

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

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December 18, 2024

## **Introduction**

This guide has been prepared by Ramsey County as an aid to local government partners, developers and others involved in the development process and submittal of plats, site plans, preliminary sketch plans, environmental documents, comprehensive plan amendments, and traffic studies. The Local Government Development Guide (LGDG) is intended to provide a better understanding of Ramsey County's development review process. It also includes a general checklist of requested and recommended items to submit that will 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 our county.

*According to state statute, section 505.03, Ramsey County is afforded 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 review of plans process within 30 days. Submittals sent in electronically can usually be turned around faster. Please submit information 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 the plans via e-mail at PWPlanreview@ramseycounty.us provided that each e-mail is less than 20 megabytes. Links to shared drives like SharePoint are also acceptable. Ramsey County prefers that plans be submitted for review in an electronic format.
- 2) A USB flash/thumb/jump drive with the plans in .pdf format *that print to scale*, which can be sent to:  
Ramsey County Public Works – Local Development Review  
Attention: Kevin Roggenbuck, Interim Plan Review Coordinator  
15 West Kellogg Boulevard, Suite 210  
Saint Paul, MN 55102
- 3) If you are unable to provide the plan information electronically, please submit a set of full-size and 11x17 size plans, *printed to scale*, to the address listed above.

## **Early Coordination**

The property owner and/or developer should coordinate with Ramsey County prior to a formal Preliminary Plat Review submittal of plans 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 can be coordinated ahead of time. 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 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."

Early coordination is the key in order to help identify potential issues ahead of time, reduce the occurrence of delays and provide the most efficient review process possible.

## **Types of Reviews**

### *Plats and Site Plans:*

Ramsey County reviews plats (in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, Section 505.03, Subdivision 2 Plat Approval; road review) as well as site plans that are 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 the submittal of sketch plans early in the project development process. Ramsey County will review the submittal and provide preliminary comments based on the 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.

### *Comprehensive Plans:*

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

### *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 leverages the guidance and process developed by MnDOT to manage traffic impact studies, with volume thresholds that are less than those published for trunk highways. Process guidance can be found at:

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/accessmanagement/docs/pdf/manualchapters/chapter5.pdf>

### **Review Process**

Following Ramsey County's review of the plans and information submitted official written comments with requirements, recommendations, and permit needs are sent directly to the local government agencies. The developer and consulting engineer may be copied on the email with official comments, but communications should be between Ramsey County and the local government agency. Ramsey County's development review needs to 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 documents, along with a general description of the responsibilities that each section has in the review process. Other Ramsey County offices may also review the plans depending upon the potential impact to their facilities.

### *Planning:*

The Planning Division coordinates Ramsey County's development review process. The Planning Division also reviews the document and checks for the following:

- Consistency with the [Ramsey County Comprehensive Plan](#) and [Major Street Plans](#).
- Consistency with MnDOT's access management guidelines (Includes public and private access spacing, right and left turn lane warrants, traffic impact study warrants, access considerations, etc.). Ramsey County follows MnDOT's guidance. For more information about MnDOT's access management guidelines, strategies and resources, visit: [www.dot.state.mn.us/accessmanagement/resources.html](http://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 policy and plans. Additionally, the development plans are checked for consistency with ADA requirements.

*Surveyor's Office:*

The Ramsey County Surveyor's Office shall review the preliminary plats and plan documents to verify the existence, location and potential needs of Ramsey County right-of-way, property, access rights (controls), and easements. The Surveyor's Office regularly assists the public, private land surveyors, attorneys, developers, and others by providing historic and current land survey information and may also provide beneficial information during the preliminary plat review in order to make the final plat review process more efficient.

Corresponding with the approval of preliminary plats submitted, the Surveyor's Office shall also review and approve 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 the 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.

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

For a Common Interest Community (CIC), the [2015 CIC Plat Manual of Minimum Guidelines](#) (also available at the website link below) was prepared for the purpose of outlining statutory procedures for preparing a CIC plat in Minnesota and maintaining uniformity in CIC plats recorded in Ramsey County.

