

## **Good Neighbour Development – FAQ's**

### **1. What will happen to the fence or retaining wall that separates the two properties?**

Depending on which side of the property line the fence/wall is on, it may need to be removed as part of the excavation process. Have a conversation with your neighbour to determine who owns the fence or retaining wall, and decide between you how it will be protected, removed, and/or replaced. It is recommended that an agreement between neighbours be signed to outline the existing and future condition, as well as having photos. Permission from your neighbour(s) will be required to remove any shared fence/retaining wall or a fence/retaining wall on your neighbour's property.

### **2. What will happen to the tree(s) near the property line?**

If the tree is on the property to be developed, excavation for a new building may require that the tree be removed. If the tree is on a neighbouring property, or straddles a property line, excavation may still result in damage to the tree that would require its removal. Talk to your neighbour about any trees of concern; trees to be removed that are not on the subject property require permission from the property owner.

Tree cutting permits: Any trees to be retained must be properly protected. An agreement is required between neighbours, outlining the existing and future condition, as well as having photos. Tree replacement plans may be required as part of the development of a site, or for the removal of trees.

### **3. Why is the excavation going all the way to the property line?**

Excavation activities can take place, if necessary, over the entirety of the subject property. Often excavation will go beyond the eventual building setback in order to properly pour a foundation, with other elements of the eventual design (e.g., stairwells or light wells) permitted to be closer to the property line than the main structure.

If an excavation removes material close to or up to the property line of a neighbouring property, shoring may be required, which may necessitate encroachment agreements. Developers must acquire the consent of the neighbouring property if encroachment is necessary.

#### **4. Why is the road in front of the neighbouring development closed/reduced to one-way traffic?**

Temporary road closures are sometimes required in order for a new development to connect to or install new services under the road, such as water, sewer or drainage. Those closures are allowed with a Road and Sidewalk Closure Permit obtained from the City. Developers closing a portion of road must still provide safe passage past the development for users of all ages and abilities.

#### **5. Why has construction work stopped?**

There are a number of possible reasons for a work stoppage on a construction site. The developer may choose to halt work for a time, or they may be subject to a permit hold or stop work order from the City. In those situations, the developer must address the issues raised by the City before work can begin again.

#### **6. Who do I contact at the City if I have a question about the development or building being constructed?**

The nature of the issue will determine what department should be contacted.

- For issues pertaining to zoning, site layout, or form of development, contact the Planning and Development Department by [emailing the Planning and Development Department](#) or calling 604-927-3430.
- To apply for building permits, schedule inspections, or for questions about excavation, demolition or construction, contact the Building Permits Department by [emailing Building Permits Department](#) or calling 604-927-3441.
- For issues around dirty or damaged boulevards and City utilities, damaged street trees, or run-off from a construction site on the street, [email the Engineering and Public Works Department](#) or call 604-927-3500.
- For concerns about the health or loss of on-site trees, [email the Urban Forestry Department](#) or call 604-927-3482.
- For enforcement of bylaws, such as the Noise Bylaw or Unsightly Premises Bylaw, email Bylaw Enforcement or call 604-927-7387 (7 days a week).

**7. Who do I contact at the City if I have a complaint about active construction by a private developer?**

If you are unable to reach the developer to discuss your concerns please contact the Construction Site Liaison team at [ConstructionSiteOfficers@coquitlam.ca](mailto:ConstructionSiteOfficers@coquitlam.ca). If your complaint is sent to this email address it will be forwarded to the correct department to help resolve any impacts on residents from active construction.

**8. Who is responsible for fixing the unevenness of the roads? Can the City do something to get that fixed?**

These temporary road cuts are related to storm and water mains installed for nearby development. They will be permanently restored with curb installation as development nears completion. City staff consider the temporary repairs to be acceptable as an interim condition.

**9. Who is responsible for sweeping the road adjacent to a development site?**

Developers are expected to keep the adjacent streets clean from debris. Construction vehicles are not allowed to track excessive debris from the site onto the public street. We would require the sweeping on an as-needed basis when excessive material from the site has been tracked onto the street. Environmental Services would also require routine street-sweeping for erosion and sediment control.

**10. Are dump trucks exempt from the idling bylaw?**

Dump trucks are not exempt and must not idle for more than 3 minutes. However, when being loaded, they would be expected to continue to run for efficiency of the operation and so that they can move as needed during the loading process and keep the truck queue moving.

**11. I'm concerned about shoring damage and shaking due to equipment operating at the development site. Who do I contact about this and what do I ask for?**

If you have concerns regarding activities on a site, reach out to the contact listed on the sign erected by the developer. You can request that their geotechnical engineer address your concerns. It would be our observation that the normal activities related to excavation should not have a significant impact on neighbouring structures.

**12. I have noticed an increase in vehicles parked in the neighbourhood related to the new development. Are developers required to provide parking for their trades?**

Before a building permit is issued, developers are encouraged to plan trades parking. The City is asking developers to share properties for parking use. Developers are encouraged to utilize the underground parking on their site as soon as possible and to make that a priority.

