



City of Aurora Planning and Development Services

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AuroraGov.org/DevelopmentCenter



Site Plan MANUAL

UPDATED JAN. 2024

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

GENERALLY

The purpose of this manual is to provide landowners, developers and their consultants information to assist them in preparing a site plan for submittal to the city of Aurora, Planning and Development Services Department. In an effort to keep this manual concise, some information is summarized and in other cases a hyperlink is provided to direct the user to more detailed information.

Note: The Planning and Development Services Department's review and approval of site plans is the first step in the city of Aurora's six step development review process. The six steps include:

1. Site Plan Review
2. Civil Construction Plans Review
3. Building Plans Review
4. Irrigation Plans Review
5. Construction Permits
6. Construction Inspections and Certificate of Occupancy

DIGITAL FORMAT

All site plans are required to be submitted electronically in a digital format. Electronic submittals have produced cost savings, eliminated waste, and enhanced the flow of information among the city, external agencies, neighborhoods, and the applicant.

STRUCTURE OF THIS MANUAL

Chapter II. Application Submittal Process provides an overview of each step in the site plan application submittal process.

Chapter III. Application Submittal Requirements provides instructions for scaling a site plan, a sample site plan for reference, a checklist of required site plan elements, a list of accompanying documents to submit with the site plan, and hyperlinks to additional information.

Chapter IV. Application Review and Approval Process provides an overview of steps involved in the review and approval of site plans including the public hearing process and recording of site plan entitlements with the county.

Appendix. Regulatory Framework provides a brief overview of the legislative requirements governing site plans and the use of land in the city.

CHAPTER II - SITE PLAN APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

Below are the steps necessary to submit a complete site plan to be reviewed and approved on schedule. Incomplete application submittals can create inefficiencies for the applicant and city staff. It is the goal of the Planning and Development Services Department to avoid these situations whenever possible.

PRE-APPLICATION MEETING

The meeting provides landowners, developers, and their consultants with an understanding of the city's submittal requirements to obtain development approval and building permits and offer initial feedback on their preliminary site plan. A project manager in the Office of Development Assistance hosts the meeting with the Development Review Team which is composed of city staff from departments involved in the development review process, including the Office of Development Assistance, Aurora Water, Planning and Development Services, Parks, Recreation and Open Space, and Public Works. For an overview of the entire city development review process, please refer to the city of Aurora's Development Handbook.

Prior to the pre-application meeting, a planning case manager in the Planning and Development Services Department is assigned to each site plan and attends the meeting with the applicant. The primary role and responsibility of the planning case manager is to manage the applicant's site plan through the application submittal and review process by distilling and facilitating the resolution of site plan issues.

Note: While the project manager guides the applicant through the entire six-step development approval process described in Chapter I, the planning case manager provides guidance to the applicant only through the first step — the site plan review process.

Prior to the pre-application meeting, the Development Review Team examines the applicant's preliminary site plan and prepares comments. The Development Review Team comments are documented in writing and upon completion of the pre-application meeting, applicants receive detailed written comments from the Office of Development Assistance.

SITE PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND REFINEMENT

The time between the pre-application and pre-submittal meeting is when the applicant and their design team establish a rapport with the planning case manager and the Development Review Team about issues identified at the pre-application meeting. Early communication focused on issue resolution helps to ensure the site plan is reviewed in a timely and efficient manner.

PRE-SUBMITTAL MEETING



When the site plan is ready to be submitted, the applicant shall contact the planning case manager to schedule a pre-submittal meeting. This meeting takes about one hour to complete and is scheduled at least one week prior to the formal application submittal. The applicant shall bring one copy of the entire site plan package to the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to:

- Discuss responses to the Development Review Team's pre-application meeting notes.
- Explain the electronic application submittal process.
 - **Note:** During the pre-submittal meeting, Planning and Development Services staff will provide the applicant access to the project on the city's website and email the applicant a link to the website along with a username, a temporary password, and instructions on how to access the city's electronic system.
- Review all the materials to be submitted as part of the application package.
 - **Note:** Chapter III of this manual describes Site Plan Application Submittal Requirements.
- Confirm the number of referral agencies and abutting property owners for the electronic submission.
- Provide an estimate of the application fee and instructions for paying the fee online.

