the neighborhood, including the opportunity early in the planning process to express neighborhood preferences about choice of location, materials, orientation, size, land use intensity, and other features.

- **Affects:** Departments designing publicly-funded projects (i.e. Wild Spaces Public Places; Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs; Sustainable Development)
- **Other Jurisdictions:** Commonly adopted
 - **Example:**
 - City of Clearwater, FL: Relies on neighborhood feedback

Rights to Consistent Customer Service: Considerations

#1: Decide which policies to adopt

#2: Formalization of rights

#3: Reasonable and realistic time expectation

#4: Communication to staff of new procedures

Rights to Timely Notification

- Public Works/Utility Projects
- Land-Use Projects

Rights to Timely Notification: Public Works/Utility Projects



* Advance notification of any City-related public works or utility project taking place within or adjacent to a neighborhood (e.g. road paving; water, sewer or drainage work; traffic signal installation or removal; park renovation or substantial maintenance; land purchases, etc.), including the day(s) and probable length of any street closures, utility interruptions, or other adverse impacts on the neighborhood, and the name and phone number of the City representative most knowledgeable and able to immediately answer questions during the course of the work.

- Affects: Multiple departments
 - Road paving – Public Works
 - Water, sewer, or drainage work – Gainesville Regional Utilities
 - Traffic signal installation or removal – Transportation and Mobility
 - Park Renovation/Maintenance – Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs

Rights to Timely Notification: Public Works/Utility Projects

- Other Jurisdictions: Commonly adopted
 - Example: City of Clearwater, FL
 - Notifications through various media
 - Issue: Applicability to small-scale projects

Rights to Timely Notification: Land-Use Projects



* Notification of the submission of any application for rezoning, zoning or land use variance or exception, Development of Regional Impact (DRI) or Planned Unit Development (PUD) application, or other significant land use action; a clear explanation of the date, time and place of all applicable public hearings and other opportunities for public input on the application; and a clear explanation of the type of testimony that is allowable and relevant from neighborhood organizations and residents.

- Affects: Department of Sustainable Development
- Current Requirements:
 - Notification to residents by applicants
 - Neighborhood Workshops

Rights to Timely Notification: Land-Use Projects

Other Jurisdictions

- Specify which types of projects require notification (generally, significant land use changes)
- Determine which neighborhoods receive notifications
 - Most establish a boundary range of 200 to 350 feet
 - City of El Paso, TX “ within a reasonable boundary of the project”
- Decide the entity responsible for notification
 - Most jurisdictions - applicants
 - City of El Paso, TX – Planning Department
 - City of Clearwater, FL – City Clerk

Rights to Timely Notification: Land-Use Projects

Other Jurisdictions (continued)

- Determine when notifications are sent
 - Most jurisdictions require notice within 10 Days of application
 - City of Jacksonville, FL – at least 14 days BEFORE the meeting
- Other options
 - St. John's County, FL – applicants or neighborhood association may schedule a meeting
 - City of Raleigh, NC – department contact information is shared with neighborhoods to provide input

Rights to Timely Notification: Considerations

#1: What types of projects require notification?

#2: What notification process should be used?

#3: How will these rules be adopted?

#4: Is a coordinated communication process needed?

Coordinating Communication: Neighborhood Registration Process

Other Jurisdictions:

- Determine eligibility for registration
 - Formal and informal neighborhood groups
 - Non-neighborhood groups (i.e. businesses, civic organizations, non-profits)
 - Other requirements:
 - member size, geographic boundary, meetings, organizational documents
- Benefits of registration
 - Neighborhood Bill of Rights
 - Use of City facilities or resources
 - Neighborhood newsletters
 - Eligibility for grant program
 - Access to neighborhood maps

Coordinating Communication: Neighborhood Registration Process

Other Jurisdictions (continued):

- Registration Requirements and Process
 - Option 1: Automatic Registration
 - Option 2: Needs approval
 - Registration requirements
 - Contact information of one or two representatives
 - Proof of eligibility for other requirements (if applicable)
 - Reregistering each year (some jurisdictions)

Neighborhood Registration Process: Considerations

#1: Determine registration eligibility requirements

#2: Identify a department to own this process

#3: Maintaining the contact lists after registration

#4: Additional benefits for registration

#5: Does this method fit the needs of this community?

