



City Council

October 28, 2025
Packet Addendum #1

From: [H.M](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Uphold Public Participation and Transparency in Development Review
Date: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:35:08 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] From outside of City of Louisville DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City Council Members,

As you consider proposed changes to Louisville’s development review process, I urge you to reject any streamlining measures that value efficiency and convenience over public participation, transparency, and accountability. These changes, particularly those that shift decision-making authority to administrative approval—risk fast tracking without well documented, reasonable standards or time for review and comment by residents and the community. These proposed changes also sideline impacted neighbors and neighborhoods, and are not aligned with best practices in neighboring communities.

Louisville’s strength lies in its engaged residents and thoughtful planning. Removing public hearings and expanding discretionary authority without clear definitions undermines the trust and collaboration that have long guided our city’s growth. These proposals concentrate the process—and, in some cases, the power—in ways that could erode community input, prioritize the interests of business over residents’ rights, and reduce clarity for both applicants and residents.

Please choose Alternative 2, as presented by staff: wait to make changes until the 2026 development code update. This would allow time to integrate these proposals into the broader comprehensive plan process, where public engagement is expected and essential. It would also allow for time to determine which plats and PUDs should have mandatory neighborhood meetings like four of the six peer cities that maintain robust public-facing procedures. If any changes move forward, they must include:

- - Clear definitions of “material change,” “significant public improvements,” and “compelling public interest”
- - Opportunities for adjacent property owners to request public hearings
- - Preservation of public land dedication requirements— even for minor subdivisions
-

Neighborhood meeting procedures modeled after peer communities to prioritize sustainability, affordability, and pedestrian-oriented design.

- Explicit direction to staff to strengthen, clarify and eliminate ambiguity in the PUD criteria without eliminating any of the intent –for example add definitions to criteria designed to preserve vegetation, buffers, natural features, water conservation, optimizing solar, include low and moderate income housing, and providing for pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- **A phased implementation, starting with or applied only to projects with low and moderate income housing is the place to start.**

Louisville deserves a development process that reflects our values—not one that favors expediency over inclusion. Please protect the public’s role in shaping our city’s future.

Sincerely,
Helen Moshak, Louisville Resident

From: [tamar krantz](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Diana Langley](#); [Planning](#); [Steve Brauneis](#)
Subject: Please wait to make changes until development code update in 2026
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 11:07:03 PM

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Dear Mayor and City Council Members (and planning commissioners if this comes before you later)

Please choose alternative 2, presented by staff on page 6 of 6-- Wait on making changes. Some of these changes may be detrimental and waiting could give more time to consider strategies in the final comp plan. Could you run these changes by the public as part of the comp plan engagement process? The most consequential outcomes of the comp plan will be the changes to code and the changes to zoning.

The comparisons are really interesting. Could you include Boulder's process for comparison too?

Regarding # 1 Allow Administrative Approval of minor subdivisions

If we take away the hearing requirement, I wonder if the following condition is adequate: "If easement changes are required that impact adjacent property, informational notice provided to impacted properties with an opportunity to submit comments or objections." It would be more fair for an adjacent property owner to be able to request a public hearing.

Second, it is not necessary to take away the public land dedication requirement to streamline the process. The fee in lieu and other options exist.

Regarding # 2 Allow Administrative Approval of Final Plats

The suggestion for submittal requirement checklists is great so I hope you encourage that. But the other changes could be detrimental. First, there is no definition of what is a material change--so there is too much discretion for the community development director. If you move forward with this change, please define material change very carefully. Second, this apparently is not necessary. Recall that with the RTR subdivision plat-- one that I would consider significant and consequential, the applicant was allowed to submit both a preliminary and final at the same time. If that is the case, there is no need to eliminate the final plat from the public process. Below is the explanation in the staff memo that explains that both can be done together. (PC Aug 11, 2022).

"The applicant requests concurrent review of both a preliminary and final plat application for the property.... staff has consulted with the City Attorney and determined a concurrent application could be requested considering that there is not a clear prohibition on concurrent applications. Staff has reviewed the application against both the preliminary and final plat standards."

