

An introduction to Community Benefit Agreements and other types of agreements



In Denver, property developers/owners can enter into legally binding agreements that address specific topics related to the development. This guide provides an overview of three common agreement types: Community Benefit Agreements, Development Agreements, and Good Neighbor Agreements.



Community Benefit Agreement

A Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) is an agreement between a community organization and a developer or property owner of a new project. CBAs are an opportunity for neighbors to work together with development projects to make sure the community's priorities are reflected. The city is not directly involved in this type of agreement.

These agreements empower community organizations and developers or property owners to approach each other with creative solutions outside of city government processes. CBAs are a newer tool in Denver, but have been successful in other cities. Please reference the resources section in this pamphlet for additional information.

Community Benefit Agreement

Who	Between a community organization and a developer or property owner
When	When a project goes through a city process, like a rezoning or purchasing city-owned land
Common Topics	<p>CBAs typically focus on a project's social and economic impacts on the surrounding community. This may include the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Privately-owned open space or trees Affordable housing Local hiring/apprenticeships Wages/job quality standards Community-serving businesses or spaces, like grocery stores or daycares

Development Agreement

A Development Agreement (DA) is an agreement between the city and the developer or property owner addressing infrastructure and other public improvements or amenities that contribute to the city and community's goals.

Development Agreements focus on project phasing of standard city requirements and timing of public improvements. Development Agreements may also include commitments beyond city regulations.

For example, the River Mile redevelopment proposed in Downtown Denver included a DA to ensure the project incorporated affordable housing, open space, and infrastructure commitments beyond the requirements of city codes and policies.

Development Agreement

Who	Between the city and a developer or property owner
When	When a project moves through a city process, such as a rezoning
Common Topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Streets, multimodal transportation options, and infrastructure Parks/open space Environmental remediation Affordable housing

Good Neighbor Agreement

A Good Neighbor Agreement (GNA) is an agreement between a neighborhood organization, like a Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO), and a developer, property owner, or operator of a new project or business, such as a liquor/marijuana establishment.

This kind of agreement typically focuses on the relationship between immediate neighbors and a project's physical impacts.

For example, Yates Theater wished to redevelop the Theater and obtain a liquor and cabaret license. The Theater entered into a GNA with Berkeley Regis United Neighbors RNO to agree upon enforced hours of operation, noise restrictions, parking requirements, and other items.

Good Neighbor Agreement

Who	Between a neighborhood organization and a developer, property owner, or operator
When	When a project applies for a liquor/marijuana license or wants to rezone the property
Common Topics	<p>GNAs typically address the design and operation of the project and its impact on the surrounding neighborhood, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hours of operation Building and site design Points of contact for neighborhood communication Noise restrictions Parking requirements

FAQs

Can there be more than one type of agreement for the same project?

- Yes, there could be one or more agreements for the same project. For example, the developer may enter into a DA with the city and a CBA or GNA with the community for the same project.
- If there is more than one type of agreement for the same project, they will be legally separate agreements, even if they address similar topics. A developer/owner will typically not agree to sign any private agreement that conflicts with city requirements, but could agree to do more or include the community in a unique way, or to do things that are not addressed in a DA with the city.

How do neighbors initiate a CBA or GNA?

- Identify like-minded organizations and gather input from them about social and economic goals for the project.
- Develop a coalition or committee to help research, plan, and organize the approach the community wants to take using some of the resources provided in this brochure.
- Consider asking your district and at-large council members for insights on the project and your goals and/or concerns.
- Reach out to the developer/property owner and ask them to engage in a dialogue about your goals/concerns and potential ways to address them.

Resources

NEST: Neighborhood Equity & Stabilization Team

This team works to connect residents and businesses with public and private resources available to help them stay in Denver.

They can be reached at:
email: NEST@denvergov.org
phone: 720-913-1552

Resources to Learn More About Community Benefit Agreements

These resources were not created by the City and County of Denver and may not fully reflect how CBAs and DAs are typically used in Denver.

Overview of CBAs:

<https://allincities.org/toolkit/community-benefits-agreements>

History and Overview of CBAs in the US:

<https://ced.msu.edu/upload/CBA%20report%20Final.pdf>