**13. What is required for concrete trucks washing their chutes on the street?**

When they wash the chute, a bucket must be attached to capture all the water running off the chute. Some small overspray may occur and is considered acceptable. It is impossible to fully prevent overspray and small amounts will not impact the creek water quality. Trucks are not permitted to wash their vehicles (other than the chute) on the roadway if there is a risk of any harmful material (notably soap) that could get into a water course. Truck drivers should be washing their vehicles at their yard.

**14. What are the allowable hours for construction noise and what is considered to be construction noise?**

Construction noise is permitted between: 7 a.m. – 8 p.m. Monday – Friday and between 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Saturday. Homeowners working on their own property, other than constructing a new home, can also work between 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Sunday or holidays. Noise from construction for profit or gain is not permitted on Sunday or holidays.

Construction noise means any noises or sounds made on or associated with a construction site, in carrying on work in connection with the construction, demolition, reconstruction, alteration, or repair of any building or structure, in carrying on any excavation or other operation, or in moving or operating any machine, engine, or construction equipment. Please call the bylaw department to report any construction noise which disturbs and is occurring outside permitted hours.

On occasion, sites may need to complete construction work such as large continuous concrete pours that cannot be completed within the allowable hours. As a result, a noise exemption permit from the Engineering Department prior to working outside the allowable hours must be obtained. Prior neighbourhood notification of the noise exemption permit is a requirement.

## **15. When is a building permit required?**

Building permits are needed for all new construction, including additions, temporary buildings and for alterations to existing construction. Please visit our [Minor Projects web page](#) or contact the Building Permits division directly if you would like to confirm if a building permit is required.

## **16. How do I know if my neighbour has a permit for the construction work they are doing?**

If a building permit was issued for the work it should be posted in a visible location on site. Our [Good Neighbour Development Policy](#) also requires that all adjacent property owners are issued a notification letter from the neighbour advising the nature of the upcoming work. You can also check our [Building and Construction web page](#) which may have information on the project, depending on the project size. If you suspect there is work being done without permits, please contact the building permits division.

## **17. My retaining wall is old and failing. Do I need a building permit to rebuild my retaining wall?**

There are several factors to determine if a building permit is required for a retaining wall, including the height of the wall, whether the wall is part of a multiple wall (stepped) system, and how steep the slope is. More information on steep slopes and retaining walls may be found in the [steep slopes and retaining wall PDF](#). You can also contact the building permits division to discuss your particular project to determine if a permit is required before starting any work.

## **18. Who do I contact at the City if I have a complaint about active construction by a private developer?**

If you are unable to reach the developer, please contact the Construction Site Liaison team at [ConstructionSiteOfficers@coquitlam.ca](mailto:ConstructionSiteOfficers@coquitlam.ca). If your complaint is sent to this email address it will be forwarded to the correct department to help resolve any impacts on residents from active construction.

## **19. How do I obtain a gas or electrical permit?**

In Coquitlam, gas or electrical permits/inspections are regulated by [TechnicalSafetyBC.ca](http://TechnicalSafetyBC.ca).

## **20. Do I need a permit to demolish or move a structure?**

Demolition permits are required to deconstruct a structure over 10m<sup>2</sup> whether the structure was originally built with or without a permit.

A building permit is required if you are deconstructing a portion of a building or making interior changes

## **21. Where can I find information on the BC Building, Plumbing and Fire Code?**

Online versions of the Building, Plumbing, and Fire Code are available online and free of charge at [BC Publications](#).

## **22. Where can I find information on the City of Coquitlam Zoning Bylaw?**

Online versions of the City of Coquitlam zoning bylaw are available online at the [zoning bylaw web page](#).

## **23. Does the Building Department inspect the construction of new single family homes?**

The City building and plumbing inspectors inspect new construction at various stages of the project. Please see [Inspections to be Scheduled Prior to Concealing Any Works Guide \(PDF\)](#) for a list of inspections conducted by the City.

## **24. Where can I find information on Road Closures?**

Contractors are required to provide notice to residents when a road, sidewalk, or lane is going to be closed or have restricted access. You can also find information about any road closures within the city at [Municipal 511 interactive map](#).

## **25. Are developers allowed to pump dirty water from an excavation onto the street?**

The City of Coquitlam does not allow any contaminated water from a construction site to be pumped onto the street or into storm drains. Please see [Erosion and Sediment Control Best Management Practices \(PDF\)](#).

## **26. What is the Good Neighbour Policy?**

The [Good Neighbour Policy](#) places greater onus on the developer to follow City bylaws, regulations, and policies; encourages early and ongoing communication between the developer and the neighbourhood they are working in; and, helps to protect and enhance the health of existing neighbourhoods and the natural environment. The policy formalizes a notification process for developers to contact and inform neighbours about the work that will be taking place.