Regarding #3 Create a New Site Development Plan Process Administrative Approval Process

Please consider that this may leave too much at the discretion of the community development director. If you end up approving this idea, please define what is a "significant change in public improvements, streets, easements, open space, utilities, etc." and what is "a compelling public interest". These could be interpreted very differently if there were to be a change in staff.

Regarding #4 PUD Process Improvements

This idea concerns me- just like the changes proposed for plats. First, there is no definition of what is a material change--so there is too much discretion for the community development director. If you move forward with this change, please define material change very carefully.

However, I do believe it is a great idea to eliminate redundancy in the review criteria and a great idea to eliminate subjectivity. I assume that this refers to 17.28.120 A, B, and C. Looking through these, there is plenty of room to eliminate subjectivity. There is also room to make clear requirements that ensure sustainability and smart land use--like clustering. If you move forward with this, I hope you give clear direction to staff that these should be clarified and sustainability, pedestrian orientation, and affordability should be emphasised. For example, A3 says, "Consideration and provision for low and moderate-income housing" I would love to see that become less subjective.

Regarding #5 PUD Amendment Process Improvements

Once again, certainly streamlines things, but too much discretion for the community development director. If the PUD criteria are made more clear and if preliminary and final are combined then this is not needed.

Regarding the neighborhood meeting idea

Please take the time to discuss including the neighborhood meeting procedures that Golden, Lafayette, Superior, Longmont, and Loveland use.

I look forward to your discussion tomorrow evening.

Thank you!

Tamar Krantz
She/her

From: [LLC LLC](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: Development Process Improvements
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 7:25:36 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] From outside of City of Louisville DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City Council

Please consider my thoughts re: development process improvements.

- 1) Please avoid changes that would decrease public input.
- 2) Please add to the process improvements a ruling that would ensure land dedication for large developments is not waived.

Sincerely
Linda Cateora

From: erik@hapcdesign.com
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Rob Zuccaro](#); [Jeff Hirt](#)
Subject: October 28 City Council Joint Meeting with Planning Commission
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 5:13:22 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] From outside of City of Louisville DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Re: 10/28/25 – Discussion / Direction – Louisville Development Process Improvements

Mayor and Members of the Louisville City Council,

First, I would like to give a wholehearted thank you for the hard work that staff has put into this, and for our City Council taking the initiative to pursue this long overdue updating of our development review system. I sincerely appreciate the fact that the Planning Director and other Planning staff have taken the time to reach out to the professionals who deal with these regulations on a daily basis and solicit our input. I have been working with Louisville Planning and Public Works staff for over 40 years on a variety of development reviews, some complex, some simple, some controversial, and some very mundane. Throughout the years we have seen our Planning Department evolve, and increase in expertise and sophistication regarding land planning issues. At the same time, we have seen a growing bureaucracy trying to enforce outdated land use regulations, sometimes used as a crutch and a roadblock to current best practices in urban planning. This effort is overdue, and very much welcomed in the business community as one way we can get Louisville back on track.

Our respected colleagues, Andy Johnson and Peter Stewart have eloquently framed a lot of the discussion, and I will try not to be redundant, but offer my concurrence with the issues they have presented and the suggestions offered.

Regarding staff's specific recommendations, we can always look to improve on a good idea, but my general thought here is that they have really proposed good solutions to some of our major problems with the land use review process. If this moved on as written, that would be a definite improvement, so good work on this. The administrative review processes, which used to be utilized more, will be a welcomed improvement. I would encourage higher numeric thresholds to allow more administrative reviews for simple projects. This will need to be in conjunction with some necessary changes to the land use code regarding the objective standards that will be used as thresholds for certain reviews. Again, our zoning code does not align with contemporary planning practice (lot dimensions, lot sizes, multi-family standards, and attached single-family standards). This is partially the reason that PUD's are used as a vehicle to process variances to an outdated land use code. Without updating the muni code, then many projects will still need to use the PUD process.

If I had to pick my top suggestions for making our process work better for applicants and staff, I would offer the following.