Note: If a subdivision plat (final plat) is submitted along with the site plan, please contact the Land Development Services of the Public Works Department. Land Development Services requires a separate pre-submittal meeting for subdivision plats at least one week prior to uploading the plat and site plan to the city of Aurora Development Application Review website.

FORMAL SITE PLAN APPLICATION SUBMITTAL AND FEES

Once the applicant has uploaded all of their site plan application materials onto the city of Aurora's Development Application Review website, city staff will review the application for completeness. When staff determines the application is complete (this typically takes between two and three business days), the applicant will receive an email invoice from the city. The Invoice is due prior to second submission of the site plan.

Note: Step-by-step digital submittal instructions are provided at the pre-submittal meeting and can also be found in the City of Aurora Development Review Plans Submission and Referral Website Applicant Instruction Guide.

CHAPTER III - SITE PLAN APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides details on the submittal requirements for a site plan application. The chapter is divided into two sections:

Section 1: The Site Plan

There are eight primary elements that make up the site plan. These elements and their components are listed below beginning with the cover sheet.

Section 2: Accompanying Documents

These documents are to be submitted along with the site plan.

Section 1: The Site Plan

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Scale. All site plans shall be drawn at a uniform engineering scale (1 inch = 40 feet minimum).

Font Size. All lettering and numbering must be at a font size that is legible when reduced to an 11-inch by 17-inch format.

Sample Site Plan. A sample site plan is available as an example to assist the applicant with the preparation of their site plan.

Note: Depending upon the complexity of the particular site plan, the applicant may combine elements of the site plan onto a single sheet.

Consistent Detailing. All existing and proposed site plan elements (e.g., sidewalks, parking spaces, fire lanes, building envelopes, etc.) shall be labeled (unless a legend is provided) and dimensioned (unless a detail is provided).



COVER SHEET

Title

The title shall appear in bold letters across the top of the cover sheet.

If the site plan includes a conditional use, include the words “And Conditional Use” in the title at the end of the project name.

If the site plan includes a preliminary plat, include the words “And Preliminary Plat” in the title at the end of the project name.

If the site plan includes any adjustments, include the words “With Adjustments” in the title at the end of the project name.

If the project is part of an existing development or master plan, the name of the existing development shall appear in the title. For example, “Target at Buckingham Square”.

If the project is not part of an existing development, the title shall be unique to Aurora.

Do not use the word “Subdivision” or “Filing” as part of a site plan title.

Legal Description Block

Signature Block

The Signature Block is provided in Word format to the applicant.

Amendment Block

The Amendment Block is provided in CAD. DWG format to the applicant.

Size: 2 inch by 3 inch format is recommended.

Please note this area is used for amendments following approval of a site plan.

Required Site Plan Notes

The Required Site Plan Notes are provided in Word format to the applicant.

Data Block

The Data Block is provided in Word format to the applicant.

Contacts

List the name, addresses and phone numbers of the property owner’s consulting team.

Sheet Index

Vicinity Map

Place a vicinity map of the project site on the cover page in a 3-inch by 4-inch block at a scale that includes the closest major arterial street intersection and all surrounding local streets.

CONTEXT MAP

For some applications, the Planning and Development Services Department may ask for a context map. The purpose of the context map is to ensure the site plan “fits” into the context of the surrounding land uses and the neighborhood. The type of information shown shall include the following components (existing and proposed):

- Adjacent and connecting street network
- Trails, parks and open space amenities
- Pedestrian connections, bicycle facilities
- Building footprints and other public improvements
- Topographic contours in 2-foot intervals

SITE PLAN

Abutting Zone Districts

Identify zoning on all abutting properties.

ADA Route

The city of Aurora enforces handicapped accessibility requirements based on most recently adopted International Building Code.

