

LAND USE REVIEW AND TECHNICAL DOCUMENT REVIEW PROCESS SUMMARY

The Planning Department coordinates discretionary reviews through a Land Use Review process. The various review types are listed on the Land Use Review Application Form and include annexation, site review, use review and preliminary plat for subdivision. The Land Use Review process is summarized here.

Pre-Application

If you are considering filing a development review application, a pre-application review may be beneficial. An interdepartmental city staff team is available to answer questions about applicable regulations, application requirements, and how they may affect a project on a particular site. Many pre-application questions can be answered without need for a meeting. Occasionally, staff will determine that a meeting will be the most effective approach. Pre-application review is usually optional. Exceptions are the Off-site Affordable Housing Location Review, when land is proposed for Inclusionary Housing, and certain Housing Funding requests; however, there are certain types of projects and reviews for which city staff recommends a pre-application review. Refer to the "Pre-application Review" brochure for details.

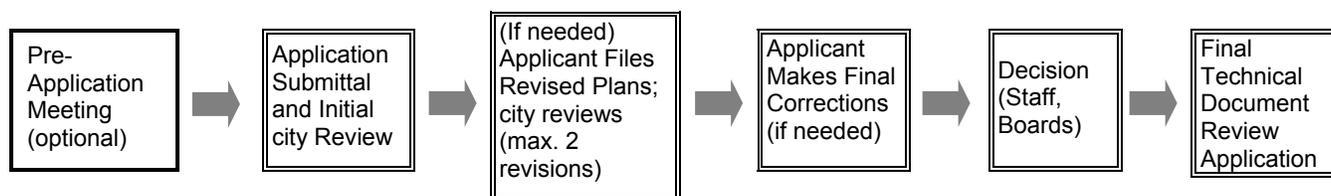
Application

A request for Land Use Review is made by completing and filing an application in the Planning and Development Services Center. Land Use Review applications are accepted daily. **Bimonthly deadlines are at 10 a.m. on the first and third Mondays of each month.** A case manager is assigned to each application and manages the land use review process for the individual project. The case manager also serves as the primary contact for the project in interactions with other city departments, the applicant and the public.

Review Schedule

Each application is assigned to a "track" based on availability of staff resources to conduct the review. The track assigned determines the land use review schedule which the project will follow and helps applicants to gauge the time needed to complete the review process. A generalized diagram of the land use review process appears below. Once a review track has been assigned, the city commits to this time schedule, assuming the applicant meets appropriate deadlines. In addition, the schedule may be accelerated or a project placed on a later track based on the applicant's response time, the number of revisions, and staff, Planning Board or City Council work volume.

Basic Steps in the Land Use Review (LUR) Process



Reviewers

The land use review process includes review by the Development Review Committee (DRC), which is made up of representatives from city departments and other referral agencies. Each representative provides review and comment about how the application complies with code and policy requirements within their area of responsibility. When the interests of individual departments diverge, developing consensus is the responsibility of the Policy Resolution Group (PRG), made up of supervisors of Planning and Development Services and the City Attorney's Office.

Initial Review and Review of Revised Plans

Public notice, by mail and posting a sign on the property, occurs during the initial review. The applicant is responsible for posting of a sign that is issued by the Planning and Development Services Center.

During a project's initial review, a summary of the city's findings, a list of requirements and informational comments are identified and given to the applicant in the form of Development Review Results and Comments.

Projects are reviewed for conformance with development standards and requirements and some are evaluated against qualitative design criteria. City comments and/or a decision are issued approximately three weeks after the start of the assigned review track.

Issuance of the Development Review Results and Comments concludes the services covered by the initial application fee. Any additional time spent by staff after this point is subject to hourly billing or by revision fees where applicable.

The case manager is available to meet with the applicant to review and discuss the city comments. After considering the issues identified in the initial review, the applicant is given the opportunity to propose revisions. Revisions must be submitted, or a written request for continuance received within 60 days from the date of city comments; otherwise, staff will either take action on the latest plans on file or the application is voided. Revised applications are evaluated by DRC staff members and review of revision comments are issued by the case manager within 15 working days after the start of the assigned review track. Up to two revisions may be filed for each project.

Decisions/Call-ups/Appeals

Depending on the potential impact, Boulder's land use regulations assign approval authority to either city staff, Planning Board, or both Planning Board and City Council. After the completion of staff review, the Planning Department either issues a staff decision or refers the project to the Planning Board or City Council. For site review, use review and subdivision (at final plat review), a "Notice of Disposition" is issued. This is a one- or two-page document stating the decision and listing any conditions of approval. These decisions are final after a 14-day "call-up" period. Staff-level decisions may be called up by the Planning Board for a final decision or appealed to the Planning Board by the applicant or any interested person. Planning Board decisions are also issued as dispositions and are final after a 30-day call-up period. Board decisions may be called up for review by City Council with a majority vote of City Council in favor of the call-up. Decisions by Planning Board and City Council are made following public hearings at regularly scheduled meetings.

Several types of Land Use Review applications do not have dispositions issued and follow a slightly different review process at the time of the project decision. For example, out-of-city utility permits are approved by city staff and subject to a call-up by the City Council. Annexations follow a state law approval process, including a recommendation by the Planning Board and approval of an ordinance at two readings by City Council. For additional information on the steps towards a final decision for a particular application type, please refer to the application attachment for the review type or contact the Planning and Development Services Center.

Technical Document Review and Permit Review

The conditions of approval for most Land Use Review applications will generally require several documents to be prepared, filed and recorded depending on the review type. These may include final plans (architecture, site, landscape), a subdivision final plat and agreement, a development agreement, engineering plans, and dedications of easements or rights-of-way.

For city review and approval of these technical and final documents, *the applicant files a Technical Document Review application*. The Technical Document Review process (TEC DOC) is similar to Land Use Review (same application deadlines, but no hearings are involved).

After the required technical documents have been approved, the applicant may file a building permit application for any new construction. Information on building permits is available in the Planning and Development Services Center (303-441-1880). The applicant may also need to obtain other permits to complete the project, including growth management allocations and floodplain development permits.

Expiration of Approval

For site and use reviews, the applicant must begin and substantially complete an approved project within three years from the date of final approval (or as modified by a specific development schedule). If a project is not completed within three years, or according to the project's approved development schedule, the approval expires. If the project is not completed within this time frame, the applicant may request administrative extension of the development approval. Up to two six-month extensions can be granted by staff. After that, extensions can only be granted by the Planning Board, after a public hearing, and upon a showing by the applicant that reasonable diligence has been exercised to complete the project.