

LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

February 2021

Introduction

This Local Government Development Guide (LGDG) has been prepared by Ramsey County as an aid to local government partners, developers and others involved in the development process. The LGDG provides important information on submittal of plats, site plans, preliminary sketch plans, environmental documents, comprehensive plan amendments and development related traffic studies. The LGDG is intended to provide users a better understanding of Ramsey County's development review process. It also includes a general checklist of requested and recommended items to submit in order to make the development review process more effective and efficient for all of those involved. Ramsey County's objective in the development review process is based on statutory requirements, adhering to directives and to further increase awareness and communication with stakeholders while also protecting the safety, operations, and integrity of the existing and planned transportation system within Ramsey County.

State Statute, Section 505.03 affords Ramsey County the opportunity to provide written comments and recommendations on any proposed preliminary plat in a city or town, which includes lands abutting upon any existing, established or proposed county roadway per filed maps and plans. The city or town must submit the plat or plat filing to the county engineer within five (5) business days after their receipt of the preliminary plat or initial filing. The county shall provide written comments within thirty (30) days of receipt from the city or town and no preliminary plat shall be approved until said comments have been addressed.

Review Submittal Options

Ramsey County's goal is to complete the development review process within 30 days. Submittals provided electronically can usually be processed faster than 30 days. Development plan information must be submitted to the County using one of the following options (items submitted will not be returned):

- 1) An electronic .pdf version of the plans *that print to scale*. Ramsey County can accept plans via e-mail at PWPlanreview@ramseycounty.us provided that each e-mail is less than 20 megabytes.
- 2) A USB flash/thumb/jump drive with the plans in .pdf format *that print to scale* can be mailed to:
Ramsey County Public Works
Attention: Scott Mareck
PW Plan Review Coordinator
1425 Paul Kirkwold Drive
Arden Hills, MN 55112
- 3) If you are unable to provide plan information electronically, please submit a set of full-size and 11x17 size plans, *printed to scale*, to the address listed above.

Early Coordination

Early coordination is the key in order to help identify potential issues prior to formal submittal, reduce the occurrence of delays and provide the most efficient review process possible. The property owner and/or developer should coordinate with Ramsey County prior to a formal Preliminary Plat Review submittal when the proposed development directly accesses or adjoins County right-of-way, is expected to generate high volumes of traffic, could result in or worsen a safety concern, or could affect drainage across Ramsey County property.

Additionally, discussions to identify future accesses, backage/frontage roads, and various other access management improvements along a County highway corridor should be coordinated before a formal submittal. These access reviews help to preserve safety and mobility, ensure consistency with Ramsey County's access management guidelines and improve the overall efficiency of the review process. Minnesota Rules 8810.5200 CHANGES IN USE, states:

"In the event of a change in land use or major change in the traffic pattern of the existing facility, existing driveways are not automatically perpetuated, and new driveway access applications shall be submitted."

Types of Review

Plats and Site Plans:

Ramsey County reviews plats (in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, Section 505.03, Subdivision 2 Plat Approval; road review) and site plans adjacent to the established / proposed network of County roads. Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 383A.42, the Ramsey County Surveyor's Office shall also review and approve all subdivision plats and registered land surveys before recording.

Preliminary Sketch Plans:

Ramsey County encourages submittal of sketch plans early in the project development process. Ramsey County will review submittals and provide preliminary comments based on information provided. This can save time and money as issues are identified before significant planning and design work has occurred.

Environmental Documents (EAW, EIS, and AUAR):

Ramsey County reviews environmental documents (i.e., Environmental Assessment Worksheets, Environmental Impact Statements, and Alternative Urban Analysis Reviews) through the Environmental Quality Board's (EQB) process.

Traffic Impact Studies:

A Traffic Impact Study (TIS) is a specialized engineering analysis that determines the potential traffic impacts of a proposed development. The TIS identifies capacity deficiencies

at affected intersections and roadways and recommends potential solutions. A TIS is required by Ramsey County if an environmental document is prepared and the estimated peak hour traffic generated by the proposed development approaches 100 vehicles or the total daily trips approach 1,000 or other unique traffic patterns are anticipated as a result of a proposed development. If an environmental document is not being prepared, Ramsey County will encourage the local governmental unit to require a TIS when similar traffic generation numbers are estimated. Ramsey County utilizes the guidance and process developed by MNDOT to manage its traffic impact studies with adjusted volume thresholds suitable for the County highway system. MnDOT process guidance can be found at: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/accessmanagement/docs/pdf/manualchapters/chapter5.pdf>

Comprehensive Plans:

Ramsey County reviews City Comprehensive Plans and Plan Updates that could potentially impact the network of County roads and Ramsey County property.

