

Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan Amendment Process

1. The developer submits a request to the County's Planning Department for a pre-application meeting to amend the Comprehensive Plan. **Completed November 2023**
2. The developer holds a public workshop to obtain comments from the citizens. **For the mega-hotels, this was held on January 8**
3. County staff reviews the 'initial' proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments and submits comments to the Developer. **Completed December 21, 2023**
4. Developers submit a formal application to County staff with a list of the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments, justification for those amendments, and transcripts of the public workshop. **The developer's formal applications were submitted on February 28, 2024, but are incomplete. Staff waiting for payment and additional documents.**
5. The county conducts a 'Sufficiency review' of the formal application which can take up to 30 days once the formal application is accepted by staff. The formal application is sent to each county department involved in the development process (transportation, stormwater, etc.) to ensure the developer submits the necessary information for them to review. If each of the departments determines the application is 'complete' then it goes through a formal review by county staff. **No date yet for this step.**
6. County staff conducts a formal review of proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments and writes a report. Staff has 45 days after the 'sufficiency review' has been completed to conduct a formal review of the application. Date to be determined.
7. If staff finds any deficiencies or has any questions on the formal application, they will send their comments to the developer. This may delay the process.
8. If County staff is satisfied with the formal application and has completed their report, they will schedule a hearing before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission is an advisory group and only makes recommendations to the County Commission. The date of the hearing is not set yet.
9. About 30 days after the Planning Commission hearings, the County Commission will hold a public hearing. The County will review proposed changes and either reject or approve the Comprehensive Plan amendments. If approved, the County Commission will transmit the Comprehensive Plan amendments to the State agency called the Florida Department of Commerce for review and approval.
10. If the state agency approves the Comprehensive Plan amendments, it goes back to the County Commission. The County Commission will hold a second public hearing to formally adopt the Comprehensive Plan amendments. If the state agency does not approve the Comprehensive Plan amendments, it goes back to the County Commission for further review.
11. If the County Commission adopts the Comprehensive Plan amendments, citizens have up to one year to challenge the amendments. The first step is to submit a protest to the Florida Department of Commerce and then file a legal challenge at the Department of Administrative Hearings (DOAH)

Source: Sarasota County Unified Development Code, Chapter 94, Article III, Division 2

Source: Fl St. Chapter 163.3184 Process for adoption of comprehensive plan or plan amendment