
City of Alexandria

Small Business Zoning Amendments



Project Goals

**An enhanced, business friendly environment;
While continuing to maintain a great quality of life.**

**Lower
application
fees for many
businesses.**

**Reduced
review time
for many
businesses.**

**Safeguard
established
neighborhoods.**

**Ensure
economic
vitality and
vibrant
storefronts.**



Overview of Small Business Zoning Efforts

Initial Phase

- Created the Administrative SUP Process

Second Phase

- Added Administrative SUP uses
- More Permitted Uses

Current Phase

- More Administrative SUP and Permitted Uses
- Definitions Clarified

Future Phase

- Further analysis of eligible Administrative SUP review
- Additional ordinance clarification



Non-Development Special Use Permits

Role of Special Use Permits

- Review of uses to minimize potential neighborhood impacts.
- Ensure compatibility with existing surroundings.
- Conditions to regulate activity and impacts to ensure continued compatibility.

Benefits of Special Use Permits

- Maintain high quality of life.
- Effective method for community review and input.
- Communication between business and resident communities.
- Context-appropriate conditions.



Types of Non-Development Special Use Permits

All Special Use Permits

- Public notice and input
- Conditions regulate activity and impacts
- Equal weight of enforcement

Administrative Special Use Permits

- Staff-level review and approval
- Approximately 30 day application process
- Typical Fees: \$250 - \$325

Full-Hearing Special Use Permits

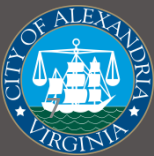
- Planning Commission and City Council review and approval
- Approximately 3 month application process
- Typical Fees: \$575

Small Business Zoning Amendments

- Some Full-Hearing SUPs become Administrative SUPs
- Some Full-Hearing SUPs become Permitted Uses
- Definition Updates based on Trends/Practices
- Other revisions



Some Full-Hearing SUPs become Administrative SUPs



Restaurants



Proposed Change

- Allow quick-service/fast-casual restaurants to be administratively approved.
- Other existing operating standards for restaurant would remain.
- Nightclubs and drive-through restaurants would continue to require a Full-Hearing SUP.

Delivery Vehicles



Proposed Change

- Increase the number of delivery vehicles per restaurant allowed through an Administrative SUP from 1 to 2.
- Decrease the seat requirement from 40 to 20 seats.
- Include fast-casual restaurants for Administrative SUP.
- Delivery vehicles must continue to be parked off-street.

Motor Vehicle Storage



Proposed Change

- Allow motor vehicle storage for more than 20 vehicles in the Industrial Zone through an Administrative SUP.

Automobile & Trailer Sales



Proposed Change

- Allow car dealerships in the Industrial Zone through an Administrative SUP.

Home-Based Childcare



Proposed Change

- Permit home-based childcare for 6 to 9 children with an Administrative SUP.

Health & Athletic Clubs



Proposed Change

- Allow health & athletic clubs through an Administrative SUP instead of Full-Hearing SUP in many commercial zones and mixed-office zones.

Some Full-Hearing SUPs become Permitted Uses



Private Commercial Schools



Proposed Change

- Allow private commercial schools with more than 20 students to become a permitted use where they are currently only allowed through SUP.
- Must comply with parking requirements.
- Does not include academic private schools or commercial day care centers.

W-1 Zone



Proposed Change

- Surgical changes to allow retail shopping establishments under 10,000 square feet and personal service establishments as permitted uses.
- This zone's area regulation currently has language encouraging ground floor retail uses, but it also requires an SUP.
- This proposal improves consistency in regulations.

Definition Updates based on Trends/Practices



Pet and Animal Care



Proposed Change

- Create a definition for a veterinary hospital in the Zoning Ordinance.
- Replace the existing “Kennel” definition with “Animal Care Facility” and differentiate between those with overnight accommodations and those without.
- Establish a separate definition for animal shelters.

Light Automobile Repair



Proposed Change

- Align definition with modern trends in automobile repair by clarifying repair activities that would be considered “light.”
- Update the City’s existing definition to include upholstery, engine or transmission rebuilding or replacement in the “light” category because impacts are similar to other light repair businesses.

