

Louisville Community Land Use,  
Planning and Development Process

# Resources for Neighbors Advocacy Toolkit

*A Community-Based Vision*

The Taylor/New Cut Network  
Louisville, Kentucky  
November 2022





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Planning and Development Process

**Resources for Neighbors Advocacy Toolkit**

**Contents**

About this Advocacy Toolkit ..... 2

*How do I fit into advocacy?*

 <b>Learn</b> ..... 3
 <b>Connect</b> ..... 5
 <b>Act</b> ..... 7
<b>Additional Resources</b> ..... 9



This advocacy toolkit was prepared for The Taylor/New Cut Network by Shireen Deobhakta, PhD and Lisa Crabtree, MA with contributions from Jessica Brown, AICP and Edie Carter

# About This Advocacy Toolkit



Organized into **three topics**, this toolkit covers the basics on the land development process and how neighbors can exercise their voice.

## LEARN

about the issue

## CONNECT

with your friends  
and neighbors

## ACT

for direct  
and tangible steps

## How do I fit into advocacy?

### Learner



“

*I like* ● ● ●

- to read
- to gain knowledge about issues and topics
- to share information with others

*I don't like* ● ● ●

- groups or intensive socializing

### Connector



“

*I like* ● ● ●

- to talk to people
- to build relationships
- groups and intensive socializing

*I don't like* ● ● ●

- to do things by myself

### Actor



“

*I like* ● ● ●

- to get things done
- a feeling of accomplishment

*I don't like* ● ● ●

- to talk and plan for long lengths of time

# How do I fit into advocacy?



## Learn



## Zoning

**Zoning is the set of local rules that regulate how a piece of land can be used. Each “zone” can be used for different things.**



The main types of zones in Louisville are residential housing (R), commercial retail or offices (C), industrial and agricultural uses (M), incentive areas (EZ), and special districts of mixed uses (PD) and (UN). Zones are also assigned a number, 1-8, which determines the intensity of the use in that zone. For example, if someone purchased a piece of land zoned R1, they would be allowed to have a single home. If they wanted to build an apartment complex, they would need to apply to change the zone to R6, which would allow for more units of housing on the land.

To learn what zoning is in your area, go to: <https://apps.lojic.org/zoning/>

## Affordable Housing

**Definition:** Housing costs do not exceed over 30% of household income.

**Affordable housing is important because:**

- Housing costs affects everyone.
- Being able to afford a safe and decent place to live stabilizes families and prevents homelessness.
- Stable housing is the key to improving someone's economic well-being over time.
- Stable housing significantly increases the ability to learn in school.
- Affordable housing strategies can apply to all housing types.

Louisville needs

**31,412**

units to fill the Affordable Housing needs of the community.\*



\*<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/housing/housing-needs-assessment>

### EXAMPLES of affordable housing types:

#### Workforce Housing



"Workforce housing" is affordable housing **geared at the labor force that supports a local economy**. It is designed to be affordable to working class individuals, such as teachers, retail workers, health care workers, and other “critical workers”. Often these developments offer daycares on site, and features the full spectrum of housing types.

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/casestudies/study-022422.html>

#### Supportive Housing



“Supportive housing” is affordable housing **geared at those who need support to re-enter the workforce**. It is designed for those who are aging out of the foster care system, individuals in reentry programs, or those who were previously unhoused. Many of these developments include on-site social services, health clinics, job training, and community centers.

<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/casestudies/study-112921.html>



## Recommended Elements for Development Projects

### Placemaking and Identity

Placemaking is a process that engages people in creating spaces that reflect how people use, interact with, and identify with a space. The result is an intentionally designed place where people want to be and *supports a sense of belonging for local residents*. Often, neighborhood identity is critical in the placemaking process and draws on neighborhood history, culture, and people through art, activities, and uses.



### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED is the method of designing the physical environment to provide a feeling of safety. The four key elements include:



1. providing clear visibility to *support natural surveillance* from others in the space
2. adequate lighting
3. delineating space using natural elements to create boundaries for various activities, and
4. controlling access points to certain spaces by using natural elements such as bushes and trees.

### Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

TOD is the creation of walkable places that connect easily to public transit. These types of development *support various types of mobility and encourage the use of public transportation*.



