

FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BILL ANALYSIS

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BILL #: [CS/CS/HB 927](#)

TITLE: Local Land Planning and Development

SPONSOR(S): Sapp

COMPANION BILL: [CS/SB 1138](#) (Massullo)

LINKED BILLS: None

RELATED BILLS: None

Committee References

[Intergovernmental Affairs](#)

13 Y, 1 N, As CS



[Commerce](#)

17 Y, 4 N, As CS



[State Affairs](#)

SUMMARY

Effect of the Bill:

The bill requires certain counties and municipalities to create a program to conduct pre-application reviews of plans, permits, or plats submitted as part of compliance with a local government's land development regulations. After completing a pre-application review on work in their respective field, a qualified contractor completes an affidavit that the work is in compliance with the local government's requirements, which is then reviewed by the local government. The bill requires each local government to establish a registry of qualified contractors and provides requirements for those contractors.

The bill also revises the process for the expedited approval of residential building permits prior to plat approval by expanding its applicability to one or more phases of a community or subdivision and establishing procedures for when a local government has failed to establish an expedited permitting process.

Fiscal or Economic Impact:

The bill may have an indeterminate fiscal impact on local governments and a positive economic impact on developers.

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ANALYSIS

EFFECT OF THE BILL:

Qualified Contractors in Local Planning

The bill requires counties with populations of 25,000 or more, municipalities with populations of 10,000 or more, and independent districts to create a program by January 1, 2027, to enable qualified contractors to conduct pre-application reviews of plans, permits, or plats submitted as part of compliance with a local government's [land development regulations](#). The program must specify:

- How contracts with qualified contractors are made.
- Minimum qualifications for being listed as a qualified contractor (e.g., valid professional credentials, no adverse licensing actions). A local government may consider the number of years' experience of potential qualified contractors, but may not consider geographic location or prior or existing work for or with the local government.
- Minimum and maximum hourly rate a qualified contractor may charge, comparable to market averages, as part of the application fee.
- Other procedural elements (intake, payment, records, notice) that do not conflict with the bill's purpose. (Section [1](#))

Persons or firms who may be contracted by a local government to serve as qualified contractors in their respective field of expertise include engineers, surveyors or mappers, architects, landscape architects, certified planners, or employees of other local governments. (Section [1](#))

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A qualified contractor performing a pre-application review must determine whether the application is in compliance with all applicable land development regulations, comprehensive plan regulations, ordinances, and codes of the local government. After completing a pre-application review of work in their respective field, a qualified contractor completes an affidavit that the application is administratively complete or administratively incomplete for purposes of acceptance and processing. If the application is administratively complete, the applicant submits the contractor's affidavit as part of the application to the local government, which must accept the certification and approve or deny the permit within the existing timeframes established by law for that type of permit without further review. For an application that is administratively incomplete, the denial must include written notice specifically identifying aspects not in compliance with law, regulations, ordinances, and codes, and the reasons the application was denied. (Section [1](#))

The bill specifies that an application determined to be administratively complete does not constitute substantive approval of the permit submitted and may not be construed to limit the authority of a development services office to grant or deny an application. However, the bill prohibits a development services office from conducting any duplicative review of a permit subject to pre-application review except as expressly authorized by the bill. (Section [1](#))

The bill requires each local government that must create a qualified contractor program to establish a registry of at least six qualified contractors. If a local government is unable to identify this number of contractors after a reasonable effort, all willing and qualified individuals must be listed in the registry. If a local government does not establish a program or does not have a sufficient number of contractors registered, an applicant can choose to use any qualified contractor who meets the minimum qualifications established by the local government. (Section [1](#))

The bill requires local governments to adopt and use standard contract terms and conditions for agreements with qualified contractors. The bill requires that contracts with qualified contractors may only include terms that are authorized by the statute and that local governments may not add provisions that frustrate, impair, or defeat the purpose of the bill. Local governments must ensure that the material terms of contracts with qualified contractors are the same as the terms applied in similar contracts with private sector contractors providing comparable services (Section [1](#))

The bill provides that payments to qualified contractors are made through the local government as part of the application process and that local governments must pay the qualified contractor in compliance with the Local Government Prompt Payment Act under part VII of chapter 218, F.S. If an applicant does not use a qualified contractor and the local government fails to process the application within statutory timelines, the bill provides that the applicant may use a qualified contractor from the registry at the local government's expense, provided certain other conditions are met. (Section [1](#))