Bar Scale

Bike Racks

Please refer to City Code Section 146 4.6.3.F

Building Footprints

Curbs, Curb Cuts, and Crosspan

Please refer to the Roadway and Design Construction Specifications

Detention/Water Quality Ponds

Please refer to City Code Section 146 4.7.5.M

Drainage Inlets and Manholes

Easements: Existing and Proposed

Please note that easements proposed as part of a concurrent final plat application shall be labeled as proposed on the site plan

Entry Monuments

Footprint located on the site plan

Include dimensions to the street flow line and the property line at the closest point

Fences/Gates Across Driveways or Easements

Locations shown and labeled

Materials, color, and height labeled

Please refer to City Code Section 146 4.7.9

Fire Hydrants/FDC/etc

Fire Lanes

Handicap Ramps

Handicap Parking Stalls

Please refer to City Code Section 146 4.6.3.E

Legend

Provide graphic symbols and distinguish line types (on each sheet as appropriate)

Lot Dimensions, Boundaries, and Lot and Block Numbers

Mailbox Locations

The applicant shall discuss USPS cluster mailbox location guidelines with the planning case manager

Monument Signs

Label the footprint, height, material, color, and lighting method

Include dimensions to the street flow line and the property line at the closest point

Please refer to City Code Section 146 4.10 for sign identification and marking requirements

Motor Vehicle, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Connections

North Arrow

Open Space Tracts and Common Areas

Parking Stalls

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.6

Phasing

Identify phasing areas and describe the improvements by area

Plan Cross Sections

Provide, as needed, to illustrate specific topographical or sight line issues

Retaining Walls

Provide and label all locations

Identify and label all materials, colors, and heights

Right-Of-Way Dedications: Existing and Proposed

Setbacks

Sidewalks and Trails

For trails, provide cross section and label materials

Sight Distance Triangles

Please refer to City Code Section 146 4.7.5.C

Sign Program and Design

Please refer to City Code Section 146 4.10

Site Lighting

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.9

Street and Pedestrian Lighting

Please refer to Section 2.11 in the Roadway and Design Construction Specifications

Please refer to TE 18.3 and TE 18.4 in the Roadway and Design Construction Specifications if the project is in an Urban Center or in a TOD

Street Cross Sections

Site Furniture

Streets and Driveways

Label the names of public, private, and abutting streets

Traffic Signals: Existing and Proposed

Identify parties and funding responsibilities for new traffic signal costs

Trash Enclosures

Dimension the distance between enclosure and building if proximate

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.8.11

GRADING SCHEMATIC

Title Block

North Arrow

Scale

Site Improvements Legend

Sheet Index map

Required notes:

Include the required grading notes

Grading including existing and proposed contours

Label contour intervals

Finished Floor Elevations provided for buildings

Longitudinal slopes for roadways, access drives and alleys

Street and Site Lighting

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.9

Streets Driveways and Alleys

Label the names of public, private, and abutting streets

Right-of-way width labeled

Show longitudinal slopes

Fire Lanes

Width dimensioned

Retaining Walls

Top and bottom of wall elevations

Provide typical section with height range and material type

*** Items to not include in Site Plan grading schematic, as these will be reviewed in Civil Plans ***

Detailed grading and/or point elevations of accessible ramps or parking spaces

Detailed grading and/or point elevations around buildings

UTILITY SCHEMATIC

Title Block

North Arrow

Scale

Site Improvements Legend

Sheet Index map

Drainage Inlets, Manholes, Head Walls

Label private or public as applicable

Drainage and Utility Easements

Fire Hydrants/FDC, etc.

