

Rapid Racial Equity Impact Analysis

SUBJECT:

Admin/Streamlined Development Approvals Study and Ordinance (Case #PL2024-127)

WHO PARTICIPATED IN COMPLETING THIS ANALYSIS:

Tom Ramler-Olson, Planner, and Nick Johnson, Senior Planner

1. WHAT ARE THE RACIAL EQUITY IMPACTS OF THIS DECISION?

It is difficult to estimate the racial equity impacts of this decision since its aim is to lower barriers to certain development types. It is not a policy that creates and/or distributes resources. However, the collection of proposed Code amendments will result in a greater number of development application types or other reviews being subject to an administrative process as opposed to the current discretionary processes that involve Planning Commission and City Council. These amendments have not been drafted with any specific community or group of people in Bloomington in mind. Review processes that are more administrative are expected to provide relief to residents, organizations, and businesses by reducing time, fees, and complexity while increasing overall confidence in approval. While achieving these goals would be broadly beneficial, they will have a stronger impact on applicants that are typically more resource or time constrained, or otherwise are less familiar with navigating regulatory processes. From this perspective, streamlining development has the potential for positive racial equity impacts to ease some of the barriers to gaining approval. Other benefits could include more housing development and an expansion of opportunities for multi-generational housing by allowing Code-compliant proposals for two-family dwellings and ADUs to immediately proceed to building permit. With the lessening of discretionary review, one potential negative impact could be that fewer development types would be required to have a public hearing, resulting in less instances of public notification for neighboring residents in close proximity to the proposed development.

2. WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM AND/OR BE BURDENED BY THIS DECISION?

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Since this is a Code change and not a policy, it's not able to address any specific groups. However, communities that are less familiar with navigating complex regulatory processes or are more resource constrained may experience the benefits to a greater degree than other more experienced development applicants. One potential burden of the decision would be a potential reduction in instances of public notification. Since review of certain project types are proposed to not include public hearings in front of the Planning Commission and/or City Council, that deprive nearby persons who reside or operate businesses within the notice area from being explicitly notified about the proposal and providing comments.

3. ARE THERE STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE ANY UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THIS DECISION?

Staff is always available to answer questions about development proposals. And a significant amount of project types will continue to need public hearings. Staff reviewed which project types to remove the public hearing requirement through a highly deliberative process informed by minimizing instances of nuisance and potential negative consequences of development. Staff is confident that those project types will not impose unreasonable adverse impacts as thorough internal staff review and use-based and other standards in the City Code will mitigate negative externalities in most cases.