

PRIORITY REVIEW PROCESS FOR NMD APPLICANTS IN THE RIO29 AREA

It is the County's goal to provide timely and responsive review for all applicants. However, the County also recognizes that opportunities to develop property within the Rio29 Small Area Plan (SAP) node (Attachment A) are of highest priority to the County. Nonetheless, this development must be realized in a manner and in line with principles that enable the vision for the SAP to be implemented.

The County has established a priority review process in order to expedite projects that are consistent with the recommendations for the Rio29 node and furthers the accomplishment of a Form Based Code approach to the development of this area. Selectivity in granting priority status helps to ensure that qualifying projects receive the necessary staff attention. A priority review process will not in any way lessen the careful scrutiny of environmental issues that is a standard part of the County's development review processes.

The priority review process is available to applicants pursuing a Neighborhood Model (NMD) re-zoning on property located within the Rio29 node with a proposed development that is expected to comply with the vision and designs established in Phase2 of the Rio29 Small Area Plan project (Attachments B & C). To be considered, the proposal should comply with three or more of the following numbered criteria:

1. A form consistent with the Rio29 designs (must meet at least 3 of the bulleted criteria)
 - Buildings containing two or more stories; and
 - Buildings fronting on existing or proposed streets with relegated parking; and
 - A minimum of two use classifications (see [Sec 20A.8\(b\) of the Zoning Ordinance](#) for acceptable use classifications) or provide the flexibility to allow for conversion to different use classifications in the future; and
 - A minimum of two housing types (see [Sec 20A.8\(a\) of the Zoning Ordinance](#) for acceptable housing types)
2. A development that contains new public bike/ped/green space components – (new trails, parks, open space, consistent with connectivity plan)
3. A development that establishes or improves upon interconnectivity of the area (proposes new roads, intersections or interconnections and/or upgrades existing travelways to public roads, consistent with connectivity plan)
4. A minimum size of 3 acres

Guidelines for Priority Review Process

To be successful, a formalized priority process must recognize that each project has different needs and circumstances and that a specific approach must be developed on a case-by-case basis. The following guidelines provide a general approach with the understanding that a critical part of the initial evaluation of the project review will include assessing and responding to the project's specific individual circumstances.

- An applicant must make a request to the County's Community Development staff that its project be designated for priority review. Requests that meet the priority review criteria will then be forwarded to the Community Development Director who, in consultation with other departments as appropriate, will make the final determination on eligibility for priority designation.
- Prior to submitting its development application, the applicant and the Community Development Director and staff shall meet to discuss the County's priority review process. This structured meeting will identify issues before the formal application is submitted for review. The applicant also would be advised to identify a single point of contact (SPOC) for the application process as this has proven to significantly reduce communication problems. The County will do the same as

outlined below. Success of the priority review will depend on the willingness of both parties to commit to meeting established expectations.

- Once the project is approved for priority review and the initial submission meeting has occurred, the priority review application is submitted to the attention of the Community Development Director.
- Priority treatment of the application, or “top-of-the-list” status, will be provided for the project throughout the entire development review. This priority treatment will include flexibility in submittal deadlines and immediate processing for qualifying applications.
- The Community Development Director will assign the project to a senior project manager who will serve as a liaison during the application and permitting process. This senior project manager will provide oversight throughout the process, and the project will remain prioritized throughout developmental review. The senior project manager also will be responsible for notifying the Community Development Director of any resource needs or problems the applicant is unable to address. The senior project manager and the applicant’s SPOC will coordinate throughout the development review process.
- A review team comprised of experienced members from all reviewing departments will work on the application’s review until the project is completed, based on timelines agreed upon and established in order to ensure efficiency. These experienced team members will be empowered to make administrative decisions and recommendations on behalf of their respective departments and divisions during the review process.
- Legally required Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors notices may be published simultaneously.
- The site plan process may run concurrently with the rezoning or special use permit application if both are required.
- Other department's staff, as appropriate, will be involved during the pre-submittal process and will act as part of the review team throughout the process to identify possible federal, state and local incentives and resources.

Again, these process guidelines are general in nature due to the individual requirements of specific projects. If a project is accepted for priority review, staff will tailor the most efficient approach while maintaining established standards of quality and public input.

Guidelines for Priority Review Evaluation

To be successful, applications should also integrate the form-based framework that the Board of Supervisors endorsed on January 30, 2018. Applications will be evaluated to ensure that they are consistent with form and design guidelines that were described in that framework, including, but not limited to: building massing and relationship to the street, transportation capacity (including multimodal) and green infrastructure.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Map of Rio29 Node

Attachment B – Connectivity plan

Attachment C – Design character