### Sustainable Wastewater Management

Using trees, bushes, rocks, and other natural elements, development projects can many times make storm water control attractive and *support nature*. Bioswales are ditches dug into the landscape that are sometimes connected to pipes or stream heads. The ditch is then lined with rocks, plants, and trees that catch water runoff and help redirect it downstream. Rain gardens are planted in areas that regularly collect water. The plants help absorb the water and diminish standing pools that can cause damage or attract unwanted pests. At the same time, they beautify the area and positively add to the environment.



### Safe Spaces for Recreation

Incorporating green space and recreation opportunities into development *supports physical activity, use of the outdoors, and overall health*. Walking paths, lawns, and other flat, well-lit spaces are naturally welcoming to most users. Outdoor seating options can provide places to rest outdoors. Play equipment or natural playscapes are fun invitations for neighborhood youth and social gathering.



## Mixed Use Development Features



### Retail/Commercial Offices

Street level shops and offices that provide shopping and service choices, often paired with apartments on the upper levels of the building.



### Multi-family or middle housing

Small and mid-scale housing with multiple units. These housing types serve those who need smaller or less expensive living, integrated within a neighborhood.



### Pedestrian Friendly

The area is easy and safe to walk, with sidewalks, marked crossings, decent lighting, and slower roadway speeds. Many buildings will have glass windows, awnings, and signage on the first floor to keep a smaller scale and welcoming environment to those walking past the building.



### Community Space/ Public Space

Places for community members to informally gather, such as green space, parks, squares, or indoor centers. Social connection is supported by the available spaces within the development like a park or community center.

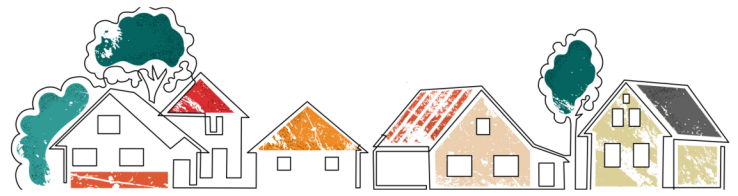


### Institutions

Incorporating nonprofit service providers, libraries, churches, schools, health clinics, or other community partners add variety and access to the community.

# How do I fit into advocacy?

## Connect



## Connect with your Neighbors

### Neighbors have the ability to affect development.

Neighbors can be MOST effective if they are coordinated in their efforts. The most secure way to connect with your neighbors is around a shared set of values and/or vision. It is important to discuss with your neighbors.

#1 *What's your vision for the neighborhood? What do you want your neighborhood to be like in 10 years... 20 years?*

#2 *What are the needed enhancements for the neighborhood? What do you need? What have you heard other neighbors saying they need?*

### How to have a conversation with your neighbor



- Talk about something you have in common.
- Compliment them on something you've seen them working hard at (a garden? cleaning?).
- Give a small item or share what you have.
- Mention anything you like about the neighborhood or something positive going on in the neighborhood (an event, a holiday).
- Do not approach them when they seem busy or stressed.
- Always start positive. Bring up concerns after a relationship is established.

### Ways to engage your neighbors on issues that matter



- Invite them on a walk.
- Invite them to visit the site of the issue with you.
- Ask them what matters to them, what motivates them to act?
- Share stories about how the issue has affected you.
- Share the values you have around the issue. For example, *"What do you think about adding more housing to the neighborhood? There are so many people that need decent housing, and I really care about children having a safe place to live."*

### Every individual in the community has a part to play in the solution.

Getting to know your neighbors helps you identify each person's skills, abilities, and passions to connect them to neighborhood activities or initiatives. Be honest with your neighbor and tell them how they can play a part in the solution. Tell them, **"We need you."**



*We Need You!*

### Make goals together



It is more effective to get people to join your cause by basing the conversation on *vision for the future and values* than it is to try to get people to join your solution. Identify individuals that share some of the same vision and values, and come together as a small group to brainstorm about some achievable action items or advocacy goals that can promote your shared vision. For example, *A shared vision might be, "I want our neighborhood to be inclusive of all types of people and all backgrounds. You might ask the group, "How can we go about achieving an inclusive neighborhood?"*

