



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 5, 2025

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER /s/

FROM: KARL MORITZ, DIRECTOR, PLANNING & ZONING

DOCKET TITLE:

Public Hearing, Second Reading and Final Passage of an Ordinance to amend Section 5-6-224 (Method of Storm and Subsoil Water Disposal) of Subdivision J (Miscellaneous Provisions) of Article B (SEWAGE DISPOSAL AND DRAINS) of Chapter 6 (Water and Sewer) of Title 5 (Transportation And Environmental Services) to Transfer Signature Authority. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

ISSUE: City Council consideration of an ordinance to amend City Code Section 5-6-224 (Method of Storm and Subsoil Water Disposal), which describes requirements and procedures for review and approval of grading plans associated with administrative development approvals, typically for low density residential development. The proposed changes include (i) reassigning the signature authority for approval of the plans from the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES) to the Department of Planning and Zoning and (ii) deleting the application fee from the City Code and adding it to the fee schedule when approved as part of the budget process. The proposed changes align with an ongoing strategic reorganization and operational improvements to facilitate investment.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council approve the proposed ordinance on first reading and schedule it for a second reading, public hearing and final passage on Saturday, March 15, 2025.

BACKGROUND: The City is undertaking a strategic realignment, titled One Start, to facilitate review of development applications from concept to occupancy. The changes will improve customer service and enable faster delivery of community benefits associated with approved development projects. Part of the realignment includes reorganizing the engineering division responsible for processing of grading plans from T&ES to P&Z. Consistent with the reorganization, staff has prepared language to update the City Code and Zoning Ordinance to transfer signature authorities for grading plans and site plans, respectively, from T&ES to P&Z. The changes to the City Code and Zoning Ordinance are being brought forward at the same time under separate staff reports.

DISCUSSION: Private investment is an important contributor for meeting the community's and City Council's goals of a fiscally stable, vibrant, inclusive community. The One Start initiative is designed to facilitate delivery of approved development projects that align with the Council's priorities and adopted plans and ordinances. One Start includes a series of improvements in internal operations.

The proposed changes are procedural adjustments to signature authority. Grading plan applications will receive the same rigorous review and be held to the same technical standards that they are now. Transferring the signature authority will reduce staff overhead associated with internal routing across departments.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The revised code will become effective immediately.

FISCAL IMPACT: There are no anticipated financial impacts.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Ordinance Cover
2. Ordinance
3. Presentation

STAFF:

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager

Paul Stoddard, Deputy Director, P&Z

Christina Zechman Brown, Deputy City Attorney

Lalit Sharma, P.E., Deputy Director, T&ES

Brian Dofflemyer, P.E., Division Chief, T&ES