



## CITY OF TARPON SPRINGS

### PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT

City Hall: 324 E. Pine Street, Tarpon Springs, FL 34689  
(727) 942-5611 / [planning@ctsfl.us](mailto:planning@ctsfl.us)

## APPLICANT GUIDE TO PROJECT SUBMITTAL FOR TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (TRC) REVIEW (This document does NOT pertain to building permits)

### THE TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE (TRC):

- Reviews your project for compliance with the City's Land Development Code (LDC),
- Provides comments specifying the project revisions needed to meet code requirements,
- Decides whether your project is ready to proceed to public hearing (if applicable).
- Meets on the first Thursday of each month in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Media Room starting at 9:00am at City Hall, 324 E Pine Street, Tarpon Springs.
- The TRC agendas (and all City meeting agendas) are posted at this link:  
<https://tarponspringsfl.portal.civicclerk.com/>
- The TRC includes the following City staff:

Planning and Zoning	Fire Marshal
Utilities (Consulting Engineer)	Projects Administration
Public Works	Code Enforcement
Building Inspector	Law Enforcement
Site Construction Inspector	Floodplain Management
Municipal Arborist	Sustainability Coordinator
Stormwater Management (Consulting Engineer)	
- The types of projects most often reviewed by the TRC include:

-Annexations	-Conditional Uses
-Rezoning/Future Land Use Amendments	-Temporary Uses
-Subdivisions	-Variances/Sidewalk Waivers
-Site Plans	-Sidewalk Cafes
-Plats	-Development Agreements
-Planned Developments	-Vacations of Rights-of-Way/Easements

### STEP 1: APPLY FOR YOUR PROJECT

- Upload new applications and supporting materials into the City's electronic plans portal. See "Uploading to Electronic Plans Portal (Go Post)" below.
- Fees may be paid by check made out to the City of Tarpon Springs and mailed to Tarpon Springs City Hall, Planning and Zoning Department, P.O. Box 5004, Tarpon Springs, FL 34688, or, dropped off at the front lobby of City Hall. Contact staff at 727-942-5611 if you want to pay by credit card.
- There is no on-line payment method available. The City of Tarpon Springs will NEVER contact you by phone or email requesting on-line payments of any kind.

### FOR ALL APPLICATION TYPES:

- ☐ Complete the [General Planning Application and Addendum\(s\) as specified in application](#)
- ☐ Complete the [General Application Checklist](#) and include the materials listed
- ☐ Determine the required fee using the [Fee Schedule](#)

### **(SEE BELOW FOR A GUIDE TO APPLICATION ADDENDUMS)**



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## STEP 2: ATTEND TRC MEETING AND RESPOND TO TRC COMMENTS

**Attend the TRC Meeting!** Although it's not mandatory, it is recommended to attend the TRC meeting. By attending the meeting it provides a chance to discuss your project with knowledgeable staff, it improves everyone's understanding of the project, and, it assists in making project adjustments where needed.

After the TRC meeting, you will receive a TRC Comment Report through the on-line portal. The document lists:

- the staff member and code citation for each comment,
- the name of your document that the comment applies to,
- a description of the revision needed to meet the code requirement,
- the status of your application: return to TRC, schedule for public hearing, OR, apply for permit

### HOW TO PREPARE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE TRC COMMENTS

If your project needs revisions that must be further reviewed by the TRC, prepare and upload your revisions to the existing project in the on-line portal. For fastest processing, you should:

- Use the TRC Comment Report to create a response letter addressing each comment. Note where, on the revised plans, you addressed the comment.
- Upload your revised documents as 'new versions' of the previously submitted documents and, upload any new documents that were not previously submitted.
- Submit the revisions/resubmittals at least three (3) weeks prior to the next TRC meeting date.

## STEP 3: PREPARE FOR THE PUBLIC HEARING

### WHAT TO EXPECT AT A PUBLIC HEARING

Your project may require up to three (3) public hearings before the City's Planning and Zoning Board and the Board of Commissioners. The Board of Commissioners makes the final decision on your project. The Planning and Zoning staff assembles the **hearing agenda packet** for your project. It includes:

- Staff report outlining the project and how it meets applicable codes,
- Staff recommendation to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application,
- Staff presentation with graphics and summary of the proposed project,
- The project survey, plans, narratives, and other documentation
- Draft resolution or ordinance for approval.

(Note that requests for variances require only one public hearing before the Board of Adjustment. The Board of Adjustment makes the final decision on variances).