- Development Review Tracks – This was a staple of Louisville’s planning process for decades, and was abandoned for a much less predictable, loose process with no set timelines for applicants and staff to adhere to for a public hearing schedule that they could count on. We always knew when we needed to submit for each step to stay on schedule, and we could anticipate the timing of staff reports and public hearings, unless there were unusual circumstances that might arise during the process. This would be a great improvement to re-institute the track system.
- Less Multiple “Bites at the Apple” – Reducing the number of times that staff comments are provided (via less public hearings as staff has pointed out) would be more efficient as it would necessitate having all major issues identified early in the process, eliminate surprises, and “we’ll look at that on the next round” scenarios. I think that applicants would be forced to be more complete with their submittals as well, if they knew that they could get through the process without an obligatory/expected number of multiple resubmittals prior to the public hearing. I guess if we could agree that the submittal need not be perfected prior to the public hearing, knowing that there is consensus on major issues, any remaining details could be finalized after the Planning Commission hearing. The applicant’s response to staff comments is just the submittal for the public hearing (with a memo to staff acknowledging the applicant’s concurrence, or otherwise). Then any significant issues could just become conditions that the applicant agrees to (or not). If the applicant is not in agreement with staff, then the applicant can make their case to Planning Commission, and/or Council. The process used to be more like that “back in the day”.

Otherwise, I think that many great suggestions by staff and the professionals in our community can really get our process turned around.

Thank you for initiating and working on this important issue. I am always available for any assistance that I might offer you in this process.

-Erik

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From: [Lauren Foster](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Subject: 10-28 meeting: Formally clarify LMC 16.060
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 4:10:56 PM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] From outside of City of Louisville DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear City Council,

Since you are already in the process of amending LMC code 16 and 17 tonight, I urge council to discuss a 6th amendment entailing a clarification to those codes. City Council should issue a formal clarification on LMC 16.060 to honor the language of the city code and avoid future legal liability.

LMC 16.060 clearly states: "A minimum of 12 percent for nonresidential subdivisions and a minimum of 15 percent for residential subdivisions of the total land area of the tract being subdivided shall be dedicated, exclusive of subsection A of this section, for park, school, or other public purposes as determined by the city council and shall be delineated on the final plat. Land dedicated for public use must be suitable, as determined by the planning commission, for the type of development and/or the use for which it is intended."

Despite the language being straightforward, clear, and interpretable, the city has in recent history (i.e. the last 20-40 years) waived this requirement in a number of large developments. Given this historical precedent, set well before current planning staff or council members, city staff are forced into an unreasonable interpretation of the code where the rule is ignored or waived. The city itself undertakes legal liabilities in upholding their code due to this historical precedent (for example, a developer could sue the city if the code were not waived for them also).

City Council should please consider a formal amendment and clarification of the code, in which the public land dedication requirements are upheld for large developments. This backs up our existing code, protects the city from legal liability, and ensures developers are working with the city for the benefit of the public.

Thank you,
Lauren Foster
1011 Harper St.

From: [Peter Stewart](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Rob Zuccaro](#); [Jeff Hirt](#)
Subject: Development Review Improvements
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 12:04:22 PM

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Mayor and Members of the Louisville City Council,

As an architect and longtime resident of Louisville I am writing in support of improvements to the City's development review process. I applaud staff's efforts and endorse their recommendations while also acknowledging more needs to be done.

I am in strong support of the strengthening recommendations outlined in Andy Johnson's letter. I believe all of his recommendations, including greater administrative flexibility, comprehensive pre-application meetings, established timelines, and assignment of case managers, are critical in fostering a flexible, timely, and predictable development review process. These measures are sensible and should be readily achievable. Measures such as these are routinely practiced in other jurisdictions and in my view represent a responsible development review process. Adopting these measures will benefit the City by enabling needed investment in the projects we wish to see, such as in local businesses and in more diverse housing.

I urge the City Council to direct staff to further develop improvements to our development review process as soon as practicable, before the development code rewrite.

Thank you for your consideration,

Peter Stewart

stewart

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From: [Andy Johnson](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [Jeff Hirt](#); [Rob Zuccaro](#)
Subject: Louisville's Land Use Application Review Process - Strong Support and Necessary Strengthening
Date: Monday, October 27, 2025 8:58:32 AM

[EXTERNAL EMAIL] From outside of City of Louisville DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you validate the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayor and Members of the Louisville City Council,

I am writing to you today as a practicing architect in Louisville and a long-time stakeholder in our city's development process, having offered comment to both staff and Council for many years.

