

VILLAGE OF ELWOOD, ILLINOIS

**A GUIDE TO THE
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

March 2007

As a growing community, we at the Village of Elwood want our community's vitality and commerce to grow, too. Our community's character is rooted in the integrity of our people and the quality of their homes and businesses. Every Village official welcomes the opportunity to assist you in improving our community's character through development of quality new residences and businesses, and enhancement of properties that already enjoy Elwood as their home.

This **Guide** is intended to help you navigate effectively through the Village's development review process so that upon completion you can apply for construction permits in the timeliest manner possible. The **Guide** can answer questions about which procedures are required, how does one begin the process and submit an application, and how long will the process take.

We sincerely hope that the development review process is just the beginning of a long and prosperous partnership in the growth of Elwood and its quality of life. We welcome you to our home.

The development review process in the Village of Elwood begins with an understanding of the various reviewing bodies and people who will be part of the submittal, evaluation, and approval of your application(s).

It is also important to use the Village's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Subdivision and Development Regulations as reference guides and tools for designing any proposed development of land. These are the same guides and tools the Village itself uses in evaluating development proposals, to help everyone create built environments that enhance Elwood's quality of life and value of its properties.

Village President and Village Board

The Village President and Village Board of Trustees (Village Board) are the governing bodies of the Village. The citizens of Elwood elect the Village President and the Village Trustees at-large for terms lasting four (4) years. The Village Board discusses and decides matters of Village policy and renders final decisions on all annexation, subdivision, and zoning development applications, upon recommendation of the Plan Commission. The Village Board holds workshops on the 2nd Wednesday of every month and meetings on the 3rd Wednesday of every month.

Village Clerk

The Village Clerk is elected by the citizens of the Village for a four (4) year term. Among the many responsibilities of the Village Clerk is the acceptance of complete applications for the various types of development reviews, and maintaining current copies of Village regulations and ordinances.

Plan Commission

The Plan Commission consists of seven (7) residents of the Village, including the Chairman of the Plan Commission, appointed by the Village President with advise and consent of the Village Board of Trustees. The Plan Commission conducts public hearings and open meetings prior to making recommendations to the Village Board on all applications for annexation of land, Zoning Ordinance map changes (rezoning) and text changes, site plan review approvals, special uses (including planned unit developments), and variances. The Plan Commission meets on the 4th Tuesday day of every month.

Village Staff and Consultants

The Village staff is intended to be the first point of contact to begin the development review process. The Village staff is available to answer questions on Village regulations, policies, and procedures, and to provide necessary service to help customers prepare complete applications. Village staff and consultants prepare background information and analysis of all development review applications for Plan Commission and Village Board review. Consultants include the Village's attorney, engineer, and planner.

Listed and described on the following pages are the various applications for development review in the Village of Elwood. Depending on the complexity of any proposal, one or more of these applications may be necessary. In many cases, development reviews can proceed simultaneously.

Plat of Subdivision and Planned Unit Development (PUD)

A. Requirement

Prior to the division or proposed division of any parcel of land into two (2) or more lots, parcels, sites, units, plots, or interests by any method, including planned unit developments, subdivision of the property is required. A Planned Unit Development is a method through which Zoning Ordinance regulations can be evaluated in a more flexible manner to consider certain exceptions to the regulations. Such exceptions are intended to foster more creative design in development of extraordinary sites that otherwise would not be possible under strict application of the Zoning Ordinance.

B. Application

1. Pre-Application (PUD only)

Applicant shall meet with staff and present a concept plan. Staff may direct, or the applicant may choose to present the concept plan to the Plan Commission for review at an open meeting.

2. Concept Plan for Plan Commission review

This application is intended to allow applicants an opportunity to meet informally with the Plan Commission at an open meeting to discuss the purpose of the proposal and consider its merits prior to expending the time and money necessary to develop a preliminary plat. The level of detail on the concept plan and in supporting documentation of existing conditions on and around the site will determine the scope of the Concept Plan review. At the Concept Plan review, the Plan Commission may authorize simultaneous filing of a Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision. The Concept Plan must be submitted at least one (1) week prior to the scheduled Plan Commission meeting.