Right to Neighborhood Grant Fund



Officially organized groups should; be organized for at least one (1) year; meet regularly with at least 3 members present; present a shared 'mission" or "vision" statement for the group; provide a program description that includes 1. Program purpose 2. Who the program will serve 3. How the program will operate 4. Who will operate the program 5.Desired program outcomes and program budgets; carry liability insurance separate from the City of Gainesville.

All program volunteers will be subject to City of Gainesville Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs' security and application screening.

To apply for or be considered for funding of resident led programming from the City of Gainesville or any other granting agency or foundation, an organization must have a current Tax Exempt (501c3) or list a Tax Exempt (501c3) organization as a fiscal sponsor.

Right to Neighborhood Grant Fund

Other Jurisdictions:

- **Types of Grants**

- Matching
- Additional source

- **Uses**

- Physical Improvements (fencing, gardens, painting/landscaping)
- Non-physical improvements (public safety, crime watch, leadership training, website)
- Neighborhood Organizing (recycling education event, block party, children's programs)

Right to Neighborhood Grant Fund

Other Jurisdictions (continued):

- Amount of Grant
 - Range from \$500 – 8,000 depending on jurisdiction funds
- Funding Sources
 - General Fund or budgeted for department
 - City of Jacksonville, FL -Foreclosed Property Registry
- How Funds are Administered
 - Reimbursement
 - Disbursement

Right to Neighborhood Grant Fund: Considerations

#1: Type of grant and administrative details

#2: Types of organizations eligible for funding

#3: Types of projects eligible for grant funding

#4: Source of funding and amount of grant

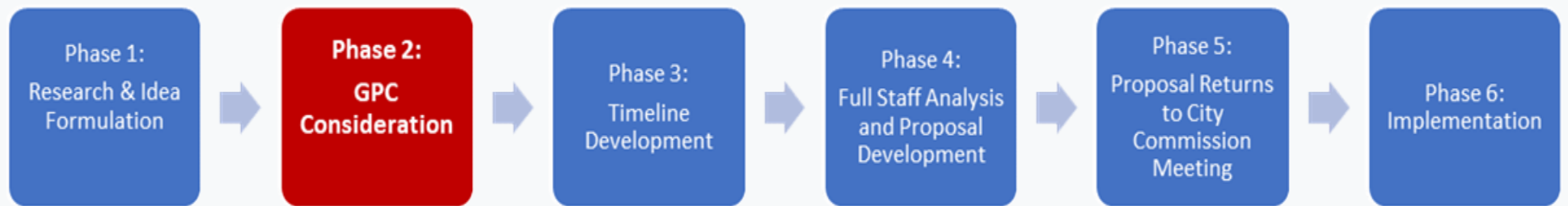
Steps for Implementation

- 1) Create a system to formally register neighborhood associations
 - a) Determine the definition of a neighborhood/neighborhood association that is eligible to register.
 - b) Identify a department to own this process.
 - c) Determine a method for maintaining neighborhood information.
 - d) Consider additional benefits besides the Neighborhood Bill of Rights that could be provided to the registered neighborhoods.
- 2) Determine which rights to consistent customer service will be implemented
 - a) Consider how these rights will be formalized (in code or in City policy)
 - b) Choose reasonable and realistic expectations that City staff can uphold in their operations.
 - c) Decide how these new procedures will be communicated to staff.

Steps for Implementation

- 3) Determine which City actions/proposals warrant notification to neighborhoods.
 - a) Create a notification system that can cross departments
 - b) Create a system to track actions/Proposals requiring notification
 - c) Create a workflow to ensure messages are sent timely to appropriate parties
 - d) Create a method that would ensure the neighborhood contact distribute the notification
- 4) Determine the parameters for a grant program, where in City Governments it will function, and sources of funding. These parameters include:
 - a) Type of program (reimbursement v. disbursement, matching, etc.)
 - b) Organizations eligible for funding
 - c) Projects eligible for grant funding
 - d) Source of funding
 - e) Amount of individual grants

Recommended Next Steps



We are here!

If the General Policy Committee wants to proceed, move this project to Phase 3 of the Policy Process.