First and foremost, I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the efforts of City staff in developing the proposed amendments to the land use application review process, particularly regarding Planned Unit Developments (PUDs). I especially applaud the proposed creation of a Site Development Plan (SDP) process and the increased authority for staff to efficiently and effectively review applications administratively. It is evident that significant effort has been put forth to create real change and not merely a superficial fix or "band-aid" on a broken system.

The Necessity of Comprehensive Action

While I strongly support the direction of staff's proposal, I must I want to be clear and firm; the process by which land use applications are currently reviewed is outdated, broken, cumbersome, and unsustainable. It is a rigid, one-size-fits-all process that is expensive in both time and money, and it offers little to no flexibility for the inevitable and necessary changes that occur between initial PUD approval and the creation of final construction documents.

The consequences of maintaining this status quo are clear and severe. The current opaque and lengthy process actively dissuades developers, leading them to choose to invest elsewhere. Every day that significant reform is delayed, our city misses opportunities for needed investment, economic vitality, and the creation of diverse housing stock. Inaction, or slow action, is no longer an option.

Essential Suggestions to Strengthen the Proposed Amendments

To ensure these efforts result in the necessary systemic improvements, I urge the City Council to direct staff to integrate the following crucial amendments into the final proposal. These changes are essential to creating a modern, flexible, and predictable process.

1. Administrative Review Threshold: I strongly recommend increasing the administrative review threshold for design changes from 10% to 20%. This is a

practical and powerful step toward creating the flexibility needed to actually build approved projects.

2. Streamline Board Review for Open Space and Parks: The requirement for the Open Space Advisory Board (OSAB) and the Parks and Public Landscaping Advisory Board (PPLAB) to have a mandatory public meeting must be eliminated. Instead, they should function as a referral agency providing unified, written comment, or the applicant should be given the option for an in-person review.

3. Establish a Dedicated "Case Manager" Role: The City must create a "case manager" role—preferably a dedicated staff member from the Planning Department—to act as the sole main point of contact. This Case Manager must provide one complete unified comment report compiling feedback from all referral agencies.

4. Prioritize and Mandate Review Timelines (Minimized and Predictable): A firm, published timeline for review must be prioritized and enforced for all City departments, including Public Works. Council must direct staff to make all efforts to minimize all application review times, especially for projects willing to meet or exceed the City's 12% inclusionary housing ordinance.

5. Professionalize Pre-Application Meetings: The City must provide a written agenda ahead of the meeting and schedule the meeting with all required referral agencies to ensure their mandatory attendance. A written report detailing the discussion and action items must be provided to the applicant immediately following the meeting.

Recommended Direction to Staff on Specific Questions

To guide staff in finalizing these necessary reforms, I strongly recommend the Council provide the following direction:

1. General Approach to Proposed Amendments

The Council should confirm strong support for staff's proposed direction but agree that the current system is outdated and unsustainable. Council is urged to encourage staff to incorporate all strengthening suggestions provided by the development community, including the 20% administrative threshold and the Case Manager role.

2. Public Input and Neighborhood Meetings

The Council should direct staff to structure neighborhood meetings as a tool, but one that is suggested, not required, for applicants.

3. Administrative Review Thresholds

The proposed thresholds are correct provided the Council supports the increase of the primary administrative change threshold from 10% to 20%. This change is essential to ensuring the process is buildable.

4. Final Review Authority

To enhance process predictability and efficiency, Council should direct staff to draft an amendment making the Planning Commission the final review body for all land use applications, unless the applicant requests review by the City Council or as suggested by staff due to an application's complexity.

5. Timeline and Process Efficiency

The Council must demand a firm commitment to efficiency, directing staff to prioritize and enforce a firm, published timeline for review for all departments and to make all efforts to minimize review times, particularly for projects meeting or exceeding the inclusionary housing ordinance.

These steps are critical to demonstrating to the development community that Louisville is serious about fostering responsible investment. I urge the City Council to provide clear and strong direction to staff to incorporate these necessary improvements, ensuring that the proposed amendments deliver the efficient, predictable, and flexible process our city desperately needs. Thank you and please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Andy



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