



# **DIRECTOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

## **An Informational Guide**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING**

***Development Services Division***

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### **WHAT IS A DIRECTOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL (DRA)?**

The Fresno County Zoning Ordinance requires a Director Review and Approval (DRA) for certain uses of land or types of businesses which are not allowed as a matter of right in a particular Zone District.

The determination on a DRA Application is generally made by the Director of the Department of Public Works and Planning. The Director's decision is final unless appealed to the Planning Commission. The Director may, however, refer a DRA directly to the Commission. Notice of the Director's decision or notice of the Planning Commission hearing is mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the project site.

### **WHAT ARE THE SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A DRA?**

Prior to submitting a DRA Application, the applicant must obtain a Conference Checklist (Pre-Application Review) which is prepared by the Permit Assistance and Zoning Counter. This Checklist allows County staff to identify information specific to the property which may affect submittal and processing of the Application.

The application package for a DRA includes the following:

- DRA 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;
- Project description/Operational Statement (if necessary);
- Nine copies of a detailed Site Plan (drawn to scale, showing all existing and proposed structures) plus an electronic copy or 8-1/2"x11" copy of the Site Plan;
- Eight copies of Floor Plans and Elevation drawings;
- Photographs of the subject site and surrounding area;
- The Pre-Application Review.

Prior to submittal of 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 A DRA GOES THROUGH?**

After the applications for the DRA 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 DRA to determine if the Findings required to grant a DRA can be made. These Findings are as follows:

1. That the site of the proposed use is adequate in size and shape to accommodate the use and all yards, spaces, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping, and other features required by the proposed use;
2. That the site for the proposed use relates to streets and highways adequate in width and pavement type to carry the quantity and kind of traffic generated by the proposed use;
3. That the proposed use will not be detrimental to the character of the development in the immediate neighborhood;
4. That the proposed use is consistent with the Fresno County General Plan.

After staff completes its analysis of the required Findings and the IS, the determination to deny or approve the application is made. If approved, a letter documenting the Director’s decision is mailed to the property owner, applicant, and surrounding property owners. The approval letter typically includes Conditions of Approval which must be met in order to establish the approved use. If the DRA is referred to the Planning Commission, a public hearing notice is mailed and a Staff Report is prepared. The Report is made available to the Commission, the applicant, and the public prior to the hearing. The Planning Commission hearing is held in the Board of Supervisors Chambers located on the Third Floor of the Hall of Records, 2281 Tulare Street, Fresno.

## **APPEAL PROCESS**

After the Director’s decision is made on the DRA Application, there is a 15-day appeal period during which the applicant or any other affected party may appeal the decision to the Planning Commission. The Appeal form and Filing Fee must be submitted to the Department of Public Works and Planning, Development Services Division, within the 15-day appeal period.

NOTE: DRAs referred to the Planning Commission are subject to appeal to the Board of Supervisors.

## **HOW LONG DOES THE DRA PROCESS TAKE?**

Generally, a DRA Application will require approximately 55 days to process. The processing time 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 DRA IS APPROVED, WHAT NEXT?**

The approval of the DRA does not address all requirements that must be met in order for development to proceed. Other requirements may include a Site Plan Review Application, Grading Permits, Building Permits and payment of 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 Director Review and Approval Permit process. Please call (559) 600-4497 for assistance.

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