
REQUEST: Amendment to the City’s Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR); Sections 47-24.1, 47-24.2, 47-27.4 - Public Participation Notice requirements.

Case Number	T14010
Applicant	City of Fort Lauderdale
General Location	City-wide
Applicable ULDR Sections	Section 47-24.1 Development Permits and Procedures, Generally Section 47-24.2 Site Plan Development Permit Section 47-27.4 Notice for Site Plan Level II, III and Level IV, Conditional Use and Plats.
Notification Requirements	Newspaper ad 10 days prior to meeting
Action Required	Recommend approval or denial of the proposal to the City Commission
Project Planner	Eric Engmann, Planner II

PROJECT DESCRIPTION / BACKGROUND:

The subject ordinance is intended to address aspects of public participation in the development review process for Site Plan Level III (Planning and Zoning Board review) and Site Plan Level IV (City Commission review) applications as defined by the City’s ULDR.

The intent of adopting Public Participation Notice requirements is to ensure that applicants and neighbors have adequate opportunities early in the planning process to understand and comment on proposed development projects. The plan will require applicants to present development plans to affected neighborhoods prior to the submittal of a formal development application. Although the proposed ordinance will not guarantee consensus, it can serve as a tool to help guide the process and engage the community in a meaningful way early in the development review process.

The initial concept behind the ordinance was discussed at the City Commission Conference meeting on April 3, 2012, when a presentation was made by City staff regarding the Permitting Process Improvement Project, which was undertaken to evaluate aspects of the development review and approval process that could be streamlined. Discussion ensued regarding public input, and points were raised that some cities have institutionalized community outreach at the beginning of the development review process, in an effort to help define development expectations for both applicants and neighbors early on. The City Commission concurred that there is a need for more communication and outreach to the community at the start of the process and in a subsequent Conference meeting on August 21, 2012, the City Commission expressed that appropriate public participation notice requirements be established.

Staff presented a draft proposed ordinance to the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations on May 13, 2013 followed by a presentation at the City Commission Conference meeting on June 4, 2013. In response to comments at that meeting, the City Commission directed staff to continue with additional outreach. After input from the Council of Civic Associations and other interested parties, staff amended the original draft ordinance, to incorporate additional comments.

The proposed ordinance was presented to the Planning and Zoning Board on September The final proposed ordinance is attached as Exhibit A.

PROPOSED ORDINANCE CRITERIA:

The draft Public Participation Notice ordinance consists of the following main themes:

Applicability: The ordinance will apply to projects that qualify as Site Plan Level III or IV, meaning they require Planning & Zoning Board review and approval as part of the process. These applications typically include requests for conditional use approvals, parking reductions, flex allocation, cluster developments, modification of yards, waterway use approvals, rezoning and right-of-way vacation requests, public purpose use, land use amendments and beach development permits. The ordinance will exclude plat and easement vacation requests.

Purpose & Intent: To ensure that applicants seeking approval of Site Plan Level III or Site Plan Level IV development applications pursue early and effective public participation in conjunction with a proposed development in order to provide neighbors with an opportunity early in the development review process to learn about, understand and comment upon proposals, to attempt to mitigate impacts a proposed development may have on the neighborhood, and facilitate communications between applicants and neighbors throughout the review process.

Notice Requirements: A minimum of 21 days prior to the scheduled Development Review Committee (DRC) meeting, the applicant is required to provide a notice of the upcoming meeting to any official city-recognized civic association(s) within 300 feet of the project. A minimum of 10 days prior to the DRC meeting, the applicant will then submit an affidavit documenting that notice was provided to the applicable civic associations.

A minimum of 30 days prior to the scheduled Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) hearing date, the applicant is required to conduct a public meeting to discuss the project. Notice of the meeting to the applicable civic associations must be sent prior to submittal of the PZB application. A minimum of 10 days before the PZB meeting, an affidavit documenting that the notice was delivered must be provided.

Record of Meeting: When a meeting is required under this ordinance, the applicant must provide the Department of Sustainable Development with a record of the meeting including a general summary of the event, presentation material and the number of participants. The letter should also summarize the comments expressed at the meeting. The record of the meeting must be provided to the Department no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled PZB meeting and will be included as a part of the case record.

As the City encourages stakeholder involvement in shaping decisions, the Public Participation Notice ordinance will offer a process that will continue to foster good working relationships, communication and engagement between the community, City staff, and decision-makers.

This ULDR amendment furthers the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2018* initiative, included in the *Neighborhood Enhancement* Cylinders of Excellence, specifically advancing:

- Goal 5: Be a community of strong, beautiful and healthy neighborhoods.
- Objective 1: Increase neighbor engagement and improve communication networks within and among neighborhoods.
- Goal 6: Be an inclusive community made up of distinct, complementary, and diverse neighborhoods.
- Objective 1: Evolve and update the land development code to balance neighborhood quality, character, and livability through sustainable development.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale Vision Plan 2035: We Are Here*.

PLANNING and ZONING BOARD REVIEW OPTIONS:

The Planning and Zoning Board acting as the Local Planning Agency shall determine whether the proposed change is consistent with the City of Fort Lauderdale's Comprehensive Plan and whether the Planning and Zoning Board recommends approval of the proposed amendments to the City Commission.