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Speed to Market: County Permitting Process for Commercial and Industrial Development



Compliance with zoning and building codes is fundamental to doing business in all Florida communities and Santa Rosa County has gone to great lengths to ensure the review time for these projects is as short as possible by adopting a project management approach. We view our role in the development process as more than simply regulators; we are also a key part of the development team tasked with providing comprehensive information on the front end, timely reviews during the permitting process, and careful but prompt inspections during construction.

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The commercial and industrial project management process begins with a pre-application meeting. These meetings are free of charge and bring together as many permitting interests as possible, including county engineering, building, and planning reviewers as well as utility, fire, and state representatives as the situation warrants. Pre-application meetings are followed up with a letter to the applicant summarizing information shared in the meeting.

The next step in the process is submittal of site plans and building plans, which can be submitted and reviewed concurrently. The typical review time is 10 days, but may be longer for larger buildings or shorter for resubmittals.

Some locations require a change in zoning designation before work can begin. In those cases, the timeframe from submittal to decision is two to three months for a straight rezoning or three to six months if state review is required. This process can run concurrent with site and building plan review.

Site development can begin as soon as the site plan is approved and vertical construction can commence upon issuance of building permits. When appropriate, the county will issue a foundation-only permit to enable an early start on construction.

When a development is ready for inspection, next-day inspections are the norm. Evening and weekend inspections can be scheduled for a fee. Many of the county's building inspectors are multi-certified, allowing for increased inspection efficiency.

To ensure that this process goes smoothly for the applicant, the county appoints a project manager who is tasked with following each project from start to finish, helping the applicant to anticipate next steps and overcome permitting and inspections obstacles along the way.

The county's development services team endeavors to continually improve this process for the benefit of our applicants and as such provides multiples opportunities for feedback

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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

including an introductory letter from the public services director inviting direct communication, to customer feedback surveys for each employee, and sending out a surveys upon completion of site plan review and again at the end of each project.

While our role and responsibility to the community is to ensure that adopted regulations are followed, we are committed to doing that in a way that enables new business to be up and running as quickly as possible.

Behind the Scenes Employee Spotlight – Tambre Lee



Tambre Lee heads up our development review section and project management program. As the development review supervisor, she works closely with our inspectors, plans examiners, developers, contractors and property owners to ensure that our development services customer service standards are met. One key to our project management process is our written commitment to function as one department. Tambre leads our review staff in meeting this commitment by organizing our joint pre-application meetings, coordinating joint correspondence on projects, and by following each element of project review and inspection to ensure consistency.

Tambre has over 17 years of experience in the construction industry and was previously employed as one of our fire/life safety inspectors. In addition to her employment with the county, Tambre is a member of the Florida Fire Marshal and Inspectors Association and is working towards a bachelor's degree in public administration and safety.

New Eateries in Pace and Navarre



During recent months, residents of the Pace area have been watching the construction of a new Kentucky Fried Chicken, located at the corner of Watkins Street and Highway 90. Although construction started in mid- March, the behind the scene phases have been taking place since September 2013 when KFC first inquired with our staff. This project involved demolition of an existing convenience store and underground fuel tanks, but moved rather quickly once the demolition phases were completed. Since our timelines are generally dictated by the progression of the construction, we often find that we must react quickly to our customer's needs. When KFC decided to reduce the footprint of the building during mid-construction, our commercial review staff and project manager had to react quickly and worked closely with the builder through the remaining phases of the project to keep it on schedule. The job superintendent commended the project management approach for the timely execution of inspections. KFC opened for customers on Oct. 2.

Likewise, Navarre is home to the first Culver's in northwest Florida. Famous for their ButterBurgers and frozen custards, the Wisconsin based food-chain opened a new location at 8792 Navarre Parkway in June. Culver's first submitted plans to our department for concurrent review of both site and building Dec. 4, 2014, and permits for construction were issued Jan. 27, 2015. During Culver's ribbon cutting ceremony in July, the development services staff was recognized and complimented on their dedication throughout the project's many phases. The owner of Culver's stated that "... at 11p.m. on a Saturday night, the project manager answered emails to coordinate inspections." Several representatives of the restaurant commented how well the one-stop process and team approach eased confusion and aided in the fast pace movement of the overall project.



We are very proud of the positive outcomes of the project management efforts and continue daily to strive to better the processes for our customers' needs. If you have any suggestions as to how we may improve, please contact Tambre Lee, our development review supervisor at tambrel@santarosa.fl.gov to share your ideas.

Growth Management Topic: Connecting School Planning with Community Development

This is the first in a series of articles on topics related to growth management. Future topics will include shoreline development, agricultural area protection, coordinating community development with military installation protection, and transportation planning. Let us know what topics you would like to hear more about by e-mailing the planning director at beckiec@santarosa.fl.gov.