### Write it down!

Writing down your advocacy plans is an effective way to ensure that everyone is on the same page. The plan can also be a communication tool so that everyone in the group can follow along and understand how they can be a part of the work. Write down your goals and add as much detail as you can. **Make them SMART:**

- S = Specific** - What exactly will you do? How exactly will you advocate?
- M = Measurable** - What number are you striving for? What can you keep track of so that you know how you are doing? How will you know when you are done?
- A = Achievable** - Everyone is a volunteer and has limited time. Be realistic with what you can do and don't assign too much. Avoid stress and burnout. Small actions and sharing work with each other are effective strategies.
- T = Time-bound** - What is the time frame in which you will work towards your goal?





## Connect with your Neighbors, continued...

See if your area has a neighborhood association: <https://arcg.is/1vaWPX>

**Don't have a lot of neighbors? Find new connections city-wide.** Engage with organizations that share our values or work on issues that you care about. Bring a friend to help you break the ice in a new space. Attend fun events in your area:

- Look at Facebook events.
- <https://www.gotolouisville.com/events-calendar/>
- <https://www.eventbrite.com/d/ky-louisville/events/>
- [https://www.courier-journal.com/ Monthly\\_events](https://www.courier-journal.com/ Monthly_events) article
- <https://louisvilleky.gov/events>

Be in the loop and sign up for email newsletters from your Metro Council representative. Find your representative based on your address, and select the "Subscribe & Stay Informed" button on their page or sign up here:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/KYLOUISVILLE/subscriber/new>

## Participating in the Development Process

**Louisville Metro Government follows established processes for development projects.**

There are a variety of applications that developers must submit depending on the development project type, project location, conditions of the land, and any local regulations. A list of the types of applications and what is required for each is viewable online here: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/planning-and-design-applications>

Neighborhood meetings, Board of Zoning Adjustment meetings. Planning Commission meetings, and Metro Council meetings are times when neighborhood comments are considered, or in-person feedback opportunities occur.

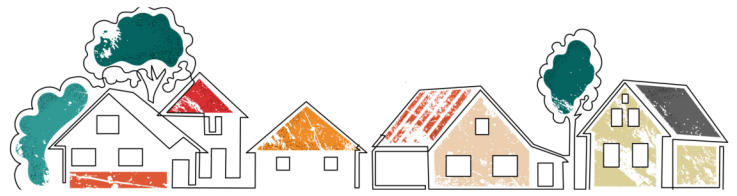
### Development Applications *GENERALLY* follow this process:

- 1 Pre-Application to Metro Government:** All documentation required for the application is given to Metro Planning and Design staff.
- 2 \*Neighborhood meeting** (zoning changes, subdivisions, and conditional uses): The applicant holds a public meeting for public feedback, which may also be a virtual meeting.
- 3 Formal Application and review:** The applicant submits all information, along with the feedback they collected in the neighborhood meeting and it is reviewed by appropriate agencies.
- 4 \*Board/Commission Review:** Case is pre-reviewed by a committee and then presented during a hearing of the responsible commission. Recommendation for approval/denial is then sent.
- 5 \*Metro Council Planning Committee:** A sub-committee of council reviews the proposals, where they can then be forwarded to the full council for vote as an ordinance or can be sent back for further review.
- 6 \*Metro Council regular meeting**



Those marked with an asterisk (\*) have an opportunity for public comment either in writing sent ahead of time to the reviewing body or in person at the meeting. Most meetings require advance registration to speak. Additionally, it is possible to influence the time and location of the meeting through a petition: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/planning-commission>

# How do I fit into advocacy?



## Contact your local Metro Council Representative



First, **find out who your Metro Council representative is!** You can look up your address on the district map page: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/metro-council>




**Catch up on issues** and learn where your Councilperson has stood in the past on an issue! You can watch all previous meetings online: [http://louisville.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=2](http://louisville.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2)



**Stay up to date with the upcoming Metro Council meetings.** Many representatives serve on multiple committees: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/metro-council/calendar-agendas>

**Let your voice be heard at a Council meeting!** Register by 12 pm the day prior to the meeting in order to speak.




You can **search all Council agendas**, documents, and watch past meetings. <https://louisville.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>



You can watch all the meetings live on the **Facebook page or Metro TV:** [www.facebook.com/louisvillemetrocouncil](http://www.facebook.com/louisvillemetrocouncil)

**The Planning and Zoning Committee** reviews development proposals and other zoning applications.



**The best and easiest way to reach your Council Member is to write them an email or make a call to their office.** This sample shows you some good tips for sending an impactful message.