Review Process

Following Ramsey County's review of development plans and related information submitted, official written comments with requirements, recommendations, and permit needs are sent directly to the local government agencies. Ramsey County's development review must be completed before applications for Ramsey County permits can be processed.

The following lists the sections within Ramsey County that typically review development proposals and related documents, along with a general description of the responsibilities that each section has in the development review process. Other Ramsey County offices may also review development plans depending upon the potential impact to their facilities.

Planning:

The Planning Section leads and coordinates Ramsey County's overall development review process. Planning also reviews development plans and checks for the following:

- Consistency with the Ramsey County Comprehensive and Major Street Plans.
- Consistency with Ramsey County's Access Management guidelines (Includes public and private access spacing, right and left turn lane warrants, traffic impact study warrants, access considerations, etc.). For general information regarding access guidelines visit: www.dot.state.mn.us/accessmanagement/resources.html
- Safety, mobility, and other transportation related impacts of the proposed development on the County's transportation network.
- Consistency with scheduled or planned Ramsey County projects and improvements.
- Consistency with County and regional multi-modal facilities such as bicycle and pedestrian policies and plans.
- Consistency with ADA requirements.

Survey:

The Ramsey County Surveyor reviews preliminary plats and plan development documents to verify the existence, location and potential needs of Ramsey County right-of-way, property,

access rights (controls), and easements. The County Surveyor regularly assists the public, private land surveyors, attorneys, developers and others by providing historic and current land survey information. The Surveyor may also provide beneficial information during the preliminary plat review process that makes the final plat review process more efficient.

Corresponding with the approval of submitted preliminary plats, the County Surveyor also reviews and approves all Subdivision Plats, Registered Land Surveys (RLS), Condominium (CIC) and other documents related to development projects within the County (Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 383A.42) before recording. Allow up to 30 days to complete the initial review of a submitted plat, RLS or CIC. The general guidelines for this review and approval process are as follows:

- Documents are to be submitted by the certifying surveyor. All correspondence during the review process will be with the certifying surveyor.
- Submit one print, or electronic copy, of the approved *preliminary* plat/RLS.
- Submit three prints, or electronic copy of the proposed *final* plat/RLS/CIC (with declaration) for our review.
- Submit payment (fee schedule available on website).
- Submit copies of the current title insurance policy, certificate(s) of title, proposed public way vacation resolutions, directives and other relevant documents.

Ramsey County's ***Manual of Guidelines for Subdivision Plats*** (available at the website link below) was prepared for the purpose of outlining policies and procedures for Subdivision Plats and Registered Land Surveys (RLS) plats. The intent of this manual is to describe the requirements and recommendations of the County Surveyor for the purpose of achieving and maintaining uniformity in subdivision plats and Registered Land Surveys recorded in Ramsey County.

Ramsey County's ***2015 Common Interest Community (CIC) Plat Manual of Minimum Guidelines*** (also available at the website link below) was developed to outline statutory procedures for preparing a CIC plat in Minnesota and to maintain uniformity in CIC plats recorded in Ramsey County.

More information regarding the subdivision plat review process and other related resources can be found at ramseycounty.us/Surveyor.

Traffic & Signals:

The Traffic Section reviews development plans to evaluate the safety and operational impacts of traffic entering and exiting a proposed development. Additionally, Traffic identifies the need for Intersection Control Evaluations (ICE) reports for new public intersections as well as Traffic Impact Studies (TIS). Traffic will also review plans for compliance with signing and striping standards when the County Road system is impacted.

Engineering:

The Engineering Section reviews development plans to ensure they are consistent with corridor studies, upcoming Ramsey County projects, prior commitments, and earlier coordination discussions with the city, township, developer, and other agencies.

Engineering also reviews development plans to ensure that access management guidelines are met and proper roadway geometrics are applied including site distances, clear zones, setbacks, and grades that will result in a safe and well-designed transportation system. Engineering will also determine whether any additional project work will be required within Ramsey County right-of-way (e.g. turn lanes, traffic signals, roundabouts) as a result of the proposed development. Ramsey County requires that development plans involving design work be completed by a licensed civil engineer. It is also very helpful if the engineer is experienced with Ramsey County Design and CADD standards. A preliminary design layout should be submitted for review and should include the following information:

- Existing roadway conditions information.
- Existing driveways, including those at adjacent properties and opposite the road.
- Preliminary site layout including proposed access locations and driveway dimensions.

