



VANDERBURGH COUNTY

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Vanderburgh County Commission Proposes Overhaul of Site Review Process

Evansville, IN – August 29, 2023 – The Vanderburgh County Commission announces an important step towards modernizing and enhancing our local business environment. The Commission held a First Reading of proposed changes to the Site Review process, a vital component of the county's regulatory framework for new business. The code citation is 17.36.020.

The proposed updates aim to bring Site Review processes up to date, ensuring greater efficiency, rapid permitting and promoting a conducive atmosphere for economic growth. Initially introduced approximately thirty years ago to organize the permitting procedure for new businesses, the Site Review process has lost focus and introduced delays. The need for improved efficiency has been brought to the Commissioner's attention by major stakeholders in the building industry.

The primary objectives of the proposed overhaul are two-fold: first, to streamline the process by reducing the number of business circumstances subject to Site Review, and second, to establish clear building permit review timeframes.

The first objective seeks to limit Site Review to business with a new or expanded building footprint or seeking a rezoning from one classification to another. Currently, virtually any business change of ownership or "use" triggers the Site Review process.

The second key objective is the introduction of a permit review timeframe. Under this framework, permit applications submitted to permitting authorities will now allow regulators 12 business days to respond. If no response is received within this timeframe, the application is deemed approved. It is important to note that this timeframe has already been established in state law, and the ordinance change ensures alignment with existing state regulations.

The Vanderburgh County Commission believes these updates to the Site Review ordinance will contribute significantly to the county's continued economic growth and sustainability. By reducing bureaucratic hurdles and providing clear timelines, the county aims to attract new businesses, encourage local entrepreneurship, and ultimately foster a thriving business ecosystem.

The Commission extends its gratitude to the community for its ongoing support and input in shaping these revisions. The proposed changes reflect a collaborative effort to ensure that Vanderburgh County remains a leader in progress and innovation.

The first reading of the proposed overhaul of the Site Review process was approved unanimously at the August 29, 2023, meeting of the Vanderburgh County Board of Commissioners.

The Area Plan Commission, an advisory board, is statutorily required to hold a hearing within 60 days, providing an opportunity for stakeholders and the public to engage in discussions and contribute valuable insights. A Second Reading will be scheduled at the Vanderburgh County Commission immediately after Area Plan Commission action. The Vanderburgh County Commission looks forward to a constructive dialogue and is committed to a smooth transition that benefits both the business community and our residents. The proposed changes, when adopted, will apply to the unincorporated county.

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