A local government may audit the preapplication review of a qualified contractor pursuant to procedures established by the respective local government. Such procedures must be reasonable, applied in a nondiscriminatory manner, and made publicly available. A qualified contractor must be provided written notice of any audit findings and a reasonable opportunity to respond. (Section [1](#))

The bill provides for attorney fees and costs to be awarded to a prevailing plaintiff applicant who brings a civil action against a local government for violating these provisions. (Section [1](#))

Platting Approval

The bill prohibits local governments from creating or establishing any additional local procedure or condition that a platting applicant must meet for the approval of a plat or replat. For local governments requiring infrastructure financial assurances in connection with a final plat approval, the designated administrative authority shall receive and act upon the proposed surety. The bill requires local governments to accept commonly used forms of financial assurance, including performance bonds, letters of credit, and escrow agreements, provided that the assurance is

in a form reasonably acceptable to the local government and issued by a financially responsible issuer meeting objective, uniformly applied standards. If an assurance is deficient, the local government must provide written notice of such deficiencies within 10 business days. (Section [2](#))

Expedited Approval of Residential Building Permits Prior to Plat Approval

The bill expands the expedited [building permit](#) process for residential subdivisions or planned communities to include one or more phases in a multi-phased community or subdivision. (Section [3](#))

The bill also provides that if a county or municipality which was required to adopt a program for expedited building permit processing fails to do so by the applicable statutory deadline, the following requirements apply:

- The applicant shall have an unconditional right to use a qualified contractor of the applicant's choosing to obtain up to 75 percent of the building permits for development before the final plat is recorded.
- The local government may not condition, delay, limit, restrict, obstruct, or deny the applicant's use of a qualified contractor other than for reasons expressly provided by state law and the Florida Building Code (FBC).
- The qualified contractor may perform all services within the scope of his or her licensure and qualifications which are necessary or incidental to obtaining building permits. The local government is required to accept all documents from the qualified contractor in place of review by local government staff if the submission is properly prepared and sealed.
- The local government may not unreasonably require the applicant or the qualified contractor to use a local government registry, rotation, shortlist, or other vetting process. (Section [3](#))

The above provisions apply until the local government adopts a program that meets the bill's requirements. Local governments, however, still have full authority to enforce the FBC, Fire Prevention Code, and other generally applicable state laws. (Section [3](#))

The bill requires the preliminary plat submitted under the two-step application process to include stabilized access roads for emergency vehicles. (Section [3](#))

The bill allows an applicant to use a qualified contractor to expedite the process for reviewing any plans necessary to support the approval of the site plan or plat. If a local government has failed to create a program to expedite the process for issuing building permits,, the bill allows an applicant to retain a [private provider](#) or qualified contractor of their choosing. Approvals must be made by the local government in the same timeframe that would be applicable if local government staff or a qualified contractor on the registry reviewed the application. (Section [3](#))

The bill prohibits a local government from conditioning its issuance of building permits under the expedited approval process on the actual or substantial completion of infrastructure or improvements identified in the preliminary plat; on the submission and approval of any certification of completion, record drawings, pressure or compaction test results, utility acceptance letters, or similar confirmation of finished construction or readiness for service; or on compliance with an environmental condition that is not required by its land development regulations or by state law or federal law. This prohibition applies notwithstanding local ordinance, policy, development order, permit condition, concurrency or proportionate-share agreement, development agreement, interlocal agreement, utility policy, or any other local requirement. (Section [3](#))

The bill provides that applicant has a vested right in a preliminary plat under the program for five years, regardless of whether the applicant has taken action and incurred expenses in reliance on the preliminary plat. (Section [3](#))

The effective date of the bill is July 1, 2026. (Section [4](#))

FISCAL OR ECONOMIC IMPACT:**LOCAL GOVERNMENT:**

Local governments may see an indeterminate negative fiscal impact in creating the required registry program within 6 months of the effective date of the bill, maintaining the registry, auditing qualified contractors, and amending processes to incorporate registered qualified contractors for certain functions, but may see long-term benefit from some amount of workload reduction due to the use of private contractors. A request for a formal analysis was submitted to the Department of Commerce on January 12, 2026.

