



ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING COMMISSION **SUMMARY OF SCHEDULE AND PROCESS**

The Environmental Planning Commission (EPC) is an appointed, 9-member, volunteer citizen board with authority on many land use and planning issues. The EPC conducts regularly scheduled public hearings on the second Thursday of each month in the Plaza del Sol hearing room, 600 2nd Street NW in downtown Albuquerque. Hearings generally begin at 8:30 am and conclude when adjourned by the EPC Chair. Staff Report packets for each EPC case are available for download from the City's website on the 1st Thursday of each month for items scheduled for the all-day hearing the following week. From time-to-time, the EPC conducts special hearings on the 1st Thursday of the month, and occasionally schedules meetings at other times. All hearings and meetings for new cases are advertised in the Albuquerque Journal and all are posted on the City's web site: www.cabq.gov/planning/epc (click on Meeting Agendas/Actions, then select the desired agenda).

The City Council has delegated some authority to the EPC via the **Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO)** to decide on some requests for amendments to the City's Official Zoning Map. The EPC reviews and decides on Master Development Plans associated with the Non-residential Business Park (NR-BP) zone district and site plans for the Planned Development (PD), Planned Communities (PC), Mixed-use Form-based (MX-FB), Non-residential Parks & Open Space (NR-PO), and Non-residential Sensitive Use (NR-SU) zone districts. The EPC also hears appeals of impact fee assessments. The EPC reviews and provides recommendations to the City Council on annexation requests, larger zone map amendment requests, amendments to the *IDO*, and amendments to the *Comprehensive Plan* and Facility Plans.

Prior to application, the applicant is required to schedule and attend a Pre-application Review Team (**PRT**) meeting with Planning staff and send electronic notice (email) to the representatives on file for each Neighborhood Association (NA) whose boundaries include or are adjacent to the subject property. This electronic notice shall include an offer for 1 pre-application **Neighborhood Meeting**. The NA has 15 days to either accept or decline the offer for a Neighborhood Meeting. If the NA accepts, then the meeting must be scheduled within 30 days of the acceptance. The applicant is required to submit with the application: documentation of the PRT, the email notice, the NA response, and if there is a Neighborhood Meeting, proof that the meeting occurred and what transpired. See IDO Section 14-16-6 for notification details.

The monthly application deadline for EPC requests is the last Thursday of each month at Noon for a hearing in approximately six to seven weeks (42 - 49 days), depending on how the dates fall on the calendar. The Planning Department assigns a staff planner to each application. **Distribution** of application materials to City departments and outside agencies for review and comment takes place the Monday after the deadline. Agency comments are due to the Planning Department approximately two weeks after that and are available to applicants and other interested parties.

Facilitated meetings may be requested by anyone and the City *may* require the applicant to attend a City-sponsored facilitated meeting (applicant can agree to attend voluntarily). These meetings are arranged by the Legal Dept.'s ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) program and are conducted by professional, contract facilitators who are not City employees. See the Planning Dept. webpage for the criteria to require the applicant to attend a facilitated meeting.

Public Notification of applications to the EPC occurs in several ways. **First** is the applicant's electronic notice to NAs prior to application. **Second**, the Neighborhood Recognition Ordinance (O-92) requires applicants to send certified mail notice to all recognized NAs affected by the request before application submittal. **Third**, is the publication of a Legal Advertisement in the Albuquerque Journal at least 15 days prior to the public hearing. **Fourth**, the applicant is required to send mailed notice to all property owners within 100 feet of the subject property at least 15 days prior to the hearing. **Fifth**, applicants are required to place one or more yellow request signs on the subject property for the 15 days that precede the public hearing. EPC agendas are posted on the City's web site one week prior to each hearing (www.cabq.gov/planning/epc).

Planning Department staff reports and agendas are distributed to the EPC and made available to the public one week prior to the public hearing. Staff reports recommend approval, denial or deferral of applications based on compliance with relevant City plans, policies and regulations. **Submittal of materials for consideration by the EPC** is through the Planning Department. Materials submitted 10 days or more before the hearing are included in the staff report packets. The EPC Rules of Conduct state that written or other types of materials should be submitted at least 48 hours in advance of any public hearing. The EPC may choose to not consider written materials that are submitted at the public hearing.

At the beginning of each Hearing, the agenda is reviewed, adjusted, and approved by the Commission. Agenda items are heard in sequence without a predetermined start time or overall time allotment for any item. The public is encouraged to testify, but there are time limits for testimony. **Appeals** of EPC decisions may be filed within 15 days of the decision. The Land Use Hearing Officer (LUHO) and/or the City Council hear appeals of EPC decisions.

As mentioned above, **the City Council has approval authority on certain types of land use applications**, including annexations and amendments to the *IDO*. The EPC will hear such applications and make a recommendation to the City Council. The Planning Department will prepare a transmittal packet for City Council review that includes the record, a transmittal memo, draft legislation, a fiscal impact analysis (FIA), and the transcribed minutes from the EPC hearing(s). The transmittal packets are signed by the Planning Director and reviewed by the Finance & Administrative Services Dept., the Legal Department and then the Mayor's office. Once signed by the Mayor, the transmittal packet is forwarded to the Council Services office to be scheduled for introduction and then for public hearing by the City Council.