



AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING THE LOCAL SUBDIVISION REVIEW PROCEDURE; REVISING THE INFORMATION A GOVERNING BODY MAY CONSIDER WHEN DETERMINING IF SUBSEQUENT HEARINGS ARE REQUIRED FOR A SUBDIVISION APPLICATION; REVISING THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A PHASED SUBDIVISION; PROVIDING TIMELINES AND AMENDED CONDITIONS OF A FINAL PLAT APPROVAL; REVISING THE EXPEDITED SUBDIVISION REVIEW PROCESS; AMENDING SECTIONS 76-3-615, 76-3-617, AND 76-3-623, MCA; AND PROVIDING AN APPLICABILITY DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 76-3-615, MCA, is amended to read:

"76-3-615. Subsequent hearings -- consideration of new information -- requirements for regulations. (1) The regulations adopted pursuant to 76-3-504(1)(o) must comply with the provisions of this section.

(2) The governing body shall determine whether ~~public comments or documents~~ public comments or other information presented to the governing body at a hearing held pursuant to 76-3-605 ~~constitute:~~

~~(a) information or analysis of information that was presented at a hearing held pursuant to 76-3-605 that the public has had a reasonable opportunity to examine and on which the public has had a reasonable opportunity to comment; or~~

~~(b) constitutes relevant, new information regarding a subdivision application or a substantial change to the design of the subdivision that has never been submitted as evidence or considered by either the governing body or its agent or agency at a hearing during which the subdivision application was considered and has a substantial effect on the governing body's consideration of the application.~~

(3) If the governing body determines that the ~~public comments or documents constitute information~~ presented to the governing body constitutes the information described in subsection (2)(b), the governing body

may:

(a) approve, conditionally approve, or deny the proposed subdivision without basing its decision on the new information if the governing body determines that the new information is either irrelevant or not credible or the change to the design of the subdivision does not substantially impact the analysis of potentially significant adverse impacts; or

(b) schedule or direct its agent or agency to schedule a subsequent public hearing for consideration of only the new information that may have an impact on the findings and conclusions, including a substantial change to the design of the subdivision for purposes of considering its findings of fact and conclusions and any proposed conditions of approval in light of the new information that the governing body will rely ~~upon~~ on in making its decision on the proposed subdivision.

(4) If a public hearing is held as provided in subsection (3)(b), the 60-working-day review period required in 76-3-604(4) is suspended and the new hearing must be noticed and held within 45 days of the governing body's determination to schedule a new hearing. After the new hearing, the 60-working-day time limit resumes at the governing body's next scheduled public meeting for which proper notice for the public hearing on the subdivision application can be provided. The governing body may not consider any information regarding the subdivision application that is presented after the hearing when making its decision to approve, conditionally approve, or deny the proposed subdivision."

Section 2. Section 76-3-617, MCA, is amended to read:

"76-3-617. Phased development -- application requirements -- hearing required. (1) A subdivider applying for phased development review shall submit with the phased development application an overall phased development preliminary plat on which independent platted development phases must be presented. The phased development application must contain the information required pursuant to parts 5 and 6 of this chapter for all phases of a development and a schedule for when the subdivider plans to submit for review each phase of the development. The subdivider may change the schedule for review of each phase of the development upon approval of the governing body after a public hearing as provided in subsection (4) if the change does not negate conditions of approval or otherwise adversely affect public health, safety, and welfare.

(2) Except as otherwise provided by this section, the phased development application must be

reviewed in conformity with parts 5 and 6 of this chapter. In addition, each phase of the phased development must be reviewed as provided in subsection (4).

(3) The governing body may approve phased developments that extend beyond the time limits set forth in 76-3-610 but all phases of the phased development must be submitted for review and approved, conditionally approved, or denied within 20 years of the date the overall phased development preliminary plat is approved by the governing body.

(4) ~~Prior to the commencement of each phase~~ For any phase of the approved subdivision submitted for final plat approval more than 5 years after the date of preliminary approval of the subdivision, the subdivider shall provide written notice to the governing body not more than 1 year or less than 90 calendar days in advance of submitting the final plat application. The governing body shall hold a public hearing pursuant to 76-3-605(3) within 30 working days after receipt of the written notice from the subdivider to determine whether changed circumstances justify amending any conditions of approval or imposing additional conditions of approval. The governing body may amend or impose additional conditions of approval only if it determines, based on a review of the primary criteria, that the existing conditions of approval are inadequate to mitigate the potentially significant adverse impacts identified during the original review based on changed circumstances. ~~After the hearing, the governing body shall determine whether any changed primary criteria impacts or new information exists that creates new potentially significant adverse impacts for the phase or phases.~~ Notwithstanding the provisions of 76-3-610(2), the governing body shall issue supplemental written findings of fact within 20 working days of the hearing ~~and may impose necessary, additional conditions to minimize potentially significant adverse impacts identified in the review of each phase of the development for changed primary criteria impacts or new information.~~ Any additional conditions must be met before final plat approval for each ~~particular remaining~~ phase and the approval in accordance with 76-3-611 is in force for not more than 3 calendar years or less than 1 calendar year within the maximum timeframe provided in subsection (3).

(5) The governing body may impose a reasonable periodic fee for the review under subsection (4) of the phases in the phased development."

Section 3. Section 76-3-623, MCA, is amended to read:

"76-3-623. Expedited review for certain subdivisions. (1) Except as provided in subsection (9), a

subdivision application, regardless of the number of lots, that meets the requirements provided in subsection (3) is entitled to the expedited review process provided in this section at the applicant's request.