As of April of 2025, fourteen Florida counties had populations of less than 25,000.¹ Accordingly, those counties will not need to establish a registry of qualified contractors, as required by the bill.²

PRIVATE SECTOR:

Developers may benefit economically from greater efficiency and private options for various stages of development approval.

RELEVANT INFORMATION**SUBJECT OVERVIEW:****Comprehensive Planning**

The Community Planning Act³ provides counties and municipalities with the power to plan for future development by adopting comprehensive plans.⁴ Each county and municipality must maintain a comprehensive plan to guide future development and growth.⁵

All development, both public and private, and all development orders approved by local governments must be consistent with the local government's comprehensive plan.⁶ A comprehensive plan is intended to provide for the future use of land, which contemplates a gradual and ordered growth, and establishes a long-range maximum limit on the possible intensity of land use.⁷

A locality's comprehensive plan lays out the locations for future public facilities, including roads, water and sewer facilities, neighborhoods, parks, schools, and commercial and industrial developments.⁸ A comprehensive plan is made up of 10 required elements, each laying out regulations for a different facet of development.⁹ Local governments may also include optional elements in their comprehensive plan.¹⁰ The 10 required elements are:

- Capital improvements.
- Future land use plan.
- Transportation.
- General sanitary sewer, solid waste, drainage, potable water and natural groundwater aquifer recharge.
- Conservation.
- Recreation and open space.
- Housing.

¹ Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research, *Florida's Population*, The Florida Legislature Econographic News (2025 Vol. I), available at https://edr.state.fl.us/Content/population-demographics/reports/econographicnews_2025_Volume1.pdf (last visited Feb. 13, 2026).

² *Id.*

³ [Ch. 163, Part II, F.S.](#)

⁴ [S. 163.3167\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁵ [S. 163.3167\(2\), F.S.](#)

⁶ [S. 163.3194\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

⁷ See, e.g., [Sarasota County, Fla. Comprehensive Plan, Future Land Use Element, FLU Policy 1.1.1](#) (last visited Feb. 2, 2026).

⁸ [S. 163.3177\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁹ [S. 163.3177\(6\), F.S.](#)

¹⁰ [S. 163.3177\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

- Coastal management.
- Intergovernmental coordination.
- Property rights.¹¹

Comprehensive plans must include at least two planning periods, one covering the first 10-year period occurring after the plan's adoption and one covering a period of at least 20 years.¹² Additional planning periods are permissible and accepted as part of the planning process.

Land Development Regulations

Comprehensive plans are implemented via land development regulations. Land development regulations are ordinances enacted by governing bodies for the regulation of any aspect of development and includes any local government zoning, rezoning, subdivision, building construction, sign regulations, or any other regulations controlling the development of land.¹³

Each county and municipality must adopt and enforce land development regulations consistent with and that implement its adopted comprehensive plan.¹⁴ Local governments are encouraged to use innovative land development regulations¹⁵ and may adopt measures for the purpose of increasing affordable housing using land use mechanisms.¹⁶

Development Permits and Orders

Florida law requires local governments to specify in writing the minimum information that must be submitted in an application for a zoning approval, rezoning approval, subdivision approval, certification, special exception, or variance.¹⁷ Local governments must make the minimum information available for inspection and copying at the location where the local government receives applications for development permits and orders, provide the minimum information to an applicant at a pre-application meeting, or post the minimum information on the local government's website.¹⁸

Within 5 business days of receiving an application for a development permit or order, local governments must confirm receipt of the application using contact information provided by the applicant.¹⁹ Within 30 days of receiving an application for a development permit or order, the local government must review the application for completeness and issue a written notification to the applicant indicating that all required information is submitted or specify in writing (with particularity) any areas that are deficient.²⁰ If an application is deemed deficient, the applicant has 30 days to address the deficiencies by submitting the required additional information.²¹

For applications for development permits or orders that do not require final action through a quasi-judicial hearing or public hearing, local governments must approve, approve with conditions, or deny such an application within 120 days of the local government's deeming the application complete.²² For applications that require final action through a quasi-judicial hearing or a public hearing, local governments must approve, approve with conditions, or deny such an application within 180 days of the local government's deeming the application complete.²³

