



DeKalb County

G E O R G I A

# Sketch Plat Guide

Department of Planning and Sustainability

03/2023

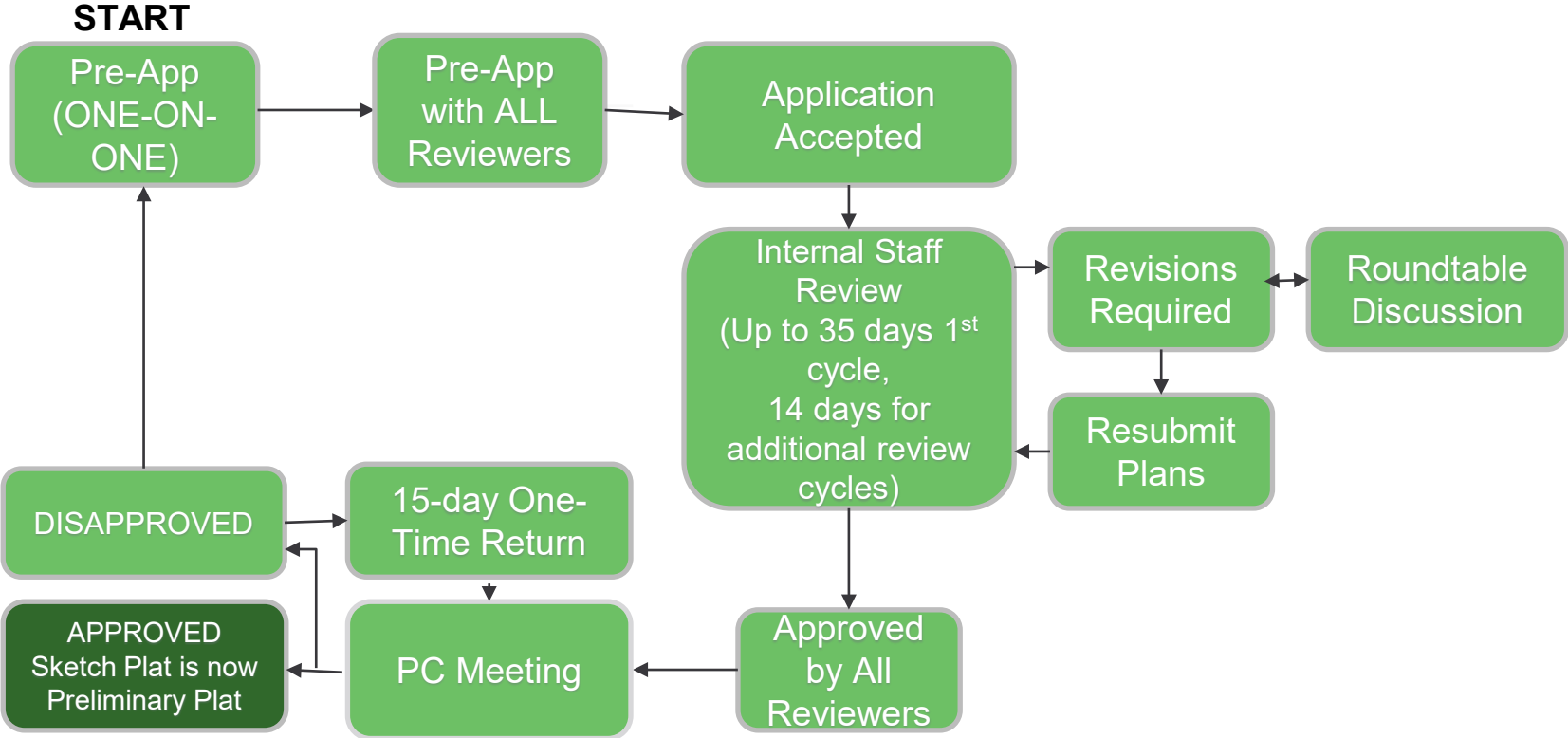
# What is a Sketch Plat?

- A sketch plat is required for any subdivision of land into three (3) or more properties.
- A sketch plat **MUST BE APPROVED** prior to any submittal for a Land Development Permit (LDP) or application for building permit.
- Contrary to the name, a sketch plat is **NOT** a conceptual plan. The proposed sketch plat must meet **ALL** minimum requirements of the County Ordinances, including Chapter 14 (Land Development Code) and Chapter 27 (Zoning Ordinance). After approval, the sketch plat shall be referred to as the “preliminary plat” to be used as the development design for a Land Development Permit (LDP). Plans for the sketch plat shall be done by a licensed engineer/surveyor and **NOT** by an architect.