(2) A subdivision application that meets the requirements provided in subsection (3) is exempt from:

- (a) the preparation of an environmental assessment as required in 76-3-603; and
- (b) the review criteria listed in 76-3-608(3)(a).

(3) A subdivision qualifies for the expedited review process provided in this section if the proposed subdivision:

- (a) is within:
 - (i) an incorporated city or town or consolidated city-county government and is subject to an adopted growth policy pursuant to Title 76, chapter 1, and adopted zoning regulations pursuant to Title 76, chapter 2, part 3; or
 - (ii) ~~a county water and/or sewer district created under 7-13-2203 that provides both water and sewer services~~ a county water and/or sewer district created under 7-13-2203 that provides both water and sewer services or an area outside the boundaries of an incorporated city, town, county, or consolidated city-county that is served by city, town, county, or consolidated city-county water and sewer services and is subject to an adopted growth policy as provided in Title 76, chapter 1, and zoning regulations pursuant to Title 76, chapter 2, part 2, that, at a minimum, address development intensity through minimum lot sizes or densities, bulk and dimensional requirements, and use standards;
- (b) complies with zoning regulations adopted pursuant to 76-2-203 or 76-2-304 and complies with the design standards and other subdivision regulations adopted pursuant to 76-3-504 ~~without the need for variances or other deviations to adopted standards~~; and
- (c) includes in its proposal plans for the onsite development of or extension to public infrastructure in accordance with adopted ordinances and regulations.

(4) On submission for expedited review under this section, the subdivision application must be reviewed for required elements and sufficiency of information as provided in 76-3-601(1) through (3) to determine whether the application complies with zoning regulations adopted pursuant to 76-2-203 or 76-2-304 and complies with the design standards and other subdivision regulations adopted pursuant to 76-3-504 ~~without~~

~~the need for variances or other deviations to adopted standards~~ and includes in its proposal plans for the onsite development of or extension to public infrastructure in accordance with adopted ordinances and regulations.

The application may include a request for variance or deviation from subdivision regulations adopted pursuant to 76-3-504 and in accordance with the provisions of 76-3-506.

(5) The governing body shall:

(a) hold a hearing ~~on and approve, conditionally approve, or deny~~ the subdivision application within 35 working days of a determination by the reviewing agent or agency that the application contains required elements and sufficient information for review as provided in subsection (3). If the subdivision application includes a request for variance or deviation from subdivision regulations adopted pursuant to 76-3-504, the time for holding a hearing as required in this subsection (5) must be extended to a total of 45 working days.

(b) provide notice for the hearing required in subsection (5)(a) by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county not less than 15 days prior to the date of the hearing;

(c) approve the application unless public comment or other information demonstrates the application does not comply with:

(i) adopted zoning regulations, design standards, and other requirements of subdivision regulations adopted pursuant to 76-3-504 ~~without the need for variances or other deviations to adopted standards~~, including any criteria for granting variances or deviations from subdivision regulations adopted pursuant to 76-3-504; or

(ii) adopted ordinances or regulations for the onsite development of or extension to public infrastructure; and

(d) provide to the applicant and the public a written statement within 30 days of the decision to approve or deny a proposed subdivision for expedited review as allowed in this section that provides:

(i) the facts and conclusions that the governing body relied on in making its decision to approve or deny the application; and

(ii) the conditions that apply to the preliminary plat approval that must be satisfied before the final plat may be approved.

(6) The governing body may:

- (a) with the agreement of the applicant, grant one extension of the review period allowed in subsection (5)(a) not to exceed 180 calendar days;
- (b) adopt conditions of approval only to ensure an approved subdivision application is completed in accordance with the approved application and any applicable requirements pursuant to Title 76, chapter 4; or
- (c) delegate to its reviewing agent or agency the requirement to hold a public hearing on the subdivision application as required in this section.
- (7) A local governing body may not adopt zoning regulations pursuant to 76-2-203 or 76-2-304, subdivision regulations pursuant to 76-3-504, or other ordinances or regulations that restrict the use of the expedited subdivision review process as provided in this section.
- (8) (a) Except as modified in this section, subdivision applications meeting the requirements for an expedited review remain subject to the provisions of 76-3-608(3)(b) through (3)(d) and 76-3-608(6) through (10), 76-3-610 through 76-3-614, 76-3-621, and 76-3-625.
- (b) The provisions of this section supersede any provision of this chapter that is in conflict with any provision of this section.
- (9) A subdivision located outside of the boundaries of an incorporated city or town may not utilize the expedited review process provided in this section unless the board of county commissioners of the county where the subdivision is located has voted to allow the provisions of this section to apply to subdivisions located outside the boundaries of an incorporated city or town.
- (10) An incorporated city, town, or consolidated city-county shall implement the expedited review provided for in this section for a proposed subdivision that meets the criteria in subsection (3)(a)(i) regardless of whether the city, town, or consolidated city-county has incorporated the provisions of this section into the city, town, or consolidated city-county's local subdivision regulations."

Section 4. Applicability. [Section 2] applies to subdivision applications that are approved on or after October 1, 2023.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,
HB 211, originated in the House.

Chief Clerk of the House

Speaker of the House

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

President of the Senate

Signed this _____ day
of _____, 2023.

HOUSE BILL NO. 211

INTRODUCED BY L. BREWSTER, M. MALONE, S. KERNS, J. SCHILLINGER, C. KNUDSEN, S. VINTON, K.
SEEKINS-CROWE, M. YAKAWICH, J. FITZPATRICK, J. ETCHART, J. KASSMIER, B. PHALEN

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