¹¹ [S. 163.3177\(3\), \(6\)\(a\)-\(i\), F.S.](#)

¹² [S. 163.3177\(5\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

¹³ [S. 163.3164\(26\), F.S.](#)

¹⁴ [S. 163.3202\(1\), F.S.](#)

¹⁵ [S. 163.3202\(3\), F.S.](#)

¹⁶ [Ss. 125.01055 and 166.04151, F.S.](#)

¹⁷ [Ss. 125.022\(1\) and 166.033\(1\), F.S.](#)

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ [Ss. 125.022\(2\) and 166.033\(2\), F.S.](#)

²⁰ *Id.*

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.*

Florida Building Code

Chapter 553, part IV, F.S., is known as the “Florida Building Codes Act.” The purpose and intent of the Act is to provide a mechanism for the uniform adoption, updating, interpretation, and enforcement of a single, unified state building code. The Building Code must be applied, administered, and enforced uniformly and consistently from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.²⁴

The Florida Building Commission (Commission) implements the Building Code. The Commission, which is housed within the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), is a 19-member technical body made up of design professionals, contractors, and government experts in various disciplines covered by the Building Code. The Commission updates and adopts a new edition of the Building Code every three years.²⁵ The current edition of the Building Code is the eighth edition, which is referred to as the 2023 Building Code.²⁶

It is the intent of the Legislature that local governments have the power to inspect all buildings, structures, and facilities within their jurisdiction in protection of the public’s health, safety, and welfare.²⁷

Building Code Administrators, Inspectors, and Plans Examiners

Building officials, inspectors, and plans examiners are regulated by the Building Code Administrators and Inspectors Board within the DBPR.²⁸ A building code administrator, otherwise known as a building official, is a local government employee, or a person contracted by a local government, who supervises building code activities, including plans review, enforcement, and inspection.²⁹ A building code inspector (inspector) is a local or state government employee, or a person contracted by a local government, who inspects construction that requires permits to determine compliance with building codes and state accessibility laws.³⁰

Building Permit

Every local government must enforce the Building Code and issue building permits.³¹ A building permit is an official document or certificate issued by the local building official that authorizes performance of a specific activity.³² It is unlawful for a person to construct, erect, alter, repair, secure, or demolish any building without first obtaining a building permit.³³

To obtain a permit, an applicant must complete an application for the proposed work on the form furnished by the government entity.³⁴ A local enforcement agency³⁵ must allow applicants to submit permit applications electronically to the local enforcement agency, which must provide accepted methods of electronic submission. Accepted methods of electronic submission include, but are not limited to, email, fill-in forms available online, or third-party submission software.³⁶

If a building official or plans reviewer denies a permit application or revokes a building permit, the building official or plans reviewer must give the permit applicant a reason for denying or revoking the permit.³⁷ The reason must

²⁴ [S. 553.72\(1\), F.S.](#)

²⁵ [Ss. 553.73\(7\)](#), and [553.74, F.S.](#)

²⁶ ICC Digital Codes, [2023 Florida Building Code, Building, Eighth Edition](#) (last visited Feb. 2, 2026).

²⁷ [S. 553.72, F.S.](#)

²⁸ [S. 468.605, F.S.](#)

²⁹ [S. 468.603\(2\), F.S.](#)

³⁰ [S. 468.603\(4\), F.S.](#)

³¹ [Ss. 125.01\(1\)\(bb\)](#), [125.56\(1\)](#), and [553.80\(1\), F.S.](#)

³² See [s. 468.603\(2\), F.S.](#) and [Florida Building Code \(Building\), Eighth Edition, s. 202.](#)

³³ [S. 553.79\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

³⁴ [S. 553.79\(1\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

³⁵ A “local enforcement agency” is an agency of local government, a local school board, a community college board of trustees, or a university board of trustees in the State University System with jurisdiction to make inspections of buildings and to enforce the building code. [S. 553.71\(5\), F.S.](#)

³⁶ [Ss. 125.56\(4\)\(b\)](#) and [553.79\(1\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

³⁷ [S. 553.79\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

be based on compliance with the building code or a local ordinance. Failing to provide a reason for denying or revoking a building permit, which is based on compliance with the building code or a local ordinance, is grounds for discipline against the building official or plans reviewer's license.³⁸