General Automobile Repair



Proposed Change

- Maintain repair activities more likely to create environmental impacts and require additional regulation as “general” automobile repair.
- General Automobile Repair use would focus on services that engage in any type of body work, including painting, undercoating, body or fender work, tire retreading or recapping.²⁰

Food & Beverage Production



Proposed Change

- Address artisan food and beverage production.
- Amend retail definition to include food and beverage production establishments with a retail component.
- Amend manufacturing definition to include food and beverage production.

Other Revisions



Outdoor Restaurant Seating



Proposed Change

- Extend the parking exemption for the first 20 outdoor restaurant seats citywide.

Administrative SUP Amendments



Proposed Change

- Allow restaurants to add up to 12, not to exceed a total of 100 seats, through an Administrative SUP as a Minor Amendment.
- Allow businesses to increase floor area by up to 33% through an Administrative SUP as a Minor Amendment.
- Expansions would be required to meet parking regulations.

Planning Commission Review

Proposed Change

- Researching ways to allow Planning Commission to have final approval authority for non-development, use-based SUPs.
- Maintains public hearing process for major SUP cases and those with a high degree of community interest.

Implementation Options for Review Change

“DSP-Like Process”

City Charter amendment by the General Assembly delegating City Council discretionary approval to the Planning Commission for non-development Special Use Permits.

No City Council Hearing

Requires new delegation of authority

“Super Admin SUPs”

Develop **another category of Special Use Permits** with specific standards to provide Planning Commission non-discretionary approval authority.

No City Council Hearing

No changes to delegation of authority



Implementation Options for Review Change

“DSP-Like Process”

Benefits of Implementation

- Shortened review cycle
- Maintains public hearing
- Planning Commission can adopt context-appropriate conditions

Challenges to Implementation

- City Charter amendment through State General Assembly.
- Appeals heard by City Council would require a one-month noticing period.

“Super Admin SUPs”

Benefits of Implementation

- Shortened review cycle
- Maintains public hearing
- Greater predictability for applicants through pre-written conditions

Challenges to Implementation

- Standard conditions required for each SUP use in Ordinance.
- Items determined to need to be heard by City Council require one-month noticing period.
- Planning Commission limited to non-discretionary approvals.
- Proposals outside of standard conditions require two hearings.



Alternative Approaches for Review Change

“City Council Consent Agenda”

Maintain current discretionary review and approval procedures. Implement a policy change to place all non-development Special Use Permits on City Council consent docket.

City Council Consent Docket

No changes to delegation of authority

“Maintain Current Processes”

Maintain current discretionary review and approval procedures. Staff **continue to identify uses** which could be reviewed as Administrative Special Use Permits for future phases.

City Council Hearing

No changes to delegation of authority



Alternative Approaches for Review Change

City Council Consent Agenda

Benefits of Implementation

- Policy change can be implemented immediately.
- No appeal to Planning Commission recommendation required.
- No amendments to Zoning Ordinance required.

Challenges to Implementation

- No perceived challenges to adoption.

Maintain Current Processes

Benefits of Implementation

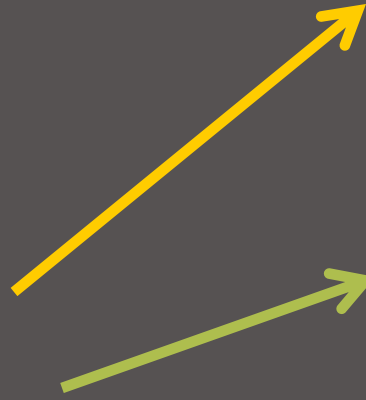
- Maintain current authorities.
- Continue staff review process to establish additional Administrative SUPs.

Challenges to Implementation

- No perceived challenges adoption.



Next Steps

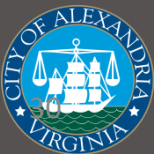


Continue revisions to Small Business Zoning.

Finalize recommendations to Small Business Zoning and prepare final documents.

Submit proposed amendments for approval to Planning Commission and City Council.

Research future phase of potential zoning amendments.



Questions? Comments?

- Alex Dambach, Alex.Dambach@Alexandriava.gov
- Ann Horowitz, Ann.Horowitz@Alexandriava.gov
- Taryn Toyama, Taryn.Toyama@Alexandriava.gov
- Sara Brandt-Vorel, Sara.BrandtVorel@Alexandriava.gov
- (703) 746-4666