Fire Lanes

Grease Interceptors (when applicable)

Site Utility Layout: Existing and Proposed Schematic Layout

Street and Site Lighting

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.9

Estimate Locations of Water Meters and Related Pocket Utility Easements

Water Quality/Detention Ponds

Water and Sanitary Sewer Service Lines

LANDSCAPE PLAN

Please refer to the Landscape Reference Manual for additional information

Project Title

Landscape Architect/Designer

Include name, address, email address, and phone number

Title Block

North Arrow

Graphic Scale

1 inch = 40 feet minimum

Sheet Index Map

Plant Material Symbol Legend

Tree Preservation and Protection Plan and Black Forest Ordinance

Please discuss this issue with the Planning and Development Services Landscape Architect and the Forestry Division before submitting

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.7

Building Perimeter Landscaping

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.5.J

Detention and Water Quality Ponds

Type

Area

Depth

Identify and label retaining wall materials and colors

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.5.M

Site/Neighborhood Entryways

Detail as applicable

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.5.L

Fence and Walls Regulations

Identify and label locations

Identify and label materials, color, and height

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.9

Landscape and Urban Design Master Plan

Landscape palette

Standard buffers

Street furniture

Lighting

Signs

Landscape Area Table and Outlining Water Conservation Areas

Please refer to the Landscape Reference Manual



Landscape Street Perimeter Buffer Table

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.5.D

Landscape and Site Improvements Legend

Monument Signs

Label the footprint, height, material, color, and lighting method

Include dimensions to the street flow line and the property line at the closest point

Parking Lot Landscaping, Islands, and Screening

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.5.K

Phasing

Identify phasing areas and describe the improvements by area

Proposed Landscaping Adjustments

Please discuss this with the Planning and Development Services Landscape Architect before submitting

Retaining Walls

Identify and label locations, materials, colors, and height

Service Areas and Trash Enclosures

Identify screening methods and materials

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.7.8

Standard Landscape Notes ONLY

Please do not include contractor notes

Label each sheet NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

Site Lighting

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.9

Site Utility Services and Easements: Existing and Proposed

BUILDING ELEVATIONS

Elevations shall be line drawings, drawn to scale, and with material callouts

Building Height

Building Light Fixtures

Wall Signs

Identify the general location of signs on the building elevations as a dashed line

Dimension sign area envelope

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.10

Screening Equipment

Label equipment screening walls or fences, and outline any rooftop and/or building mounted equipment with a dashed line.

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.8.11



SITE PLAN DETAILS SHEET

For most site plans, one or more pages are devoted to design details. The planning case manager will discuss requirements with the applicant

Cross Sections

Not identified on the site plan

Fence or Wall Detail

Identify and label materials, colors, and height

Signs

Label the footprint, height, materials, colors, and lighting method

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.10 for sign identification and marking requirements

Site Furniture and Lighting

Provide a photo or drawing of sufficient quality to determine compliance with the development plan standards where they exist

Label all benches, trash receptacles, bollards, pedestrian lighting, wall fixtures, etc , however please do not include entire cut-sheets or model numbers in the site plan set

Trash Enclosures

Elevation and section with material callout

PHOTOMETRIC PLAN

For site plans that propose exterior/site lighting, the Planning and Development Services Department will ask for a photometric plan. The photometric plan shall note that all site lighting shall be downcast and full cutoff.

Show the illumination levels on the site 10 feet beyond all property levels

Please refer to City Code Section 146-4.9

Section 2: Accompanying Documents

OVERVIEW

The supplemental items listed below shall be submitted at the time of site plan application unless otherwise noted.

Note: The minimum size font for accompanying documents shall be 11-point with a serif font or 10-point with a sans serif font.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The applicant shall prepare and sign a letter of introduction for the project. Address the letter to the planning case manager and include the following information:

- Description of the type of land use proposed (i.e., commercial or residential; retail, office, flex, or industrial; single family detached, townhomes, or multi-family; infill, redevelopment, or Greenfield; etc)
- Location of the project
- Size of the project in acres
- Intensity of development
 - Residential Projects: total number of dwelling units and dwelling units/acre
 - Commercial Projects: total square feet of building and FAR
- Outline of justification and mitigation for each proposed adjustment of the city code. Analysis of the adjustment criteria requirements in Section 146-5.4.4.
- List of the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the property owner and any project consultants
- A justification for how the site plan conforms to the site plan criteria in Section 146-405(F) in the City Code

Note: The original letter of introduction with original signatures shall be submitted to the planning case manager within one week of the electronic site plan submittal.

