



Public Notification, Outreach, & Engagement Policy for Planning Applications

The facilitation of inclusive community participation is an important goal for the City's conduct of the land use development process. The intent of this policy is to inform City practices that will provide the public with enhanced access to information related to land use development activity within Santa Clara to encourage community members to be informed and engage in the public process for the review of development proposals. The desired outcome of this Policy would be the extent to which the developer incorporates community feedback into the project design.

The Policy establishes notification, outreach, and engagement requirements for the City of Santa Clara that will be implemented in addition to the minimum noticing requirements provided by State law. Notification, outreach, and engagement activities are based on the City's level of discretion in deciding on a particular development proposal.

Definitions

Initial Development Proposal. For Large and Significant Interest Development Proposals, developers are encouraged to submit preliminary information about a project with conceptual drawings that include a tentative site plan and draft architectural renderings. The Director of Community Development also has the discretion to require an Initial Development Proposal for any project of any size.

Minor Development Proposal. Minor Use Permits, Off-Site Parking Permits, Reasonable Accommodation requests and Temporary Use Permits that have noticing requirements prescribed in the City Code. *These projects are not subject to this Policy unless deemed a Significant Interest Development Proposal.*

Small Development Proposal. A development proposal related to the construction, renovation, demolition, or expansion of a single-family house that requires a public hearing; up to four residential units; accessory structures that require a public hearing. Does not include minor use permits.

Standard Development Proposal. A development proposal that involves between five and 49 dwelling units, up to 30,000 square feet of commercial, or up to 50,000 square feet of office or industrial uses.

Large Development Proposal. A development proposal that involves over 49 dwelling units, 30,000 square feet or more of commercial uses, or 50,000 square feet or more of office or industrial uses.

Significant Interest Development Proposal. A development proposal that the Director determines has a high potential for a large degree of interest at a Citywide level.

Project Manager. A Community Development Department staff member who is responsible for processing the land use/or development applications.

Process

Development projects will need to advance through several stages of public notification, depending on the size and type of the project.

1. Initial Public Notification.

Purpose & Intent

The intent of the Initial Public Notification is to ensure that stakeholders and other interested parties have as much advance notice as possible of proposals. This provides stakeholders the opportunity to be informed about decisions that may affect them.

- **On-Site Posting.** For projects specified in Matrix A, the applicant is responsible for installing an on-site notification sign on the project site, consistent with the size and content requirements listed in this policy. The applicant is responsible for installing an on-site notification sign on the project site within the **30 days** of the application submittal. The Community Development Department will maintain a template that contains the format and contents of an “on-site posting” sign. The sign will reference, through use of a QR code and weblink address, a connection to the City’s project webpage for updated information. The applicant shall provide photo documentation that the sign has been posted to the Project Manager.
- **Mailed Notices.** Notices will be sent to all property owners and tenants within the radius specified in Matrix A.
 - If no community meeting is required, then a notice will be sent within **35 days** of applying.
 - If a community meeting is required, then the community meeting notice will serve as the “initial public notification”.
- **Website Posting.** For proposals specified in Matrix A, once the City receives a development application or an initial development proposal, the City will add information about the Project to the online, publicly accessible, recently filed projects list (updated, at a minimum, monthly, or more frequently).
 - The City project webpage will also include updated plans, video recordings of community meetings, community meeting notes, and frequently asked questions.

2. Community Meeting.

Purpose & Intent

The purpose of community meetings is to inform stakeholders and other interested parties about the development proposals, answer questions, receive public comment, and address project issues before the Public Hearing.

Methods, Timing & Logistics

Methods & Timing

For Standard, Large, and Significant Interest proposals, there should be at least one noticed community meeting within **60 days** of filing the application but in any event, must be held no more than **90 days** following the filing of the application. There should be a second noticed community meeting for Significant Interest proposals. Subject to the discretion of the Director of Community Development, attendance and presentation at a regularly scheduled community group or organization meeting may qualify as a community meeting, as may an Initial Visioning Meeting associated with an Initial Development Proposal. Additionally, applicants may take advantage of participating at existing community events, such as the City's Art & Wine Festival, however, this would be in addition to the community meeting.

Applicants are also encouraged to team up with a third-party whom specializes in community engagement or create partnerships with existing community-based organizations to help with connecting with hard-to-reach populations.

Logistics

The applicant shall coordinate with the Project Manager regarding the community meeting for logistics (time, place, and format). The community meeting at a minimum shall provide an overview of the project, identify potential issues, and allow ample time with stakeholders for questions and answers.

