



### Contact Us

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## Don't miss Your Chance for a two Year Extension

On May 4, Governor Rick Scott signed into law House Bill 503. Most of the bill consists of changes to environmental regulations; however section 24 does address development orders and permit extensions. The bill became effective July 1.

The extension applies to development orders, building permits or Northwest Florida Water Management District permits with an expiration date from January 1, 2012 through January 1, 2014. The maximum length of extensions is four years. If you utilized both SB360 & HB1752, you have maximized your extensions. To obtain this extension please submit a written request to our department by December 31, 2012.

**Section 24. (1) of HB 503:** *Any building permit, and any permit issued by the Department of Environmental Protection or by a water management district pursuant to part IV of chapter 373, Florida Statutes, which has an expiration date from January 1, 2012, through January 1, 2014, is extended and renewed for a period of 2 years after its previously scheduled date of expiration. This extension includes any local government-issued development order or building permit including certificates of levels of service. This section does not prohibit conversion from the construction phase to the operation phase upon completion of construction. This extension is in addition to any existing permit extension. Extensions granted pursuant to this section; section 14 of chapter 2009-96, Laws of Florida, as reauthorized by section 47 of chapter 2010-147, Laws of Florida; section 46 of chapter 2010-147, Laws of Florida; or section 74 or section 79 of chapter 2011-139, Laws of Florida, shall not exceed 4 years in total. Further, specific development order extensions granted pursuant to s. 380.06(19)(c)2., Florida 1106 Statutes, cannot be further extended by this section.*

## Variances: What are They, how to Apply & how Long Does it Take?

Simply put, a variance is permission to depart from the literal requirements of the Land Development Code or LDC.

Applications for variances may be approved by the Santa Rosa County Zoning Board when special conditions exist and a literal application of the LDC would result in an unnecessary hardship to the property owner. For example, the LDC may require the front setback for a home to be 25 feet from the front property line but the location of wetlands on the property may cause a need for the home to be built at 20 feet. In this situation, the property owner could apply for a variance to the 25 foot setback based on that special condition.

The LDC limits what are considered special conditions to "exceptional physical characteristics inherent in the specific piece of property such as exceptional narrowness, shallowness, shape, adverse topographic conditions as would result in peculiar and practical difficulties."



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**Santa Rosa's Development Service Center was created to provide a collaborative and comprehensive approach to customer service. The DSC enables residents and property owners to accomplish all of their development related county business at one location, with the help of well trained and organized county employees.**

**How's our customer service? [www.santarosa.fl.gov/customerservice/survey.html](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/customerservice/survey.html)**

A variance can be authorized for any provision of the LDC with the exceptions of minimum lot size, maximum density, permitted and/or conditional uses, distance of vendors selling liquor, beer or wine for on premise consumption from a church or school, and most road frontage requirements.

You may apply for a variance through the Development Services Office. Applications are found online at [www.santarosa.fl.gov/developmentservices/](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/developmentservices/) and must be submitted at least 30 business days in advance of the zoning board's monthly meeting (this allows time to prepare the staff analysis, take pictures of the site, complete required notifications, and delivery to the zoning board for their review). Kelly Hobbs is our planner who works with the Zoning Board and she can guide you through each step of the process. You can reach Kelly at (850) 981-7065 or [kellyh@santarosa.fl.gov](mailto:kellyh@santarosa.fl.gov).

Variances can sometimes have an affect on nearby property owners. To make sure they have an opportunity to comment on the variance request, we mail notices to nearby property owners. We also post a sign on the property that provides the case number of the variance request and our office phone number so that people can call us with questions.

The zoning board will consider your application at one of their monthly meetings. They meet on the second Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. in the county commission meeting room located at 6495 Caroline St. in Milton. Their meetings are public hearings at which you will have an opportunity to describe the purpose of your request and others will have an opportunity to ask questions and voice their concerns or support of the request. Zoning board decisions are final unless their ruling is appealed to the board of county commissioners. The appeal period is 15 calendar days from the zoning board decision date.

Variance requests are typically decided upon within six weeks to two months, depending upon the timing of your submittal. Applications for building permits can be submitted following the zoning board decision; however, permits cannot be approved until the appeal period has successfully expired.

More information about variances, including the criteria followed by the zoning board in making their decisions, can be found in Section 2.04.00 of the LDC which is located online at [www.santarosa.fl.gov/developmentservices/landdevcode.cfm](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/developmentservices/landdevcode.cfm).

## Projects in the Pipeline

### Recently Approved Development Orders

- Avalon Baptist Church, parking lot expansion, 4316 Avalon Blvd., Milton
- North Gulf, LLC, office, 1400 Bahia Dr., Navarre Beach

### Recently Approved Certificates of Occupancy

- Reserve Point Townhomes, four new townhouse units, 8864, 8866, 8868, & 8870 Brown Pelican Cir., Navarre. Estimated cost of construction \$237,000.
- Fairpoint Regional Water System, new warehouse, 4601 Delp Rd. Bldg. A., Milton. Estimated cost of construction \$70,000.
- Helping Hand Missions, interior remodel 5879 Stewart St., Milton. Estimated cost of construction \$20,000.
- GNC Live Well, interior remodel, 4789 Highway 90, Pace. Estimated cost of construction \$27,978.
- Food Outlet, interior remodel, 6516 Caroline St., Milton. Estimated cost of construction \$1,797,000.



## Behind the Scenes

Coordination and communication - those are the two key areas of focus behind the scenes at Development Services. Coordination and communication in commercial review begins the moment you call to schedule a pre-application meeting. Pre-application meetings bring you and your design professionals together with planning & zoning, building inspections, and engineering staff who will have a hand in reviewing your project. To make sure the meeting is meaningful to you, our administrative assistant, LaVerne Frye, will send you a [questionnaire](#) about your proposed project. We ask that you complete the questionnaire and return it to LaVerne prior to the meeting. She will then make sure that everyone receives a copy in advance so that we will be better prepared to answer all of your questions when you come in.

You will receive a lot of information at the pre-application meeting, so to help you to keep track of all of it, we provide you with a follow up letter after the meeting that touches on each of the key points covered in the meeting. Everyone at the meeting provides their notes to LaVerne and she compiles them into one letter so that what you receive is coordinated and in one place.

To schedule a pre-application meeting with our staff, call LaVerne at (850) 981-7084 or e-mail her at [lavernef@santarosa.fl.gov](mailto:lavernef@santarosa.fl.gov).