



# *Applicant's Guide to Submitting* **ZONE CHANGE APPLICATIONS**

## **PURPOSE:**

A Zone Change application may be filed for the purpose of requesting: the reclassification of one or more parcels from one zoning district to another; the adjustment of the boundary line(s) between zoning districts; an amendment to a Planned Community text or statistical summary; or other Zoning Map revision, pursuant to the provisions of Lake Forest Municipal Code (LFMC) Chapter 9.196 – *Amendments and Zone Changes*. California State Law requires zoning districts to be consistent with the land use designations of the City's General Plan.

## **APPLICATION PROCESSING:**

A Zone Change application is subject to separate public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council. The Planning Commission is charged with evaluating the requested Zone Change and forwarding a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council may approve, conditionally approve or deny the request. Planning Commission meetings are held regularly on the first Thursday of each month. City Council meetings are held regularly on the first and third Tuesday of each month. The City provides advance notice of the date, time, and place of the hearing(s) to the applicant(s) and owners of property in the vicinity of the project site.

*Pre-Application* – Prior to submitting a formal application, the applicant is encouraged to file a Pre-Application, the purpose of which is to allow City staff the opportunity to provide input which may minimize costs to the applicant (associated with plan revisions) and delays to the application processing. In addition, the applicant is encouraged to discuss the proposed Zone Change with surrounding property owners prior to submittal of a formal application.

*Filing of Application* – The applicant completes an application explaining the request, pays the processing deposit and submits all required information to the Community Development Department. A staff planner will be assigned to review the application to ensure that all of the required information is provided. The applicant will be notified within 30 days after filing as to whether the application is complete or what additional information is required.

*Environmental Review* – All zone change requests are assessed to determine whether it is necessary to prepare a negative declaration or an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. The applicant will be informed as to the necessity of an EIR and the requirements for preparation in the event that an EIR is deemed necessary.

*Staff Review* – Following receipt of the required information, City planning staff evaluates the proposed zone change in terms of consistency with the City's General Plan, Zoning

Code compliance, and compatibility with surrounding land uses. A written staff report will be prepared for the Planning Commission which will include a description and analysis of the request and a staff recommendation(s). Copies of this report will be available to the applicant and interested parties prior to the Planning Commission hearing.

**Planning Commission Review** – The Planning Commission is required to hold at least one public hearing on a zone change application. At least ten days prior to the hearing, owners of property within 300 feet of the subject site are notified by mail of the pending hearing, and a notice of the public hearing is posted at City Hall and in the local newspaper.

At the public hearing, staff presents an oral report and recommendation. This presentation may be followed by testimony from the applicant and any other party who wishes to comment on the application. After evaluating the staff report, environmental information and any applicant or public testimony, the Planning Commission recommends approval or disapproval of the requested action. The recommendation of the Planning Commission will then be forwarded to the City Council.

**City Council Review** – After the Planning Commission makes a recommendation, a public hearing is scheduled before the City Council. The same legal notification given for the Planning Commission hearing is given for the City Council hearing. At the hearing, the City Council considers the Planning Commission recommendation(s). Following receipt of public testimony (if any), the City Council may: (1) continue the hearing to a specific time and place; or (2) close the public hearing and render a final decision.

## **APPLICATION FILING:**

Applications may be submitted to the Planning Division during regular counter hours, **Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday** from 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., **Wednesday** from 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. (closed in the afternoon), and **Friday** from 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. For additional information on filing a Zone Change application, please contact the Community Development Department at (949) 461-3535.