More information regarding the subdivision requirements, review process and helpful resources can be found on the Land Survey Services website below:

<https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/property-home/maps-surveys/land-survey-services>

*Traffic and Signals:*

The Traffic and Signals Divisions will review the development plans to evaluate the safety and operational impacts of traffic entering and leaving a development. Additionally, the Traffic Division identifies the need for Intersection Control Evaluations (ICE) reports for new public intersections as well as Traffic Impact Studies (TIS). For guidance and resources in preparing an ICE report, visit

<https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/intersection/ice/fhwasa20043.pdf>. The Traffic Division will also review the plans for compliance with signing and striping standards when the County Road system is impacted.

*Engineering:*

The Engineering Division will review the development plans to ensure that it is consistent with corridor studies, upcoming Ramsey County projects, prior commitments, and earlier coordination discussions with the city, township, developer, and other agencies.

The Engineering Division also reviews the development plans to ensure that access management guidelines are met, and geometrics applied to the projects, including site distances, clear zones, setbacks, and grades will result in a safe and well-designed transportation system. They will also determine whether any needed work on Ramsey County right-of-way (e.g. turn lanes, traffic signals, roundabouts) will require a more detailed review of the proposed layout. Ramsey County recommends that the design work be completed by a consultant that is experienced working with Ramsey County Design and CADD standards. A preliminary layout should be submitted for review and 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 Division will review the 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. They ensure that drainage plans are adequate to protect Ramsey County facilities/property from being over-burdened or damaged. The Environmental Services Section also inspects plans for temporary and permanent erosion control measures. Information and helpful resources can be found on the Environmental Services Stormwater Management website below:

<https://www.ramseycounty.us/residents/environment/stormwater-management>

### *Permits and Construction:*

The Permits and Construction Divisions will review the development plan to identify potential Ramsey County permits that may be required. The goal 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 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 the review of any proposed work, grading, filling, drainage modifications, adding of structures, utility work and the 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 county highway system.
- *Other Permits:* Annual ROW registration and additional permits not listed may also be required.

Information regarding the requirements, permit process and helpful resources can be found on the Permits website below: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/business/licenses-permits-inspections/permits>

### *Maintenance:*

The Maintenance Division will review plans according to 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.

## **Review Submittal Checklist**

The following is a list of items that may be needed to ensure a thorough, timely, and accurate review of the development proposal:

- Name and contact information for the certifying land surveyor.
- A location map of the site relative to local roadways and Ramsey County right-of-way.
- A written description of the current and proposed use of the property.
- The amount of traffic currently being generated on the site and the traffic expected to be generated with the proposed development.
- Legal descriptions, found monuments, bearings and distances.
- Ramsey County and other adjacent right-of-way.
- Dimensions from the centerline of the Ramsey County roadway to the existing and proposed right-of-way line at one or more locations as needed.
- Access Control along the county roadway (If known).
- Land tie(s) to section corner(s).
- Existing and Proposed Contours, drainage boundaries and flow patterns, as well as drainage facilities and proposed site improvements.
- 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.
- Applicable street construction layout with dimensions and radii.
- Proposed cross sections, contours, profile grades, and typical sections.
- Time schedule for the proposed work for both the temporary and permanent construction.
- Proposed parking areas, driveways, and street access.
- Proposed turn lanes, sight distances, and geometrics.
- Number of proposed residential units and/or square footage of commercial or industrial building space.
- Horizontal and Vertical Datums for the plans submitted.
- Point of contact to send Ramsey County response letter including name, address, email and phone number.

## **Questions?**

This Local Government Development Guide can be found on-line at:

<https://www.ramseycounty.us/businesses/property-development/local-government-development-review>.



For questions concerning this guide and Ramsey County's review process, please contact the interim plan review coordinator, Kevin Roggenbuck, at 612-518-0138 or [PWPlanreview@ramseycounty.us](mailto:PWPlanreview@ramseycounty.us).