PROOF OF OWNERSHIP

- Certified copy of the recorded deed
- Title policy or commitment dated within 120 days of final approval of the site plan

Note: If a subdivision plat is being concurrently submitted with a site plan, a title policy or commitment is required by the Public Works Department for the subdivision plat and shall suffice as proof of ownership for the site plan.

BUILDING MATERIAL SAMPLES

A full color PDF of the project's building materials shall be submitted with the site plan application.

Note: Prior to the Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing, the applicant shall submit building materials samples to the planning case manager on a display board. All materials and colors shall be labeled, securely fastened to the boards, and include the name of the project.

COLORED ELEVATIONS

Please note that a colored elevation of the proposed building may be requested by the planning case manager if they determine it is necessary for the Planning and Zoning Commission public hearing.

RESPONSE TO PRE-APPLICATION COMMENTS

The applicant shall prepare a letter that lists and responds to each comment made at the pre-application meeting. Please take care in responding to these comments. Comments that address significant issues necessitate a thorough response.

ABUTTING PROPERTY OWNERS

The applicant shall input the names and addresses of abutting property owners as part of the electronic submission of the application. Abutting property owner information is obtained from the county assessor's office.

Note: Abutting property owner refers to two or more properties or zone lots sharing a common border or separated only by a public or private right-of-way or by public open space or body of water not more than 1,000 feet in width. In a case of property held in condominium ownership, abutting means all the individuals holding undivided ownership in the abutting property.

GIS/CAD INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADDRESSING

For addressing purposes, the applicant shall submit ESRI shape files or CAD DWG files with the site plan. Please refer to the Instructions for Submitting Digital Files for Addressing.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

During the pre-application meeting, the Development Review Team will inform the applicant whether any additional technical documents need to be submitted with the site plan. In these instances, the planning case manager will provide the applicant with contact information for staff who will assist the applicant in preparing the technical documents.



CHAPTER IV - SITE PLAN APPLICATION REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

City Code Section 146-5.4.3.B establishes the review and approval criteria for site plans. These criteria are primarily design criteria that play a vital role in the site plan application review process.

KEEPING THE SITE PLAN ON SCHEDULE

About a week after the electronic submittal of the site plan, the applicant will receive a letter from the Planning and Development Services Department with the following information:

- A schedule for the review of the application including deadline dates for staff and external agency review comments and deadline dates for the applicant's revised submittals
- A tentative Planning and Zoning Commission Hearing or Administrative Decision date

For projects to stay on schedule, it is crucial that all deadlines identified in the letter from the Planning and Development Services Department be met. The most successful applicants are those who work diligently with their planning case manager and the Development Review Team to understand and resolve referral comments as soon as possible. Applicants should plan to work closely with neighborhood groups to resolve outstanding issues before the application goes to a public hearing. Please contact the planning case manager assigned to the case for assistance in setting up a neighborhood meeting

Note: Seemingly minor issues can delay a project as easily as a major issue. Therefore, the Development Review Team recommends all referral comments be treated with a measure of urgency.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS

Although not a City Code requirement, it is strongly recommended that the applicant attend a neighborhood meeting to resolve any outstanding issues before the site plan application goes to a public hearing.

PUBLIC NOTICE

City Code Section 146-5.3.7 require that mailed posted, and published notification be provided to all adjacent property owners and the general public at least 10 calendar days in advance of any public hearing. The city handles the published notification requirement, but the applicant is responsible for mailing notification to adjacent property owners and posting the site. The planning case manager will review all public notification requirements with the applicant well in advance of any public hearings. Please refer to the Public Notification Instruction Form for additional instructions.

Note: Applications not complying with public notification requirements are automatically continued to the next public hearing.

SEVERED MINERAL RIGHTS

The applicant has the responsibility to notify the owners of severed mineral rights that a site plan application is pending. This notice shall occur 30 days prior to the first public hearing or administrative decision date. A certification that mineral rights owners have been notified shall be submitted to the planning case manager prior to the public hearing or administrative decision date. Please refer to the Severed Mineral Rights Notice or contact the planning case manager for additional information.