- **Meeting Format.** To increase public attendance, community meetings will be conducted as hybrid. Attendance would be in person for the applicant and Project Manager while the community may participate in person or virtually.
- **Recordings.** Meetings will be recorded and posted on the City's project webpage.
- **Time.** If these meetings are scheduled during weekdays, they are encouraged to start after 5:30 PM.

Additional community meetings may be necessary at the discretion of the Director of Community Development for reasons not limited to but including change in scope for the project, additional community interest and a project that has been in process for longer than a year.

Community Meeting Noticing

All modes of community meeting noticing will be sent and/or posted online at least **10 days** in advance of the meeting, with a target of at least **14 days** prior to the meeting, consistent with the below outreach methods:

- **Mailed Notices.** Notices will be sent to all property owners and tenants within the radius specified in Matrix A.
- **Website Posting.** Notice of the community meeting will be provided on the Community Development Department's Planning Community Meetings webpage (<http://www.santaclaraca.gov/government/departments/communitydevelopment/planning-division/planning-community-meetings>), as well as the City's online calendars.
- **E-Mails.** E-mails will be sent to individuals that have identified themselves as interested parties for the specific project and to those who have signed up for Planning Community

Meeting emails through the City's eNotify system. Those on the notification list will be sent recordings and materials from community meeting(s); information on changes to the project; and information on the community meetings or other hearings.

- **Social Media.** Announcements will be posted on the City's social media accounts, such as Facebook and Nextdoor, to increase awareness of projects.
 - Increase Access to Non-English Speakers. The City may utilize social media targeting tools available to extend reach to non-English speaking community members.

A template of the community meeting notice shall be maintained by the Community Development Department. At a minimum, the notice shall include who is conducting the meeting, contact information for the applicant and City Project Manager, the topic of the meeting, the location of the subject property, time, and place of the meeting and sufficient information to provide the community with a basic understanding of the project.

3. Public Hearing.

Purpose & Intent

The Council recognizes the importance of using larger radii for mailing notices as a tool to broaden the awareness of stakeholders in the vicinity of a pending land use or development action. Therefore, for many types of approvals, this Policy goes beyond the State's notification requirements. By keeping the community informed about land use and development decisions, the City promotes a transparent process that encourages genuine and effective involvement with stakeholders.

Public Hearing Noticing

All modes of public hearing noticing will be sent and/or posted online at least **10 days** in advance of the hearing, with a target of at least **14 days** prior to the meeting, consistent with the below outreach methods.

- **Mailed Notices.** Notices will be sent to all property owners and tenants within the radius specified in Matrix A.
- **Website Posting.** Notice of the public hearing will be provided on the individual hearing body's agenda webpage.
- **E-Mails.** E-mails will be sent to individuals that have identified themselves as interested parties for the specific project and to those who have signed up for email alerts through the City's eNotify system for the hearing body to which the project will be presented.
- **Social Media.** Large and Significant Interest proposal public hearing announcements will be posted on the City's social media accounts, such as Facebook and Nextdoor.
- **Publishing.** For Large or Significant Interest proposals, notice of a public hearing may be advertised in the newspaper.

Types of Activities

All development projects will be subject to a combination of on-site posting, website posting, email communications, social media, and community meetings, depending on the size and type of the project.

Notification Activities

Are to be provided for the community to be informed about projects, which are typically housing projects, for which the City has limited authority to require discretionary changes, pursuant to State law. Projects that utilize State housing laws such as SB 9 (2017), SB 35 (2021), and AB 3194 (2018), adhere to the Notification Activities. The purpose of Notification Activities is to share with the community the project details and schedule. Examples:

- Second dwellings and lot splits pursuant to SB 9 (2021), when a preliminary Planning application is submitted
- Subdivisions creating 10 or fewer residential lots pursuant to SB 684 (2023)

Outreach activities

Are to be provided for the community to be informed and provide input into a project which as proposed, adheres to the City's General Plan and is not utilizing State laws that limit most discretionary changes. Projects that adhere to the City's General Plan will at a minimum implement the City's intended land use vision (type of land use and density) for the site; however, through the implementation of outreach activities, the community can provide input on the architecture, site design, and raise issues of concern that should be addressed by the project. Examples:

- Rezoning, consistent with General Plan
- Conditional Use Permits
- Tentative Subdivision Maps (not including SB 9 lot splits)

Engagement activities

For more significant projects, engagement activities involve additional outreach to allow the community to identify or provide feedback on potential community benefits that would enhance the greater community with the implementation of the project. Projects triggering engagement activities would need to file an initial development proposal with conceptual drawings that include a tentative site plan and draft architectural renderings.

