

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

# A White Paper on, “Improving Nashville’s Neighborhood Engagement in Land-Use Decision-Making”

We encourage every neighborhood group to read the White Paper and hold a meeting to discuss the document and make recommendations on ways that it can be improved.

We recommend that the discussion leader provide a summary of the white paper before facilitating any discussion. We invite you to consider the following questions as part of any discussion:

1. The White Paper asserts that the diversity of Nashville’s neighborhoods is one of the attributes that make Nashville stronger. Do you agree? Disagree? How is diversity or lack of diversity evident in your neighborhood?
2. Is current land-use planning a COLLABORATIVE PROCESS that places community involvement at the center of the process? If it is, can you cite any examples of collaborative community involvement that have had an impact on a specific project?
3. The White Paper describes three models of public participation: the TECHNOCRATIC model, the ADVOCACY model, and the CONCENSUS BUILDING model. Discuss each model. What are the pros and cons of each? Which model is at work here in Davidson County?
4. Do you agree or disagree that the CONCENSUS BUILDING model of community participation is the best way to preserve and protect the character of existing neighborhoods? In your neighborhood what do you want to preserve and protect?
5. What in your neighborhood would you be willing to forego to actualize Nashville’s 25-year comprehensive plan? What would be a deal-breaker for your neighborhood?
6. How can we close the gap between the level of participation by citizens and neighborhoods and Metro in understanding land-use policies. What do neighborhoods need to know in order to increase their participation in the land-use planning process?
7. What are some of the obstacles that make it difficult for your neighborhood to have engaged and informed participation in Metro’s planning process?
8. How do we balance the focus on specific topics relevant to particular neighborhoods and the “common good?” What might Metro or neighborhoods need to forego in order to make collaborative, constructive planning for the future of Metro possible?
9. Describe the differences between short-term neighborhood participation and long-term neighborhood engagement in the planning process for land-use policies.

10. The White Paper commissioned by Neighbor 2 Neighbor makes suggestions for neighborhoods' engaged participation in land-use planning. What are those suggestions? Discuss and evaluate each one (see pages 5-9 of the White Paper).
11. What are some of the ways the document encourages active, informed, deliberative collaboration?
12. The document begins with a quotation from Thomas Jefferson.

"I know no safe depositary of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education.

This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power." --Thomas Jefferson, 1820

Read aloud. How does education enable the people to exercise their control of, and collaboration with, their elected officials in order to make a better life for the people?

13. What did the White Paper get right? What did it miss? How can it be improved?
14. Neighbor 2 Neighbor, through a grant from the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, is creating a Planning School. Beginning in 2020, they will offer the first-level course, "**Metro Planning and Zoning Essentials**," designed to help residents effectively engage in the metro planning process. Who, here today, will participate?