Final plans should not be started until Ramsey County staff approve the proposed layout.

Environmental Services:

The Environmental Services Section reviews development plans to ensure that developments will not alter the direction, nature, or rate of storm water discharge onto or across Ramsey County right-of-way. Environmental Services ensures that drainage plans are adequate to protect Ramsey County facilities/property from being over-burdened or damaged. The Environmental Services Division also inspects plans for temporary and permanent erosion control measures. Environmental Services information and helpful resources can be found on the Environmental Services Stormwater Management website located at ramseycounty.us/Stormwater.

Permits & Construction:

The Permit Section & Construction Section review development plans to identify potential Ramsey County permits that may be required. The goal of this review is to minimize or prevent damage to County facilities within the road right-of-way while maintaining safe and efficient traffic operations. Construction can occur only after the appropriate permit(s) has been obtained. Some of the most common types of permits are as follows:

- *Driveway and Access Permit:* required for access to or across Ramsey County roadways or rights-of-way. Minnesota Rules 8810.5200 CHANGES IN USE states that “In the event of a change in land use or major change in the traffic pattern of the existing facility, existing driveways are not automatically perpetuated, and new driveway access applications shall be submitted.”
- *Excavation or Obstruction Permit:* required for any work on Ramsey County right-of-way. This includes review of any proposed work, grading, filling,

drainage modifications, adding of structures, utility work and removal of soil or vegetation within Ramsey County right-of-way.

- *Transportation Permit*: required when oversized vehicles (over 8 ½ feet wide) or overweight vehicles (varies with seasons and highways) travel on the Ramsey County highway system.
- *Other Permits*: annual right-of-way registration and additional permits not listed may also be required.

Information regarding permitting and construction requirements and helpful resources can be found at ramseycounty.us/Permits.

Maintenance:

The Maintenance Section reviews plans based on current maintenance policies and standards. They will also try to identify any potential advantages or conflicts with ongoing or planned maintenance projects. Ramsey County will ask for an agreement to be in place outlining the ownership and future maintenance of new infrastructure and improvements (trails, signs, pavement, sewer connections, retaining walls, etc.) constructed with the project.

**Ramsey County
Development Plan Review Submittal Checklist**

Checklist Item	Completed?
1. Certified land surveyor name and contact information.	yes/no
2. Location map of the site relative to local roadways and Ramsey County right-of-way.	yes/no
3. Written description of the current and proposed use of the property.	yes/no
4. Traffic currently being generated on the site and expected traffic with the proposed development.	yes/no
5. Legal descriptions, found monuments, bearings and distances.	yes/no
6. Ramsey County and other adjacent right-of-way.	yes/no
7. Dimensions from the Ramsey County roadway centerline to the existing and proposed right-of-way line at one or more locations, as needed.	yes/no
8. Access control along the County roadway (if known).	yes/no
9. Land tie(s) to section corner(s).	yes/no
10. Existing and proposed contours, drainage boundaries and flow patterns, as well as drainage facilities and proposed site improvements.	yes/no
11. Existing and proposed drainage computations for the 10, 50- and 100-year rainfall events, including evidence that the rate of storm water run-off to Ramsey County right-of-way will not increase.	yes/no
12. Applicable street construction layout with dimensions and radii.	yes/no
13. Proposed cross sections, contours, profile grades and typical sections.	yes/no
14. Time schedule for the proposed work for both the temporary and permanent construction.	yes/no
15. Proposed parking areas, driveways and street access.	yes/no
16. Proposed turn lanes, sight distances and geometrics.	yes/no
17. Number of proposed residential units and / or square footage of commercial or industrial building space.	yes/no
18. Horizontal and vertical datums for the plans submitted.	yes/no
19. Point of contact to send Ramsey County response letter including name, address, email and phone number.	yes/no

Questions

Questions concerning this guide and Ramsey County’s review process should be directed to Scott Mareck, Plan Review Coordinator, 651-266-7140 or PWPlanreview@ramseycounty.us.

An electronic pdf copy of this document can also be found online at ramseycounty.us/DevelopmentReview.