

## Neighborhood Liaison

As **Neighborhood Liaison**, you have one of the most challenging positions on the team. You must help your team create a development plan that will gain neighborhood support. **Neighborhood objections will stop a project just as surely as the lack of adequate capital.** Without neighborhood support, the City Council is unlikely to select your proposal. Even in the unlikely event that the Council does select a project without neighborhood support, your project could fail. Unhappy neighbors can generate lawsuits, negative media coverage, and boycotts. Any one of these options can delay your project, causing you to lose money, or prevent office tenants, retailers, or new residents from moving in to your project—and again you lose money. **Remember, you work for the private development team. You work with the neighborhood but are not employed by it.**

**Note: You will not be effective if you take sides with one group or another. Don't let your personal opinions about the neighborhood groups color the advice you give your team.** To help your team create a proposal that will benefit the neighbors and be approved by the city, you must try to understand the objectives and fears of each group and evaluate their power.

The surrounding neighborhood is the most directly affected by what is developed in the Elmwood District and therefore has a significant stake in what your team proposes. If your team is selected as the developer for the Elmwood District, you and your team will be able to meet personally with many neighborhood groups and individuals. In creating your proposal for the city, however, the only information you have available to you regarding neighbors' issues and attitudes is letters from the most politically active segments of the neighborhood (see tab **Neighborhood Letters**).

For years, the residents of the Elmwood District have seen their property values decline and their neighborhood deteriorate. They look forward to new jobs, retail services, more parks, and reduced crime. They are concerned, however, about increased traffic, noise, and large buildings that might change the character and scale of their neighborhood.

- **Read the letters carefully.** You will discover that the residents don't always agree with city priorities—or with each other!
  - Where do the groups agree?
  - Where do they disagree?
  - Where do their priorities match the city's?
  - Do you think some groups have more political influence than others? Who and why?
- The neighborhood groups cannot get everything they want, and some of their wants may benefit very few people. You have limited resources as does the city of Yorktown, so you will have to make tradeoffs. You must work closely with the **Site Planner** and the **City Liaison** to be sure that the most important neighborhood objectives are not overlooked.
- You will have to explain to the City Council how your proposal creates the best possible solution for the neighborhood in the context of the city's goals. Explain the **benefits** your land use decisions provide. For example, one benefit of office space is jobs for residents. How does your proposal in its design and specific land use decisions incorporate the objectives of the neighborhood?

- **Resources for Neighborhood Liaison:**
  - Tab **RFP**
  - Building Fact Sheets: Tabs **Existing Buildings** and **New Buildings**
  - Tab **Neighborhood Letters**
  - Tab **Project Checklist:** Land Use Comparison Chart