What makes Santa Rosa County one of the fastest growing counties in the state? Many would point to our school system as a key contributor to county growth. Sure, we have beautiful natural resources, but so do the other 66 counties in Florida. And we have a strong military presence, but so do our neighbors to the east and west. Our job opportunities are good and growing but we remain a largely a bedroom community. But our schools consistently rank among the best in the state.

According to one online site, the Santa Rosa County school district was ranked 10th of 67 based on test scores supplied by the Florida Department of Education (schooldigger.com). The Escambia County district ranked 51st and Okaloosa County ranked 14th.

The Studer Community Institute recently benchmarked 16 metrics of community life and found that Santa Rosa Schools exceeded the state average in several key areas (Carlton Proctor, Santa Rosa's Story One of Managing Growth, October 18, 2015, www.studeri.org). For example, the high school graduation rate is among the 10 best in Florida.

Schools not only educate students; they are also important to establishing a sense of community. While all of Santa Rosa's schools are high performing, families often choose homes based on a particular school attendance district. This social component of schools makes it even more difficult to adjust to increasing populations over time.

Maintaining this high level of school performance in light of increased population growth requires a great deal of coordination between the Board of County Commissioners and the school board. The two elected boards have adopted an interlocal agreement that allows for the school board to appoint a non-voting representative to the county zoning board, requires residential rezoning applications to require a demonstration of available school capacity, and specifies information to be shared.

The school board recently hired Gene Boles, a growth management expert who partners with the Program for Resource Efficient Communities, IFAS, from the University of Florida, to develop GIS-based tools that can be used to help county and school district staff to anticipate and plan for future student needs. Toward that end a joint workshop will be held in January for the Board of County Commissioners and the school board to work with Mr. Boles in planning for the district's growth.

You are welcome to attend that workshop, scheduled for Jan. 21, 2016 at noon, at the Russell Center. For more information, you may contact Assistant Superintendent Joey Harrell at Harrellj@santarosa.k12.fl.us or (850) 983-5123.

New Employee Spotlight



Jason McLarty

The Development Services Office welcomed Jason McLarty to the team in August. As a Planner II, Jason is assigned to work with the Zoning Board and Board of County Commissioners, preparing staff reports for all applications for rezonings, variances, conditional uses, and other items requiring board action. Jason comes to us from the City of Perry, Oklahoma, where he served as Community Development Director. He is a graduate of Oklahoma State University with a bachelor's degree in Landscape Architecture. Jason and his family reside in Gulf Breeze.



Amber Aaron

Amber Aaron joined the Development Services team in August as our new Fire and Life Safety Inspector. Amber has over 15 years in fire service operations and for the last four she has served as a fire inspector with a large municipal fire department. Amber's responsibilities will include inspections on new construction projects, performing life safety plan reviews, and providing fire prevention inspections to our existing businesses. She currently holds certifications as a Fire Safety Inspector II, Fire and Life Safety Educator, and both Fire Officer I & II. With her diverse experience in fire code inspections, enforcement, and fire prevention education, we are excited to see her take our fire and life safety program to the next level.

Permit Fees for Residential Construction



The Santa Rosa County Board of Commissioners recently approved a fee increase for residential construction effective Oct. 1.

Below is a summarized list of changes:

- Increase the single family detached sub permit administrative fee by \$10 to equal \$20.
- Modify fee schedule to include minimum trip counts for permits
 - o Each trip will be \$30 for single family detached construction and \$60 for all other construction.
- Charge an \$85 fee for site permits on residential lots with new construction that affects drainage.
- Charge a \$25 fee for Flood Development Permits (new construction located in A, V, or F zones).
- Charge for report generation at a rate of \$40.00/hour (calculated in 15 minute increments)
- Charge for consultation inspections or punch list inspections.
 - o Each trip will be \$30 for single family detached construction and \$60 for all other construction.



• **Increase the Single Family Detached cost per 100 square feet as follows:**

	Single Family Detached	All Other Construction*
First 5,000 sq. ft.	\$6.50 to \$9.50	\$8.75 per hundred
Each additional 100 sq. ft. up to 10,000 sq. ft.	\$5.10 to \$8.50	\$7.20 per hundred
Each additional 100 sq. ft. up to 25,000 sq. ft.	\$3.85 to \$7.00	\$6.60 per hundred
Each additional 100 sq. ft. up to 50,000 sq. ft.	\$2.75 to \$5.00	\$6.00 per hundred
Each additional 100 sq. ft. up to 100,000 sq. ft.	\$2.75 to \$3.00	\$5.40 per hundred
Each additional 100 sq. ft. over 100,000 sq. ft.	\$2.75 to \$2.00	\$2.40 per hundred

* Keeping rates the same as current fee schedule.

• **Increase the Single Family Detached cost per \$1,000 for remodels/repairs as follows:**

	Single Family Detached	All Other Construction*
Up to \$20,000 of Construction Cost	\$3.00 per thousand	\$2.50 per thousand
Additional Construction Cost over \$20,000	\$1.75 per thousand	\$2.50 per thousand

* Keeping rates the same as current fee schedule.