Public hearings follow a structured process before the hearing body (the "Board") and their attorney (the "City Attorney"):

- Staff Presentation of how the project complies with City codes, and a recommended Board action.
- Applicant Presentation: You will be asked whether you want to make a presentation before the Board – this is your chance to explain the project to them and answer their specific questions.
- Public Comment: . The public is given a chance to comment on your project either in writing ahead of the hearing, or, at the hearing.



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- **Rebuttal:** The staff and the applicant are each given a chance to rebut each other's, and the public's, comments/arguments.
- **Board Deliberation:** The Board may discuss your project. This discussion is led by the Board Chair/Mayor.
- **Board Vote:** The Board will vote on your project. The Planning & Zoning Board makes a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners, who takes the final vote/action on the project.

#### TIPS FOR PUBLIC HEARING

- You will receive a copy of the staff report about one week prior to the public hearing date. Read it carefully and don't hesitate to contact staff with questions.
- Clear and complete applications, plans and narratives will go a long way towards a smooth public hearing. Staff's presentation will generally be a brief summary. Unclear/unreadable application documents will tend to frustrate/confuse Board officials.
- During public comment, make a quick note of the comments you hear. You will have a chance to present a rebuttal response to any comments.

#### **STEP 4: APPLY FOR YOUR BUILDING PERMITS and/or BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT**

*If your project was approved as a Conditional Use*, apply to the Building Development Department for a [Local Business Tax Receipt](#).

*If your project involves construction on the property*, apply for your building permits. Your construction plans should match the plans approved by the Board of Commissioners.

#### **APPLICATION ADDENDUMS**

**1. ANNEXATION** [[LDC SECTION 208.00](#)]

Property located in unincorporated Pinellas County may be annexed into the municipal limits of the City if it meets certain requirements.

☐ Additional Items to Include:

☐ Include a statement or narrative describing the reason for the proposed annexation including the current/proposed use and general future plans/intention for the property.

☐ Fill out the proposed Future Land Use Map category and proposed Zoning District. Include in your narrative, a rationale for the proposed map designations. If this is not filled out, staff will assign City designations that most closely match the existing Pinellas County designations.

☐ Things to Know:

☐ Annexations take approximately 3-4 months to process. They require public hearings. If the Future Land Use Map is being amended, it may take longer (see Future Land Use Map Amendment below).

☐ Annexations are publicly noticed with a legal advertisement in the Tampa Bay Times, a sign that is posted on the property, and, postcards that are mailed to addresses within 500 feet of the property.



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**2. FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENT [[LDC SECTION 207.00](#)]**

This is a request to change the City's Future Land Use Map designation on a property.

☐ **Additional Items to Include:**

☐ Include a statement or narrative describing the reason for the proposed map amendment including the current/proposed use and general future plans/intention for the property.

☐ **Things to Know:**

☐ The [Future Land Use Categories & Rules Table](#) lists the allowable uses, densities and intensities for each map category.

☐ Future Land Use Map amendments take 3-4 months to process. If an amendment to the Forward Pinellas Countywide Map is needed, processing time is extended to a total of approximately 6-8 months to process.

☐ Future Land Use Map amendments are publicly noticed with a legal advertisement in the Tampa Bay Times, a sign that is posted on the property, and, postcards that are mailed to addresses within 500 feet of the property.

**3. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) [[LDC SECTION 207.00](#)]**

This is a request to change the zoning of a property on the City's zoning map.

☐ **Additional Items to Include:**

☐ Include a statement or narrative describing the reason for the proposed map amendment including the current/proposed use and general future plans/intention for the property.

☐ **Things to Know:**

☐ Zoning districts, allowable uses and standards are found in [Article II of the LDC](#), and in the SmartCode (for properties located in the Special Area Plan).

☐ A Zoning map amendment takes 3-4 months to process unless it is accompanied by a Future Land Use Map amendment request.

☐ Zoning changes are publicly noticed with a legal advertisement in the Tampa Bay Times, a sign that is posted on the property, and, postcards that are mailed to addresses within 500 feet of the property.

**4. CONDITIONAL USE [[LDC SECTION 209.00](#)]**

Some uses are listed under the zoning districts as "conditional." This means they go through a public hearing process and may have specific conditions attached to their approval.

☐ **Additional Items to Include:**

☐ Include a statement or narrative describing the use and how it meets the City's criteria found in [LDC Section 209.01](#). Pay particular attention to item (B) regarding compatibility of your proposed use with other properties/uses in the area.

☐ **Things to Know:**

☐ Conditional uses generally take 3 months to process.

☐ If the project includes physical changes to the site, a Site Plan application is required.

☐ Conditional uses are publicly noticed with postcards mailed to addresses within 500 feet of the property.



