



Date: November 16th, 2022

To: Chair and Commissioners of the Planning Commission

From: Addison Lewis, Community Development Coordinator

Subject: Development Review Process

Information / Background:

Initiative #3 on the Planning Commission's 2022 work plan is to "review and recommend possible changes to the development review process including sketch plans, public feedback, and public hearings".

Commissioner Lori Olson is the lead commissioner for this initiative. City staff compiled research on the development review process for Edina in comparison to several nearby communities, which is provided in the attached table. Staff met with Commissioner Olson to review this information and a few things stood out:

- The number of required public hearings for PUD approval varies from just one in St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Eagan, and Plymouth to four in Golden Valley and Wayzata.
- Concept/sketch plan review is a required review stage for PUDs in Hopkins and Wayzata though there are still just two review stages in those communities.
- Eden Prairie and Plymouth require just one review stage for PUDs.
- Edina is the only community to require 1,000-foot mailed notice. All other cities require 500 feet at most, except Plymouth, which requires 750 feet.

The following were identified as preliminary recommendations for the Commission to consider:

- Consider removing the public hearing for applications that are site plan review only. Offering a public hearing implies to the public that there is opportunity to influence the outcome. Since a site plan review is limited to confirming whether a development complies with the code, there is very little discretion involved.
- Consider removing one of the public hearings for PUDs, either at the Planning Commission or City Council.
 - Removal of the public hearing at the Planning Commission meeting would potentially minimize the political influence on the Planning Commission's recommendation and allow it to focus its recommendation on consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and zoning

- ordinance. It would remove the burden on residents from feeling like they need to show up to both public hearings and it would decrease the length of Planning Commission meetings.
- Removal of the public hearing at the City Council meeting would allow the City Council to review all public hearing comments ahead of time so that it can take action on the same night a PUD is introduced. This would decrease the length of time from application to final approval, which is often cited as a cost by developers. It would decrease the length of City Council meetings, which are often longer than Planning Commission meetings, and remove the burden on residents from feeling like they need to attend both public hearings.

At the work session, Commissioner Olson will lead a discussion on the development review process and recommended changes to be considered by the Commission.