3. Preliminary Plat

This application is required for any PUD, or subdivision plat involving the opening of any new streets or for any subdivision plat proposing four (4) or more lots. Execution of the Professional Fee Agreement is required, as is completion of an *Land Use Application* form with all required fees and attachments plus twenty (20) copies of the Preliminary Plat with all required information as specified in the Village of Elwood Zoning Ordinance (for

PUD), and/or Subdivision and Development Regulations. A preliminary plat for a PUD requires concurrent submission of an application for a Special Use for a PUD. (Please refer to the following section for Special Use procedures.) The Preliminary Plat must be submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled Plan Commission meeting.

4. Final Plat

This application is required for all approved preliminary PUD or subdivision plats within one (1) year of approval, or for subdivision plats that are not required to complete the preliminary plat process. If not already completed, execution of the Professional Fee Agreement is required, as is completion of an *Land Use Application* form with all required fees and attachments plus twenty (20) copies of the Final Plat with all required information as specified in the Village of Elwood Zoning Ordinance (for PUD) and/or Subdivision and Development Regulations. The Preliminary Plat must be submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to the scheduled Plan Commission meeting.

C. Process

1. Informal inquiry to Village staff.
2. Submission of, and Plan Commission review of a Concept Plan (optional).
3. Submission of a complete preliminary or final plat application, and a complete application for a Special Use for a PUD, as applicable.
4. Village staff and consultant review (comments and recommendations must be returned to the Village Administrator with 30 days for preliminary plats, and within 60 days for final plats.
5. Applicant revisions, if advised/necessary.
6. Plan Commission review at an open meeting.
7. Plan Commission recommendation to the Village Board within 90 days (60 days for final plat) of receipt of a complete application.
8. Village Board review and decision within 90 days after its next scheduled meeting following receipt of Plan Commission recommendation (60 days maximum from receipt of Plan Commission report of Final Plat).

9. Repeat steps 3 through 8 for a final plat if a separate preliminary plat of subdivision or PUD is required.
10. Preliminary plat approval remains effective for up to 1 year. Final plats must be recorded with the County Recorder within 90 days (following approval).

Special Use, Variation, and Zoning Ordinance Map and Text Amendment

A. Requirement

1. Special Use (for PUD see section below)
The Zoning Ordinance specifies uses that are allowed by right (permitted uses) in each zoning district, and lists Special Uses. Special Uses often have unique characteristics that may require specific site design or conditions to achieve compatibility in the context of the Village. Normally the effects of such uses cannot be foreseen until a specific site and its development are proposed.
2. Variation
This application is intended to provide for a flexible method for providing relief from the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Zoning Ordinance Map and Text Amendment
The text of the Zoning Ordinance contains the specific regulations regarding the improvement and use of land, often tied to specific zoning districts, and the Zoning Map is a map of the Village that delineates the zoning districts. The Zoning Ordinance allows for proposed changes or *amendments* to the regulations or to the zoning district classification for any property.

B. Application

A completed Village *Land Use Application* form with all required attachments and fees must be submitted.

C. Process

1. Informal inquiry to staff
2. Submission of a complete application
3. Village staff and consultant review
4. Applicant revisions, if advised/necessary
5. Plan Commission review at a public hearing within 60 days of acceptance of a complete application
6. Plan Commission submission of findings of fact to the Village Board within 30 days of its vote

7. Village Board review and decision within 60 days of receipt of the Plan Commission recommendation

Annexation

A. Requirement

When a property is not located within the existing corporate boundary of the Village, and a person wishes to develop the property and become part of the Village, annexation is required.

B. Petition

Completed Village Land Use Application and Annexation Petition forms with all required attachments and fees must be submitted, accompanied by a draft Annexation Agreement (if needed).

C. Process

No Annexation Agreement

1. Informal inquiry to Village staff
2. Submission of a complete Land use Application and Annexation Petition
3. Village staff and consultant review
4. Revisions, if advised/necessary
5. Village Board review and decision

With Annexation Agreement

In addition to the above procedures, a public hearing is to be held addressing the proposed Annexation Agreement. Notifications shall be executed as specified in the Annexation petition

After successful completion of the required development review process(es) and prior to beginning development of the property, you must submit an application for a building permit. Upon issuance of a building permit (which requires payment of all permit and inspection fees, submission of a Certificate of Insurance, and registration and bonding of all contractors), construction on site may begin.

Attached to this **Guide** is a Land Use Application form and checklists summarizing all required information and submittals for completing your Land Use Application. Complete Land Use Application requirements can be found in the Village of Elwood Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Ordinance. Please do not hesitate to contact Village staff for assistance in completing your Land Use Application or building permit application.