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LDC Revisions Public Participation Plan

I. Introduction

The Land Development Code (LDC), Part III of the Escambia County Code of Ordinances, implements the land use provisions of the County's Comprehensive Plan and establishes standards for new development and redevelopment in unincorporated Escambia County. The current LDC is comprised of the 13 articles identified below. In response to the increasing requests to improve the code, an initial review of articles 4, 6, 7 and 9. Revisions to the nine remaining articles identified in bold print will be completed as the next phase. The revisions will include both a reorganization of content and a consolidation to fewer individual articles, but the most effective results from this lengthy process will come through wide-ranging public participation.

Article 1 – Legal

Article 2 – Administration

Article 3 – Definitions

Article 4 – Subdivisions and Site Plans

Article 5 – Concurrency Management

Article 6 – Zoning Districts

Article 7 – Performance Standards

Article 8 – Signage

Article 9 – Nonconforming Uses and Noncomplying Structures

Article 10 – Floodplain Management

Article 11 – Airport/Airfield Environs

Article 12 – Coastal Management/Conservation

Article 13 – Santa Rosa Island Authority Development Regulations

II. Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 – Provide opportunities for stakeholders, citizens and interested parties to learn about and help shape policies and strategies through an active engagement process that is open, inclusive and accessible, recognizing citizen and stakeholder perspectives.

- ❖ Provide learning and participation opportunities for anyone who chooses to be involved
- ❖ Develop partnerships with other local agencies and community organizations, keeping an updated list of contacts for distribution (BCC, County staff, RPC, PIO, HBA, LWV, etc.)
- ❖ Build credibility and trust among all stakeholders, citizens and project participants

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Goal 2 – Provide clear, accurate, timely and useful information which can be transmitted through a variety of ways to reach stakeholders, citizens and other interested parties.

- ❖ Use clear, non-technical language and understandable graphics to explain the technical aspects of the project
- ❖ Use a variety of media, including the county website, presentation materials, email and other methods to exchange information about the project with interested parties
- ❖ Provide informational materials in a timely manner to allow sufficient opportunity for stakeholders, citizens and other interested parties to properly consider and respond to the information

Goal 3 – Continuously monitor the progress and effectiveness of the Public Participation Plan in communicating to and receiving information from stakeholders, citizens, planning partners and the project team

- ❖ Document the level of participation by Advisory Group members and the general public throughout the planning process
- ❖ Solicit feedback from the Project Team and Working Group on the level of satisfaction with the public involvement process

III. Stakeholders and Participants

Roles and Responsibilities

- ❖ *Project Manager*
The Project Manager is responsible for directing the overall project on behalf of the Development Services Bureau. The Project Manager is responsible for the general leadership of the project and is supported by other planning professionals assisting with the preparation of the document.
- ❖ *Support Team*
The Support Team includes County planning staff and administrative support. The role of the Support Team is to provide direction, guidance, assistance and technical support throughout the code revision process.
- ❖ *Working Group*
The Working Group includes staff from several County Divisions who will be responsible for the preparation of the draft code documents. The Group will coordinate drafts with and among appropriate advisory groups, overseeing and assisting in the advisory group meetings.

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❖ *Advisory Groups*

Each County Commissioner will appoint one individual to serve on each of five Advisory Groups. The groups will consist of a balance of subject matter experts and others interested in devoting their time to at least monthly meetings regarding a broad subject area within the LDC. Through these meetings each Advisory Group provides input on its subject area to give direction to the Working Group. At the end of the process, one member from each Advisory Group will be selected by the members to review the final overall draft document. The Advisory Groups and their meetings are staggered and correspond to the events of the established timeline. The Advisory Group subject areas include the following:

Technical standards (drainage, streets, utilities, access, and other engineered facilities);

this group will include as subject matter experts engineers, architects and surveyors

Aesthetic standards (signs, lighting, landscaping, screening, buffering); this group will

include as subject matter experts landscape architects, architects, designers, sign contractors, arborists and realtors

Environmental standards (wetlands, trees, wellheads and other protected resources);

this group will include as subject matter experts arborists, environmental scientists, farmers, botanists and landscape architects

Land use standards (zoning, accessory uses, temporary uses, use-specific and other use standards); this group will include as subject matter experts realtors, planners and land use attorneys

Administrative processes (officials and boards and the land use approval processes they administer); this group will include as subject matter experts land use attorneys, planners, realtors and developers

❖ *Others*

These persons are interested individuals and groups who seek to participate in the development of the plan and will provide input and guidance over the course of the project. They may be part of the Advisory Groups established by the Project Manager and Working Group.

III. Public Participation Activities, Strategies and Tools

Public Meetings

Members of the general public will be invited to attend all meetings of the Local Planning Agency. The Working Group will have the opportunity to provide input and comments. In

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addition to those opportunities, it is anticipated that public meetings will occur at specific project milestones to ensure that members of the public are fully informed and have the opportunity to attend meetings. The public meetings will be designed to provide detailed project information and elicit comments and feedback from participants.

A variety of meeting materials will be utilized to effectively communicate information to the meeting participants. These materials can include display boards, fact sheets and electronic presentations. Following each public meeting, all meeting materials will be made available on the project website for download to provide access for participants who were not able to attend meetings.

The schedule for the public meetings will be flexible based on the progress of the study and the milestones reached. The tentatively scheduled workshop dates are attached.

Effective Coordination with County Staff and Others

The LDC amendment process requires effective coordination of multiple participants. In addition to public meetings, the Project Manager will meet no less than twice each month to continue project coordination with the Working Group. Although planning staff will likely be the main county participants in the LDC amendment process leading up to public hearings, there will also be coordination with state and local agencies (e.g. Northwest Florida Water Management District).

Project Website

A project website has been established where project information and project updates will be posted. Project materials, presentations, schedules and other information will be posted on the website for public review and continued participation. In addition to the website, the project materials will also be available during office hours at the County planning office, 1190 W. Leonard Street, Pensacola. The LDC Revisions website address is:

<http://www.myescambia.com/Bureaus/DevelopmentServices/LDCRevision.html>

Speaking Engagements and Presentations

Opportunities to speak to individual groups and organizations will be identified in order to provide project information and obtain input from a broader spectrum of the public. These groups include various civic organizations, church groups, schools, neighborhood groups and professional associations. The opportunities are also part of the general education effort concerning the overall planning process in the County.

DRAFT LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE PROCESS