In addition, developers must hold an initial visioning meeting (conducted in the same way as community meetings) during the preliminary review stage to allow for community to provide input on potential future land uses on the site or for the consideration of the development of the site plan and architecture. The applicant will also request feedback from the community regarding potential community benefit(s) that would provide amenities or attributes desirable and/or accessible to the broader community.

In addition to the initial visioning meeting, a community meeting(s) would still be required, (see community meetings section for logistics), within the first two months after the formal development application has been filed, to share proposed plans and respond to feedback received during the initial visioning meeting. Examples:

- An amendment to the existing General Plan land use designation to a residential designation, when the current designation is nonresidential
- An amendment to an existing residential General Plan land use designation to a differing density
- Long-range planning projects, including, but not limited to specific plans, significant Zoning Ordinance amendments, General Plan updates, and other policy documents, will

be treated as Significant Interest proposals in accordance with the Public Outreach Matrix. For these long-range projects, other community engagement tools such as the creation of a community task force or citizen advisory committee; surveys; and workshop(s) will be utilized.

Public Outreach Policy and State / City Law Consistency

The City and Developer shall achieve substantial compliance with the requirements in this Policy, as well as with any applicable notification criteria contained in State statutes or City ordinances.

Additional Outreach

The Project Manager for each application will maintain a list of interested parties for each application and said list will be notified by email when environmental documents are available for review and at least **10 days** in advance of community meetings or public hearings. The Director of Community Development maintains the discretion to require mailed notices to a larger radius than that called for by this policy.

Process and Alternate Language Information

All notifications will link to information on City planning processes as well as how community members can access information in languages other than English.

Additional outreach modes and efforts may be required above and beyond what are called for in this policy based on the type of project.

Matrix A: Outreach Modes

Method	Minor	Small	Standard	Large	Significant Interest
On-Site Posting		11"x17"	2'x3'	4'x6'	4'x6'
Initial Mailed Notice			X	X	X
Website Posting			X	X	X
Ongoing Communication		X	X	X	X
Mailing Radius	•	300 feet	500 feet ¼ mile	¼ mile ½ mile	¼ mile ½ mile
Initial Visioning Meeting		X	X	X	X
Community Meeting			X	X	X
Mailed Notices			X	X	X
Online Calendar/ Website Posting			X	X	X
Email to Interested Parties and E-Notify			X	X	X
Social Media			X	X	X
Public Hearing					
Mailed Notices		X	X	X	X
Online Calendar/ Website Posting		X	X	X	X

Public Notification, Outreach, & Engagement Policy for Planning Applications

Method	Minor	Small	Standard	Large	Significant Interest
E-Mail to Interested Parties and eNotify			X	X	X
Social Media			•	X	X
Newspaper Notice			•	•	•
Projects Without Public Hearing					
Mailed Notices	•				
Online Posting	•				
X Always required • May be required (Refer to City Code)					

Matrix B: Application Types and Specific Uses

Application Type / Specific Uses	Minor	Small	Standard	Large	Significant Interest
Applications¹					
Architectural Review (DRH)		X	X	X	
Architectural Review (OTC)	O				
Conditional Use Permit			X	X	
Conforming Rezone with General Plan Designation		X			
General Plan Amendment			X		
Minor Use Permit	O				
Off-Site Parking Permits	O				
Reasonable Accommodation	O				
Rezoning/Text Amendment			X		
Significant Property Alteration (Major)		X			
Temporary Use Permit	O				
Tentative Subdivision Map			X		
Variance			X		
Specific Uses					
Data Centers ²				X	

Public Notification, Outreach, & Engagement Policy for Planning Applications

Application Type / Specific Uses	Minor	Small	Standard	Large	Significant Interest
Drive-In/Drive-Through establishments					X
<p>1. <i>For any of the above applications, the Director may make a determination that the application qualifies as a significant interest project.</i></p> <p>2. <i>For projects requiring a public hearing.</i></p> <p>X Requirement O See City Code for noticing requirements</p>					

References

06/27/2017 City Council adopted Public Outreach Policy for Planning Applications by Resolution 17-8456
XX/XX/XXXX City Council Amended and Adopted _____ by Resolution XX-XXXX