### Dear Councilman,

My name is Ron Smith and I have lived in District 10 for 5 years. I am writing to you regarding the proposed ABC Realtors mixed-use development at 1257 Stonebank Lane in Waterside Point. In your role on the Planning and Zoning Committee, you have the opportunity to review the development proposal. I ask that you support this development and for two key reasons. First, the development will bring 10 affordable units to the area, which is very needed by many in the community. The city is in need of thousands of units to meet the demand for families who need a decent and affordable place to live. Everyone in our city should have a place to call home, to raise their families and sleep at night. Second, the proposal will offer some mixed-use, which will incorporate small retail spaces and a restaurant. These new amenities will support the entire neighborhood with local buying options and local food. When I first moved to the area, I was looking for a neighborhood that was affordable and safe and had places for me to shop and eat close by. The Waterside Point neighborhood needs more of this and this development can help fill the needs of many of our neighbors and welcome new ones.

Thank you,

Ron Smith

502-123-4567; Ron.Smith@Email.com

- 1 Tell them your name and where you live, especially if it's in their district
- 2 Be specific about the issue you are writing about.
- 3 Research your representative and know what committees they are on.
- 4 Be concise and clear in your ask. Practice or write one or two key points.
- 5 Do your homework. Know facts and history behind the issue.
- 6 Connect your comment to a set of values.
- 7 Give a personal connection or share a story.
- 8 Follow up. Call a few days later to make sure they received your comment. If you gave your comment in person, send a thank you note by email/mail, repeating the ask in writing.

More information on writing public officials can be found here: <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/letters-to-elected-officials/main>





## Contact the local Planning Commission

The Planning Commission reviews applications for zoning and other types of development proposals, and makes recommendations to Metro Council for approving or denying the application

<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/planning-commission>



**Stay informed on when new proposals and applications** come up in your area by signing up for email newsletters from your Metro Council representative. Find your representative based on your address, and select the "Subscribe & Stay Informed" button on their page or sign up here: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/KYLOUISVILLE/subscribe/new>. (Make sure to select your council district and "Notification of Development Proposals" under Subscriptions.)



**Stay up to date on cases** you care about! You can search any case via the online portal: <https://aca-prod.accela.com/LJCMG/Default.aspx>. Information here includes the status of the application, any development plans or paperwork submitted, and the contact information for the case manager.

**Public Notices:** Rules for public notices vary depending on application type.



You can read more here: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/public-notice-and-neighborhood-meetings>

**Case Manager:** Call the case manager and ask any questions you have! They can help explain the status of an application, the next steps in the process, any form of community input that is acceptable, and can receive public comment on the application which will be compiled in the case that is submitted to the Planning Commission for its review.



Find the **upcoming public meetings** for development projects online. They are usually held in person with a virtual viewing option. If you want to speak, you are required to sign up ahead of time to speak by filling out the "Speaker Form": <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/upcoming-public-meetings>

### Dear Planning Commission,

My name is Ron Smith and I live at 589 North Road in the Waterside Point neighborhood. I am writing to you regarding the proposed ABC Realty mixed-use development at 1257 Stonebank Lane, case number 19-ZONE-988. I am asking that you vote to recommend this proposal for approval. This proposal includes 8 affordable housing units, which I support. The city is in dire need of more affordable options for housing. Not everyone can afford a decent place to live, and our city should be supporting projects that try to provide these options.

This housing is related to the Equity principle of the Comprehensive Plan, which names access to housing as important. Housing goal #1 states "Expand and ensure a diverse range of housing choices." And Housing goal #2 states "Ensure long-term affordability and livable options in all neighborhoods." The city's vision clearly supports affordable housing and providing safe places to call home. Our neighborhood plan states that housing costs are important to neighbors and has a recommendation to increase affordable housing in the neighborhood.

A vote in support of this proposal is a vote that supports new housing and affordable housing choices. As a neighbor of Waterside Point, I ask you to support us bringing new housing to the area.

