

Aloha,

The Planning Department believes that a streamlined permitting system is beneficial to our community. A streamlined permitting system allows department staff to concentrate more of their time on larger impacts that normally result from larger projects.

In hopes of helping to achieve a more streamlined permitting process, since January 2007 the Department has implemented the following actions:

1. Approval was obtained from the State for additional exemptions to HRS 343 (environmental impact statements).
2. Additional staff has been hired, additional training dollars have been budgeted and staff has been reallocated towards problem areas.
3. The SMA assessment process has been refined so that the Zoning Division processes most assessments, unless it involves a Historic District, shoreline property or is in conjunction with an SMA permit.
4. An SMA blanket exemption was issued by the Department for small improvements within County Parks regarding ADA requirements.
5. A rule change was adopted that provides for Department approval of SMA permit time extensions.
6. A rule change was adopted so that demolitions within the shoreline setback no longer require a variance.
7. A dual permit system review was established in the Zoning Division, so that simple permits are not held up by complex permits.
8. The Zoning Division now processes single zoning confirmations ahead of requests that contain many confirmations.
9. The Zoning Division has substantially reduced the backlog of building permit and subdivision review times and in responding to zoning confirmation requests.
10. The Department has implemented a Signature Delegation Policy that allows Division Heads and staff to approve certain actions.
11. The rules for the Board of Variances and Appeals were revised to allow for expedited appeals, similar to how a traffic court operates.
12. Transmittals of applications to agencies are being done via a CD – if the agency doesn't object.
13. The new B&B ordinance allows for Department approval of most B&Bs.
14. The Department has determined that B&B applications do not require an assessment under the Special Management Area, unless an additional action is proposed (i.e. ground disturbance, etc.).
15. The Department website has been updated to include permit applications, checklists, information sheets, proposed legislation, hot topics, etc.
16. Agency transmittals are being eliminated if the agency provides a "blanket" response (i.e. the Fire Department has for B&Bs).
17. The Mission Statement for the Department has been revised to include a reference to Department "efficiencies".
18. Spreadsheets have been created, so that only incremental parking calculations need to be performed for each change to a business.
19. All past approved change in zoning applications have been entered into a spreadsheet to facilitate access.
20. A bill has been drafted to not longer require consistency with State, community plan and zoning designations for subdivisions if the proposed use is allowed by each of those designations.

21. A package of bills has been drafted that would provide for mixed-use business districts allowing residences, transient vacation rentals and small scale energy systems in our business districts.
22. A package of bills has been drafted to delegate approval/amendment/renewal authority from the Council and Planning Commissions down to the Department for planned developments, project districts, conditional permits and off-site parking.

In addition to the above, the Planning Department is currently working on other streamlining actions and will continue to seek even more in the future.

Jeff Hunt
Planning Director
County of Maui
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