# Sketch Plat Process

- Pre-Application (Roundtable) Meetings
- Application Submittal and Intake
- Internal Staff Reviews
- Planning Commission (PC) Hearing

# Sketch Plat Process



# Pre-Application Meetings

- Prior to ANY submittal, the applicant shall schedule a virtual pre-application (also referred to as a roundtable discussion) meeting with a staff Planner
- Round table discussion will be a one-on-one meeting to address the purpose of the sketch plat process and review required documentation (minimum Zoning requirements, etc.). The meeting will determine any outstanding issues or items that may need to be addressed prior to submittal.
- If the applicant does not provide plans or the quality of plans is deemed insufficient, subsequent one-on-one pre-application meetings may be scheduled.
- If the Planner has deemed that plans are sufficient, the applicant shall schedule a pre-application meeting with the Planner and other County department reviewers. These meetings shall be held virtually and may be scheduled for Thursdays between 10am and 12pm. Meetings shall be scheduled AT LEAST one week in advance to give staff proper time to review proposals.
- After the pre-application meeting with all required reviewers has taken place, the applicant may submit their sketch plat application through [ePlans/ProjectDox](#)

# Application Submittal and Intake

- Each submittal packet shall include a completed [application](#), a [certificate of conformity](#), a [sketch plat authorization](#), and [sketch plat checklist](#).
- The base fee is \$300, PLUS an additional \$10 per proposed lot.
- See the above checklist for all requirements.
- The applicant shall receive a written notice within seven (7) days that the application has been ACCEPTED or DENIED, in which time the applicant shall be informed of any deficiencies and instructed to resubmit.

# Application Submittal and Intake

- After the application is accepted, Planning staff has a maximum thirty-five (35) days from the acceptance date to notify the applicant that EITHER:
  - A) The plans are sufficient to be referred to the PC with a staff recommendation of approval; OR
  - B) The plans are insufficient and require revisions. Should revisions be required, the applicant shall receive a notification in ePlans to resubmit plans.
- Each time revisions are required, the applicant shall submit full plans (with redlines where applicable) to the existing project. Staff has a maximum of fourteen (14) days to review in each subsequent cycle.

# Internal Staff Reviews

The following County departments shall be involved in the sketch plat review process:

- Fire/Rescue
- Roads and Drainage
- Geographic Information System (GIS)
- Health/Sanitation
- Water/Sewer/Watershed Management
- Planning
- Transportation
- Land Development



# Internal Staff Reviews

- If the plans still require a significant number of revisions after the 2<sup>nd</sup> review cycle, Planning staff may require a new virtual meeting be held with County reviewers before a new cycle of review can commence.
- If the sketch plat has not been referred to the PC within 180 days of the acceptance of the application, the County may terminate/withdraw the application and the applicant would be required to resubmit a new sketch plat application.
- **HOWEVER**, at any point in the 180-day period, the applicant MAY refuse to make further revisions and request the Planning staff refer the case to the PC for approval or disapproval.
  - The sketch plat will be referred to the next available PC sketch plat meeting with a staff recommendation of disapproval.

# Planning Commission (PC) Hearing

- If the sketch plat plans are approved by all County agencies, Staff will notify the applicant in writing of the date of the PC sketch plat meeting. The PC Meeting date/agenda shall be advertised in the newspaper of record, “The Champion”.
- Applicants are required to pick-up a public notification sign from the County office and place said sign next a box containing fifty (50) 11x17 copies of the proposed sketch plat.
- Shall the applicant not place these items as required, the sketch plat shall be removed from the PC meeting agenda until the items are provided.

# Planning Commission (PC) Hearing

- Sketch Plat Planning Commission meetings are held at least one Wednesday of each month and are held virtually via Zoom.
- At the initial hearing, the applicant and the general public may be allowed to voice support for or opposition to the sketch plat. The PC shall allow a maximum of ten (10) minutes of oral comments for those in support or opposition. Each side shall have a maximum of five (5) minutes.
- The PC may approve or disapprove the sketch plat in accordance with Staff reviews, recommendations, and the standards in Sec. 14-96.

# Planning Commission (PC) Hearing

- The PC may allow for a one-time return of the sketch plat to the applicant for requested revisions to be made. The sketch plat shall be returned to Planning staff within fifteen (15) days of the decision; if the plans are not returned to staff in this time frame, the sketch plat shall be automatically disapproved by the Planning Commission.
- If the revisions are submitted within the time frame, Staff will place the sketch plat on the next available public hearing date. Be advised, however, that the fifteen (15) day planning commission revision process DOES NOT extend the maximum 180-day limitation.
- The PC has 50 days after the initial hearing to issue a final decision. If staff have recommended approval, the sketch plat shall stand approved; if staff have recommended denial, the plat shall stand as disapproved, and the applicant must restart the sketch plat process.

# Planning Commission (PC) Hearing

- Any owner, applicant, adjoining neighbor or neighbor whose property line is within one thousand five hundred (1500) feet of the nearest property line of the proposed subdivision aggrieved by a denial or approval of a sketch plat may appeal by filing a petition for writ of certiorari to the Superior Court of DeKalb County.

# Approval

- A sketch plat that has been approved by the PC shall be thereafter referred to as the **preliminary plat**. The preliminary plat shall be used in the development design for the acquisition of a Land Development Permit (LDP).

# Expiration

- The preliminary plat shall expire twenty-four (24) months from the date of approval. If fifty-one (51) percent of linear feet of total road in the entire development shown on the preliminary plat has been completed by this point, a one-time, one year extension of the approval of the preliminary plat MAY be given.
- An expired preliminary plat may not be renewed, and the applicant will be instructed to restart the sketch plat process.
- Likewise, if the approved sketch plat is amended after PC approval without a variance during the LDP process, the applicant will be instructed to restart the sketch plat process.

**Questions?**

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