For a complete listing of the changes, please see the resolution documented in the back-up documents page 175, from the Sept. 10 Commissioners' Regular Meeting found here.

Recently Approved Development Orders - July 1 to Nov. 3

- Grace Family Prayer Labyrinth, site appurtenance, 4115 Soundside Dr., Gulf Breeze
- Patriot Court Duplexes, multi-family, 9280 Military Tr., Navarre
- Hart's of Two Egg, office, 4775 Chumuckla Hwy., Pace
- Pace Crossing, restaurant/retail, 4796 Highway 90, Pace
- SRC Emergency Cell Tower- Munson, communication tower, 11550 Munson Hwy., Milton
- Twelve Oaks Bldg D, building addition, 2068 Healthcare Av., Navarre
- Whitfield Tower, communication tower, Whitfield Rd., Milton
- Cricket's Hideout, pavilion, 4233 Highway 87 S, Navarre
- Sowell Farms, event venue, 7650 Sowell Rd., Milton
- Navarre Auto & Pawn, parking lot, 9750 Navarre Pkwy., Navarre
- Victory Baptist Church, parking lot, 4000 Avalon Blvd., Milton
- Seay RV Park, RV park, 4901 Driskell Rd., Milton
- Hwy 87 RV & Boat Storage, outdoor storage, 1966 Highway 87 S, Navarre
- Tiger Point Pavilion, retail, 1430 Tiger Point Ln., Gulf Breeze
- Adventures Unlimited- Expansion 2015, recreational, 8974 Tomahawk Landing Rd., Milton
- Fort Storage Phase V, self storage, 4114 Avalon Blvd., Milton
- Dollar General #16641, retail, 4916 Gulf Breeze Pkwy., Gulf Breeze
- Blackrock Capital Partners LLC, office, 5784 Chumuckla Hwy., Pace



[Check out our Map Story of these projects](#)

Recently Approved Certificates of Occupancy

- Navarre Beach Sea Turtle Conservation, addition and interior alterations, COC- \$41,000, 8740 Gulf Blvd., Navarre Beach
- FDOT Pole Barn, accessory structure, COC- \$41,600, 6025 Old Bagdad Hwy., Milton
- Beach Colony West Condo, exterior alterations, COC- \$29,257, 8501 Gulf Blvd., Navarre
- Gulf Cable Properties, interior alterations, COC- \$28,000, 5710 Industrial Blvd., Milton
- Trahan Funeral Home, new funeral parlor, COC-\$1,052,500, 6539 Trammel Dr., Milton
- LEAD Academy, 2 DCA classrooms, COC- \$91,968, 4106 Berryhill Rd., Bldg C & Bldg D, Pace
- Gulf Breeze United Methodist Church, concrete arch and other courtyard work, COC- \$70,000, 4115 Soundside Dr., Gulf Breeze
- Robbins Builders Office Park, interior renovation, COC- \$30,000, 4645 Gulf Breeze Pkwy., Unit I, Gulf Breeze
- St. Rose of Lima, interior renovation, COC- \$367,238, 6451 Park Av., Milton
- PEN Air Federal Credit Union, interior alterations, COC- \$112,000, 5056 Dogwood Dr., Milton
- West Florida Hospital, new clinic- outpatient, COC- \$900,000, 4244 Avalon Blvd., Milton
- A Plus Mini Storage of Navarre, new mini-warehouse, COC- \$232,000, 7030 Navarre Pkwy., Navarre
- Coldwater Gardens, new ADA cabin, COC- \$40,000, 10479 Coldwater Sunset Tr., Milton
- Coldwater Gardens, new cabin, COC- \$40,000, 10493 Coldwater Sunset Tr., Milton
- Coldwater Gardens, new cabin, COC- \$40,000, 10465 Coldwater Sunset Tr., Milton
- Coldwater Gardens, new cabin, COC- \$40,000, 10436 Coldwater Sunset Tr., Milton
- Coldwater Gardens, new cabin, COC- \$25,000, 10485 Wild Boar Cir., Milton
- Starbucks Coffee, interior alterations, COC- \$100,000, 346 Gulf Breeze Pkwy., Gulf Breeze
- Ronny's Carwash, new car-wash, COC- \$150,000, 4254 Woodbine Rd., Pace
- Santa Rosa Aviation Inc, interior alterations, COC- \$110,000, 5600 N Airport Rd., Milton
- City of Gulf Breeze, fire damage repairs, COC- \$75,000, 1255 Country Club Rd., Gulf Breeze
- KFC, new restaurant, COC- \$950,000, 4683 Highway 90, Pace



Mail Delivery for New Developments

The US Postal Service has advised that the mode of delivery to new development must be approved by them prior to beginning of service. Specifically, they will only deliver to "locations and equipment approved by USPS." Developers should contact the local Post Office for their project area with questions or for assistance.