## **APPLICATION SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:**

The following information is required upon submittal:

1. Completed Planning Application (including property owner authorization signature).
2. Application Processing Deposit: **\$12,000**; Check Payable to: **City of Lake Forest** (per fee schedule established by City Council Resolution No. 2025-09). The fee for a project application is based on the actual costs associated with staff time and resources. If the cost of processing the application is less than the submitted deposit, staff will refund the balance upon completion of application processing. Should the cost of processing the application exceed the deposit, additional deposit funds will be required.
3. Completed Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) Service Request Form and application/plan review fee: **\$572**; Check Payable to: **Orange County Fire Authority**.\*
4. Completed Environmental Information Form. Processing deposit is dependent on the actual time and materials plus a 15% administrative fee. This filing fee is

applicable to projects requiring a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or Environmental Impact Report (EIR) based on the findings of the application Initial Study and the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

5. CEQA Document Filing Fee: Check Payable to: **Orange County Clerk-Recorder**, based on the current California Department of Fish and Wildlife fee schedule:

CEQA Document	Fee Effective January 1, 2024
Negative Declaration (ND)	\$2,968.75*
Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)	\$2,968.75*
Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	\$4,123.50*
County Clerk Processing Fee	\$50.00
* Not necessary if the California Department of Fish and Wildlife issues a "No Effect Determination."	

6. A detailed written description of the requested Zone Change including, at a minimum: the current and proposed zoning designation; a description of the subject parcel(s) and existing site conditions, including total acreage of each affected parcel; total combined acreage of all affected parcels; a full accounting of on-site improvements; a description of existing site access improvements (streets, sidewalks, trails, etc.); a description of surrounding property and improvements; and a statement of justification for the requested Zone Change.
7. A map indicating the current and proposed zoning designations and General Plan designation(s) with precise metes and bounds and wet-signed engineer's stamp.
8. Public hearing notification materials:
- Two sets of postage-stamped (not metered) envelopes addressed to property owners of record (as shown on the latest Orange County Tax Assessment rolls) of all parcels located within 300 feet of the perimeter of the project site. If the parcel is part of a shopping center, the 300 foot radius should be measured from the perimeter of the entire shopping center. Please also include any parcels within the shopping center. As shown in the adjacent graphic, each envelope shall include the City's return address and the mailing label shall include the corresponding Tax Assessor's Parcel Number (APN). One property owner mailing list, based on all parcels located within 300 feet of the project site.
  - One property owner mailing list, based on all parcels located within 300 feet of the subject property.

City of Lake Forest  
Planning Division  
100 Civic Center Drive  
Lake Forest, CA 92630



APN: 123-456-78  
Address for each property  
owner within 300 feet of  
the project site

- c. One copy of Orange County Tax Assessor's map(s) identifying the project site and all parcels located within 300 feet of the subject property.
  - d. One copy of a signed and dated statement by the person who prepared the public notification materials certifying that the accompanying mailing list represents the names and addresses of the owners all property located within 300 feet of the perimeter of the project site, based on the latest Orange County Tax Assessment roll.
9. Five (5) sets of full-size, fully-dimensioned plans, one (1) set of plans reduced to 11" x 17", and one set of plans in digital form (.pdf format on flash drive). **All full-sized plans shall be folded to 8½" x 11"**. All plan sets shall contain the following information:\*\*
- a. Vicinity Map.
  - b. Site plan depicting property lines and all existing improvements, including but not limited to: buildings and building floor areas; building setbacks (from property lines); parking spaces (including handicapped accessible parking stalls), drive aisles, driveways, ultimate street right-of-way lines, pavement striping, street names, street widths, sidewalks, accessible path of travel and other adjacent right-of-way improvements, landscaping, easements (location, dimensions, purpose, instrument number); walls and fences, trash and storage areas; on-site lighting, mechanical equipment enclosures, etc.
  - c. Floor Plan(s), including existing and proposed use(s) and floor area for each room/space.
  - d. Building elevations (with height dimensions).
  - e. Project address on each sheet of the plan set.
  - f. Name and address of applicant and property owner(s) on Title Sheet.
  - g. Drawing scale.
  - h. North arrow.
  - i. Drawn date.
  - j. Parking tabulation (existing number of parking spaces and corresponding building floor area to parking space ratios).
  - k. Wet-signed engineer's stamp.
10. Labeled photographs of the subject site and surrounding properties.
11. Homeowner or business association approval letter.\*
12. Technical studies (as deemed necessary by City Staff and identified during pre-application meetings or preliminary plan review).\*
13. Current (less than 3 months old) title report.

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\* If Applicable

\*\* Other plans/ documents/ information may be required depending on the specifics and complexity of the project.\*\*