



## JEFFERSON COUNTY

### DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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## Memorandum

**To:** Planning Commission  
**From:** Long-Range Planning  
**Date:** September 16, 2005  
**Re:** Site Plan Approval Advance Determination (SPAAD) & updating regulation of political signs

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The Unified Development Code (UDC) Omnibus package has been an ongoing project of Long-Range Planning over the last year. The Planning Commission and UDC subcommittee has reviewed the UDC and taken public input from stakeholders and member of the public at large through the Land Use Planning and Economic Development Advisory Panel (LUPEDAP). The Planning Commission adopted a set of recommendations for public review from the UDC subcommittee on July 20, 2005.

A public hearing on the proposed amendments has been scheduled for October 5<sup>th</sup>. At that time staff would request that the Planning Commission consider the following additional issues for amendment within the UDC.

#### Site Plan Approval Advance Determination (SPAAD)

SPAADs are typically done as a result of a property transaction to give some assurance to the purchaser that the property is buildable. Under the current code there is a requirement to show "adequate provisions" for potable water and other utilities and access. It is very difficult for a SPAAD applicant to show proof of potable water when there is not a well on the property already. SPAADs are not a guarantee of specific improvements such as septic systems or wells although they do vest a building permit to the local development regulations in place at that time for five years.

Staff would recommend that the requirement for potable water be removed from the UDC and would further recommend that the applicant disclose the number of bedrooms for the septic review. Currently the Environmental Health Department reviews for a standard 2-bedroom system for soil type and associated area for the drainfields.

Staff would also recommend that SPAADs state how many connections are available within water service areas. Department of Ecology is in the process of adopting a new rule for groundwater withdrawals with Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 17. When the rule is adopted the amount of water left for residential use in the reserve area or groundwater withdrawal area that the proposed development is located.

### Political Campaign Signs

Political campaign signs are currently an exemption under the UDC. Recent case law has ruled that time restrictions for political campaign signs must be content neutral and must be shown to be clearly in the public interest.

Staff is recommending that the time restriction on campaign signs be lifted and that political signs under 8 square feet remain exempt under the UDC. Political campaign signs are not allowed within the right of way.

### Septic Permits

When the UDC was adopted in December 2000 it included a requirement that development permits be accompanied with a septic permit. The Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adopted an ordinance in July of the following year that allowed applications for building permits to be accepted without a building permit.

Department of Community Development has been evaluating the permit system for efficiency over the last year and a half. One of the issues that was identified was the acceptance of building permits without approved septic permits