



AMENDMENT APPLICATION

An Informational Guide

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING

Development Services Division

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WHAT IS AN AMENDMENT APPLICATION (AA)?

An Amendment Application (AA) or rezoning is a request to change the zoning on a specific parcel of land from one Zone District to another. Generally, a property owner who desires to establish a use that is not allowed in the current Zone District files this request. Each of the more than 35 Zone Districts has its own list of uses allowed as a matter of right and those that are permitted by a Director Review and Approval (DRA), Conditional Use Permit (CUP) or other special permit.

A free handout titled "County Ordinance Code Zoning Districts" is available that generally describes the various Zone Districts and the uses permitted. Zoning Ordinance excerpts, which contain the detailed regulations for each Zone District, can be purchased at the Permit Assistance and Zoning Counter. An electronic version of this Ordinance is available at:

<http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/viewdocument.aspx?id=53760>

Approval of an AA requires a public hearing before the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Notice of the hearing is mailed to all surrounding property owners within 300 feet of the project site.

WHAT ARE THE SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AN AA?

Prior to submitting an application for an AA, the applicant must obtain a Conference Checklist (Pre-Application Review) which is prepared by the Permit Counter. This Checklist allows staff to identify information specific to the property which may affect submittal and processing of the application. For example, a General Plan Amendment (GPA) may also be required if the proposed zoning is not allowed by the General Plan.

The application package for an AA includes the following:

- AA Application form and Filing Fees;
- Initial Study (IS) Application form and Filing Fees (please review separate handout entitled Environmental Review);
- A current ownership deed with an accurate legal description of a subject parcel;
- A legal description of the area to be rezoned, if different from the description on the deed;

- The Pre-Application Review.

Prior to submitting the application package, the applicant may request a “pre-development meeting” to discuss the proposal with staff from County Departments and other reviewing agencies.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS AN AA GOES THROUGH?

After the applications for the AA and IS are determined to be complete and accepted, the applications are routed to County Departments and various other agencies for review. Following the comment period, staff conducts the Initial Study and reviews the AA with regard to General Plan Policies and potential impacts to surrounding properties. After the Initial Study and AA review is completed, a notice announcing the hearing dates before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors is mailed to the property owner, applicant, and surrounding property owners. A Staff Report is then prepared for the Planning Commission. The Report includes a summary of the analysis and a recommendation for approval, with or without Conditions, or denial of the requested zone change. The Staff Report is made available to the Commission, the applicant, and the public prior to the hearing.

The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors hearings are held in the Board of Supervisors Chambers located on the Third Floor of the Hall of Records, 2281 Tulare Street, Fresno.

APPEAL PROCESS

If the Planning Commission decides to recommend approval of the AA to the Board of Supervisors, the application is automatically forwarded to the Board for hearing. If the Planning Commission denies the application, the applicant or any other affected party may appeal the determination to the Board of Supervisors. The Appeal form and Filing Fee must be submitted to the Clerk to the Board of Supervisors within 15 days of the Commission’s action.

HOW LONG DOES THE AA PROCESS TAKE?

Generally, an AA will require approximately 65 days to process. This time period is extended if additional information is required of the applicant during the Initial Study/application review process. The applicant will be notified within 30 days of the application receipt date if additional information or special studies are needed in order to continue processing the application. The processing time will be substantially greater if an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required.

AFTER THE AA IS APPROVED, WHAT NEXT?

The approval of an AA does not address all requirements that must be met in order for development to proceed. Other requirements may include a Conditional Use Permit, a Site Plan Review Application, Grading Permits, Building Permits and associated fees. In addition, fees may be required by other agencies (e.g. school district, flood control district).

County staff is available to answer any questions you may have regarding the Amendment Application process. Please call (559) 600-4497 for assistance.