Private Providers

Private providers and their duly authorized representatives are able to approve building plans and perform building code inspections as long as the plans approval and building inspections are within the scope of the provider's or representative's license.³⁹ A private provider must be licensed as a building official, engineer, or architect or be licensed as building inspector or plans examiner who perform inspections for additions and alterations that are limited to 1,000 square feet or less in residential buildings.⁴⁰

A single-trade inspection is an inspection focused on a single construction trade, such as plumbing, mechanical, or electrical. The term includes, but is not limited to:

- Inspections of door or window replacements;
- Fences and block walls more than 6 feet high from the top of the wall to the bottom of the footing;
- Stucco or plastering;
- Reroofing with no structural alteration;
- HVAC replacements;
- Ductwork or fan replacements;
- Alteration or installation of wiring, lighting, and service panels;
- Water heater changeouts;
- Sink replacements; and
- Repiping.⁴¹

An owner or contractor must notify a local government that the owner or contract hired a private provider to perform building code inspection services. Such notice must be provided in writing at the time of permit application, or by 2 p.m. local time two business days before the first scheduled inspection by the local building official.⁴²

After construction has commenced, and if the local building official is unable to provide inspection services in a timely manner, the owner or contractor may elect to use a private provider to provide inspection services by notifying the local building official by 2 p.m. local time two business days before the first scheduled inspection.⁴³

For plans review, a private provider must review the plans⁴⁴ to determine compliance with the applicable codes⁴⁵ and prepare an affidavit certifying, under oath, that the plans comply, and the private provider is duly authorized to perform plans review.⁴⁶

Upon receipt of a building permit application and the required affidavit from the private provider, a building official has 20 business days to issue the permit or provide written notice of the plan deficiencies or 5 business days for a single-trade plans review for a single-family or two-family dwelling.⁴⁷ If the local building official does

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ [S. 553.791, F.S.](#)

⁴⁰ [S. 553.791\(1\)\(n\), F.S.](#)

⁴¹ [S. 553.791\(1\)\(q\), F.S.](#)

⁴² [S. 553.791\(4\), F.S.](#)

⁴³ [S. 553.791\(5\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁴ "Plans" means building plans, site engineering plans, or site plans, or their functional equivalent, submitted by a fee owner or fee owner's contractor to a private provider or duly authorized representative for review. [S. 553.791\(1\)\(m\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁵ "Applicable codes" means the Florida Building Code (FBC) and any local technical amendments to the FBC but does not include the applicable minimum fire prevention and fire safety codes adopted pursuant to ch. 633, F.S. [S. 553.791\(1\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁶ [S. 553.791\(6\), F.S.](#)

⁴⁷ [S. 553.791\(7\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

not provide written notice of plan deficiencies within the prescribed period, the permit application shall be deemed approved and must be issued on the next business day.⁴⁸

Platting

A “plat” is a map or detailed representation of the subdivision of lands, providing a complete and precise depiction of the subdivision, along with other information that complies with all applicable state requirements and local ordinances.⁴⁹ Platting ensures that when subdividing property into lots, all streets, alleys, easements, rights-of-way, public areas, utilities, and sewer and stormwater improvements are identified.⁵⁰

While state laws provide minimum requirements for the platting of lands, local governments may adopt additional requirements.⁵¹ Prior to approval by the appropriate governing body, the plat must be reviewed for conformity with state and local laws and be sealed by a professional surveyor and mapper who is either employed by or under contract to the local governing body.⁵²

Plats must be administratively approved by a county or municipality if the plat meets the requirements for recording.⁵³ Each local government is responsible for designating an administrative authority to receive, review, and process plat submittals, including an official responsible for approving, approving with conditions, or denying a proposed plat. When a proposal for a plat is submitted, the administrative authority must provide written notice of receipt to the applicant within seven business days and identify any missing documents or information that would be necessary to process the application.⁵⁴ The written notice must include the local government’s timeframe for reviewing, approving, and otherwise processing plat applications. Unless the applicant requires an extension of time, the administrative authority must approve, approve with conditions, or deny the plat submittal with a written notice.⁵⁵ If the application is denied, the written notice must identify all areas of noncompliance and include specific citations to each requirement the application fails to meet.