Thank you,

Ron Smith

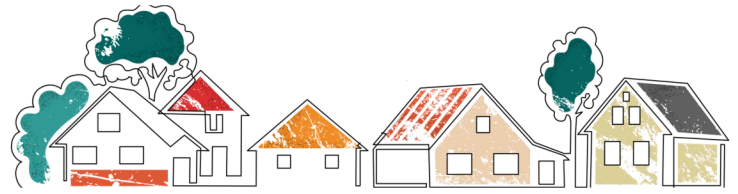
502-123-4567; Ron.Smith@Email.com

- 1 Tell them your name and where you live, especially if it's in their district.
- 2 Be specific about the issue you are writing about.
- 3 The Planning Commission "recommends" approval or denial to the Metro Council.
- 4 Tell them why you are asking them to take this action. Choose one or two of your strongest points. Make them clear and simple.
- 5 Connect your reasoning to one of the CHASE principles in the city's Comprehensive Plan.
- 6 Connect to the specific goals found in the city's Comprehensive Plan.
- 7 Connect to goals or recommendations in your area's Neighborhood Plan if possible.
- 8 Repeat your ask at the end.
- 9 Follow up. Call a few days later to make sure they received your comment. If you gave your comment in person, send a thank you note by email/mail, repeating the ask in writing.

### What is the COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The city is required by state law to create a long-term plan for development. The document is created through a lengthy community engagement process and describes the goals for building, preserving, and serving the community for the following 20 years. The comprehensive plan has four core principles, known as CHASE principles, which are values that go throughout the document. There are chapters that cover Housing, Economic Development, Transportation, and more. Each chapter has several goals and action items that the city will pursue over the 20-year timeline. Development is supposed to follow these action items. Naming how your appeal connects to the Comprehensive Plan is the most effective way to advocate and explain why the action should be taken. View the Comprehensive Plan online: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/comprehensive-plan>

# Additional Resources



## **Neighborhood Plans**

Many neighborhoods have a plan that lays out a long-term vision for the future specifically related to development. This plan includes goals and recommended updates to zoning, housing, and programs in the neighborhood. Plans are completed through extensive community engagement processes. You can connect with neighbors who have participated in the planning process. See if your neighborhood has a completed plan or one in progress here:

<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/advanced-planning-and-sustainability/neighborhood-area-plans-and-studies>

## **Community Garden Start Up Guide**

A step-by-step for how to establish a community garden in Jefferson County / Louisville Metro

<https://jefferson.ca.uky.edu/content/community-garden-start-guide>

## **Social Media for Advocacy**

Tips for how to use social media effectively. A review of the best social platforms, how to target an audience, and links to useful resources for graphics, video creation, and more.

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/electronic-advocacy/main>

## **Storytelling for Advocacy**

This guide illustrates how to build a compelling story and includes worksheets to guide you through the creation of your own story.

<https://groundedsolutions.org/sites/default/files/2018-11/Storytelling%20for%20Advocacy.pdf>

## **Basics of Policy Development**

A comprehensive breakdown of the various aspects of modifying or developing policies, including how to learn about a policy and who it affects, and how to create an advocacy message for your new policy.

<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/influencing-policy-development>

## **Louisville Metro Department of Planning and Design Services website**

Search case information, view important documents that dictate how development is done, read development applications, read existing policy and more.

<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design>

## **Lojic Online**

See maps of all kinds - zoning, land use, transportation, and more.

<https://apps.lojic.org/lojiconline/>

## **Property Valuation Administration**

View property ownership and land values.

<https://jeffersonpva.ky.gov/>

## **Affordable Housing Advocates Guide**

A comprehensive resource, with history, program examples, tools for analysis and planning, legislation recommendations, and more.

[https://safehousingpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/2021\\_NationalLowIncomeHousingCoalitionAdvocates-Guide.pdf](https://safehousingpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/2021_NationalLowIncomeHousingCoalitionAdvocates-Guide.pdf)

## **Metropolitan Housing Coalition**

Louisville based nonprofit that serves as researcher and advocate for affordable housing and housing of choice.

<https://metropolitanhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/AHA-One-Pager.pdf>