THE STAFF REPORT

At least one week before the scheduled public hearing for a site plan application, the planning case manager composes and submits a staff report on the applicant's development proposal for the Planning and Zoning Commission. The planning case manager's staff report includes, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- Applicant information
- Project summary
- Applicant's development request
- Neighborhood comments
- Major issues discussed
- Public notification details
- Analysis of the application's conformance with City Code
- Analysis of the application's conformance with the city's comprehensive plan
- Exhibits
- Land use analysis
- Staff recommendation

The applicant shall submit PDF graphics to the planning case manager for inclusion in the staff report at least 10 days prior to the scheduled public hearing. The PDF graphics shall include the refined site plan, landscape plan, building elevations, and any other relevant graphic information requested by the planning case manager.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION - PUBLIC HEARINGS

The following procedural steps occur at the Planning and Zoning Commission (Commission) hearing:

- The planning case manager makes a presentation that usually includes an overview of the staff report.
- The Commission members have an opportunity to ask any questions they may have of the planning case manager, the applicant or members of the general public who testify at the hearing.

Note: Commission members may also ask questions of the applicant and any member of the public who comments at the hearing

- If the applicant chooses, they have 10 minutes maximum to make a presentation on the project.
- The public has an opportunity to comment on the project.
- The applicant responds to public comments.
- The commission renders a decision.



ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS

For administrative decisions regarding a site plan, the Director of Planning and Development Services renders a decision regarding the application following the standard public notification process described above.

APPEALS

Decisions of the Commission or Director of Planning and Development Services may be appealed through the procedures in City Code Section 146-5.3.13.

TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS

As a condition of approval, the Commission or Director of Planning and Development Services may ask that “technical issues” be addressed before a site plan is recorded and building permits issued. Following a final decision on development applications, the planning case manager will send a letter to the applicant documenting the approval and a list of any outstanding technical issues.

Note: It is critical that the applicant work closely with the planning case manager to resolve “technical issues” to the site plan to ensure final project mylars can be recorded and building permits issued.

FINAL MYLARS

After the technical issues are addressed and the site plan has been coordinated with approved civil engineering drawings, the site plan mylars will be ready to be signed by the property owner and notarized, and submitted to the city. The Planning and Development Services Department will check and route the site plan mylars for city signatures and arrange recording of the plan with the county in which the project is located. Please refer to the Mylar Checklist for additional information. Mylars not compliant with these standards will be rejected.

Note: If a subdivision plat was required with the site plan, the subdivision plat shall also be recorded before a building permit can be issued for the site plan.

APPENDIX REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The city of Aurora is a home rule municipality created pursuant to Article XX of the Colorado Constitution. As a home rule municipality, the city has plenary legislative authority over local matters, such as land use and zoning.

AURORA MUNICIPAL CODE

The eight code sections discussed below provide an overview of the legal framework utilized by the city to regulate and enforce the use of land, particularly as it relates to site plans. The purpose of these regulations is to provide for the systematic development of land in the city while promoting the health, safety and general welfare of the city and its residents in an economically efficient and predictable manner.

Section 146-1 • General Provisions

This code section provides the city with the broad power to regulate the use of land.

Section 146- 5.6 • Enforcement

This code section allows the city to discontinue any land use not in compliance with the Aurora Municipal Code.

Section 146-5.3.9.D • Denial of an Application Based on Past Applicant Performance

This code section authorizes the city to deny a new land use application based on an applicant's past performance.

Section 146-5.3.9 • Development Application Review Procedures

This code section describes development application procedures, including but not limited to, waivers, public hearings and notifications, and appeals.

Section 146-5.3.16 • Vested Rights

This code section provides a comprehensive overview of vested rights issues, including but not limited to, established vested rights, termination of vested rights, subsequent reviews and approvals, and other provisions related to vested rights.

Section 146-5.4.3.B • Site Plans

This code section provides criteria related to the submittal, review and approval of site plans. The following site plan review criteria are specified in this section of the city code: applicability, method of review, criteria for review and approval, site plan waivers, and amendments.



Forms and Applications



Digital Site Plan Manual