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#### 5. PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS [[ARTICLE 76.00](#)]

A Planned Development is a proposal for a specific site development design. The Planned Development process rezones the property to a Planned Development zoning designation (residential, commercial or industrial). There are several steps to this process.

☐ Additional Items to Include:

- ☐ [Planned Development Application Checklist](#)
- ☐ [Certificate of Concurrency Application](#)
- ☐ [Public Art Form](#)
- ☐ A full narrative describing the planned development components and management. Include description of and justification for any waivers being requested pursuant to [LDC Section 83.00](#).

☐ Things to Know:

- ☐ A Planned Development process will take at least 6 months to complete.
- ☐ Planned Developments are publicly noticed with a legal advertisement in the Tampa Bay Times, a sign that is posted on the property, and, postcards that are mailed to addresses within 500 feet of the property.

#### 6. SITE PLANS/SUBDIVISIONS (PRELIMINARY PLATS) [[LDC SECTION 210.00](#)]

Site plan approval applies to projects allowed by right or when physical changes are made to a property.

☐ Additional Items to Include:

- ☐ [Site Plan Application Checklist](#)
- ☐ [Certificate of Concurrency Application](#)
- ☐ [Public Art Form](#)

☐ Things to Know:

- ☐ Site Plans take at least three (3) months to process and essentially require an 80% - 90% plan set to be scheduled for hearing.
- ☐ Site Plans do not require public notice, aside from appearing on meeting agendas published on the City agenda site (<https://tarponspringsfl.portal.civicclerk.com/>).

#### 7. TEMPORARY USES [[LDC Section 56.00](#)], SIDEWALK CAFES [[LDC Section 66.00](#)]

Temporary uses and sidewalk cafes can be approved administratively by the TRC.

☐ Additional Items to Include:

- ☐ Site layout, usually sketched using a copy of the property survey

☐ Additional Items to Know:

- ☐ Temporary Uses and Sidewalk Cafes are only reviewed by the TRC and typically take one month to complete.
- ☐ Upon completion of review, the TRC will typically issue an approval letter/report. The approval may have attached conditions. For a temporary use, you are advised to retain this document on site for the duration of the event to show that City approval has been obtained.
- ☐ Temporary Uses and Sidewalk Cafes are not publicly noticed other than appearing on the TRC's meeting agenda, published on the City agenda site (<https://tarponspringsfl.portal.civicclerk.com/>).



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## HELPFUL CODE STANDARDS AND LINKS

- [Land Development Code](#)
- [SmartCode](#) (for properties located in the Sponge Docks & CRA Special Area Plan)
- [Municipal Code Chapter 20 – Water and Sewer](#)
- [Zoning Map](#)

## UPLOADING TO ELECTRONIC PLANS PORTAL (GO POST)

The City of Tarpon Springs uses the GoPost electronic plans review system for all project reviews.

### TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE PROJECTS:

- The TRC reviews Design projects. Upload new applications and materials into the electronic plans portal (GoPost) at this link: <https://gp-tarponsprings.eplansoftreview.com/#/login?portal=TSDR>. Be sure you are in the “Tarpon Springs Planning and Zoning” portal (see top of lefthand green column). ***Please read the on-line instructions carefully and use the short instructional video.***
- Use the links provided to download application forms. The Planning and Zoning application forms and all addendums can also be accessed from the City’s website: <https://www.ctsfl.us/303/Applications-Forms>
- To respond to TRC review comments, upload revised and additional documents into your existing project that you already created, in the “Tarpon Springs Planning and Zoning” portal. Be sure to upload them properly as ‘new versions’ to an existing document, or, as a new document. ***Please read the on-line instructions carefully and use the short instructional video.***

### BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATIONS:

- Upload new applications and materials into the electronic plans portal (GoPost) at this link: <https://gp-tarponsprings.eplansoftreview.com/#/login?portal=tarponsprings>. Be sure you are in the “Building Development” portal (see top of lefthand green column). ***Please read the on-line instructions carefully and use the short instructional video.***
- To respond to building permit review comments, upload revised and additional documents into your existing project that you already created, in the “Building Development” portal. Be sure to upload them properly as ‘new versions’ to an existing document, or, as a new document. ***Please read the on-line instructions carefully and use the short instructional video.***

### DISCLAIMER:

This document is intended to be a guide. It does not include all the information required to assemble plans and documents for a complete project application package. Your Design Professional will know what is required and what codes/standards apply to your project for building, fire, floodplain and zoning. Staff can assist in locating and explaining the codes. Staff cannot design the project.