If the application is approved, the approval must be placed on the plat before it is offered to the clerk of the circuit court for recording.⁵⁶

The authority for plat approval is designated as follows:

- When the plat to be submitted for approval is located wholly within the boundaries of a municipality, the municipality has exclusive jurisdiction to approve the plat.
- When a plat lies wholly within the unincorporated areas of a county, the county has exclusive jurisdiction to approve the plat.
- When a plat lies within the boundaries of more than one governing body, two plats must be prepared and each county or municipality has exclusive jurisdiction to approve the plat within its boundaries, unless each county or municipality agrees that one plat is mutually acceptable.⁵⁷

Every plat of a subdivision offered for recording must contain certain information, including:

- The name of the plat in bold legible letters, and the name of the subdivision, professional surveyor and mapper or legal entity, and street and mailing address on each sheet.
- The section, township, and range immediately under the name of the plat on each sheet included, along with the name of the city, town, village, county, and state in which the land being platted is situated.

⁴⁸ *Id.*

⁴⁹ [S. 177.031\(14\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁰ [S. 177.091, F.S.](#); Clark, Campbell, Lancaster, Workman, and Airth, P.A, *The Basics of Platting Property* (May 28, 2020) (last visited Feb. 2, 2026).

⁵¹ [S. 177.011, F.S.](#)

⁵² [S. 177.081\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁵³ [S. 177.071\(1\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁴ [S. 177.071\(2\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁵ [S. 177.071\(3\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁶ [S. 177.071\(4\), F.S.](#)

⁵⁷ *Id.*

- The dedications and approvals by the surveyor and mapper and local governing body, and the circuit court clerk's certificate and the professional surveyor and mapper's seal and statement.
- All section lines and quarter section lines occurring within the subdivision. If the description is by metes and bounds, all information called for, such as the point of commencement, course bearings and distances, and the point of beginning. If the platted lands are in a land grant or are not included in the subdivision of government surveys, then the boundaries are to be defined by metes and bounds and courses.
- Location, width, and names of all streets, waterways, or other rights-of-way.
- Location and width of proposed easements and existing easements identified in the title opinion or property information report must be shown on the plat or in the notes or legend, and their intended use.
- All lots numbered either by progressive numbers or, if in blocks, progressively numbered in each block, and the blocks progressively numbered or lettered, except that blocks in numbered additions bearing the same name may be numbered consecutively throughout the several additions.
- Sufficient survey data to positively describe the bounds of every lot, block, street easement, and all other areas shown on the plat.
- Designated park and recreation parcels.
- All interior excepted parcels clearly indicated and labeled "Not a part of this plat."
- The purpose of all areas dedicated clearly indicated or stated on the plat.
- All platted utility easements, which must provide that such easements are also easements for the construction, installation, maintenance, and operation of cable television services; provided, however, no such construction, installation, maintenance, and operation of cable television services interferes with the facilities and services of an electric, telephone, gas, or other public utility.⁵⁸

Many local governments have a process to approve a *preliminary plat* before approving a final plat, and once a preliminary plat is approved, a developer may be allowed to commence construction before the final plat is approved. Generally, a preliminary plat is a technical, graphic representation of a proposed development, including plans for streets, utilities, drainage, easements, and lot lines, for a proposed subdivision. If a preliminary plat is required, it is generally a prerequisite for a final plat approval and the submission of any property improvement plans or permit applications.⁵⁹ For example, the City of Jacksonville, the Village of Royal Palm Beach, and the City of Tallahassee allow for a preliminary plat approval process.⁶⁰

The fee to have a plat approved differs between local governments. For instance:

- The City of Orlando charges either \$1,200 or \$3,000, depending on the type of plat being submitted.⁶¹
- Madison County charges either \$1500, \$1700, or \$2000, depending on whether it is a preliminary or final plat and whether improvements are required; additionally, Madison County charges a \$50 fee per lot, along with consultant fees.⁶²

Once a final plat is approved, it is submitted to the clerk of the circuit court for recording.⁶³

In 2025,⁶⁴ the Legislature strengthened the plat review process by requiring local governments to:

- Administratively approve plat or replat submissions, with no further action by the local government, if the submittal complies with statutory requirements;
- Designate an administrative authority to receive, process, and review the plat or replat submittal; and

⁵⁸ [S. 177.091, F.S.](#)

⁵⁹ See e.g., [City of Zephyrhills Code of Ordinances Art. XI, Part 11.03.00, s. 11.03.02.01.](#)

⁶⁰ [City of Jacksonville Code of Ordinances s. 654-109.](#) [Village of Royal Palm Beach Code of Ordinances s. 22-22.](#) [City of Tallahassee Code of Ordinances s. 9-92.](#)

⁶¹ City of Orlando, [Fees—Commercial Development](#) (last visited Feb. 2, 2026).

⁶² Madison County, [Planning & Zoning Fees](#), [Madison County Resolution No. 2016-09-14A.](#) (last visited Feb. 2, 2026).

⁶³ See [s. 177.073\(1\)\(b\), F.S.](#)

⁶⁴ See ch. 2025-164.

- Within 7 business days of receiving a submission, provide written notice to the applicant acknowledging receipt of the submittal, identifying any deficiencies, and providing timeframes for reviewing, approving, and otherwise processing the plat or replat submittal.⁶⁵

[Expedited Approval of Residential Building Permits Prior to Plat Approval](#)

Counties and municipalities that meet certain population thresholds that have at least 25 acres of contiguous land that is designated in its comprehensive plan and future land use map as land that is agricultural or to be developed for residential purposes are required to develop a program for the expedited issuance of building permits for residential subdivisions or planned communities before a final plat is recorded with the clerk of the circuit court.⁶⁶

As part of this process, each county and municipality subject to the requirements much create:

- A two-step application process for the adoption of a preliminary plat, inclusive of any plans, in order to expedite the issuance of building permits related to such plats.
- A master building permit process consistent with existing master building permit application requirements for applicants seeking multiple building permits for residential subdivisions or planned communities, with the master building permits issued being valid for the earlier of three consecutive years after issuance or until the adopting of a new Building Code.⁶⁷

The expedited process must include an application for an applicant to identify up to 50 percent of planned homes, or the number of building permits, that the governing body must issue for the residential subdivision or planned community, increasing to 75 percent on December 31, 2027.⁶⁸ The local government is required to issue these building permits to the applicant, provided that the residential buildings or structures are unoccupied and all of the following conditions are met:

- The governing body has approved a preliminary plat for each residential subdivision or planned community.
- The applicant provides proof to the governing body that the applicant has provided a copy of the approved preliminary plat, along with the approved plans, to the relevant electric, gas, water, and wastewater utilities.
- The applicant holds a valid performance bond for up to 130 percent of the necessary improvements that have not been completed upon submission of the application. For purposes of a master planned community, a valid performance bond is required on a phase-by-phase basis.⁶⁹

Applicants are allowed to use a private provider to expedite the application process and each local government required to create a program must establish a registry of at least three qualified contractors who the governing body may use to supplement staff resources, as determined by the governing body, for processing and expediting the review of an application for a preliminary plat or any plans related to such application.⁷⁰ A qualified contractor on the registry who is hired to review an application, or any part thereof, for a preliminary plat, or any part thereof, may not have a conflict of interest with the applicant.

Applicants are prohibited from transferring ownership of a residential structure or building constructed pursuant to this process and from receiving a temporary or final certificate of occupancy, until the final plat has been approved by the governing body and recorded in the public records by the clerk of the circuit court.⁷¹

⁶⁵ [S. 177.01, F.S.](#)

⁶⁶ [S. 177.073\(2\)\(a\), F.S.](#) This requirement applies to counties with at least 75,000 residents and municipalities with at least 10,000 residents, excluding Monroe County and municipalities therein.

⁶⁷ [S. 177.073\(3\), F.S.](#)

⁶⁸ [S. 177.073\(2\)\(a\), \(c\), F.S.](#)

⁶⁹ [S. 177.073\(6\), F.S.](#)

⁷⁰ [S. 177.073\(4\), F.S.](#)

⁷¹ [S. 177.074\(7\)\(a\), F.S.](#)

Applicants gain a vested right in a preliminary plat that has been approved by a governing body if all of the following conditions are met:

- The applicant relies in good faith on the approved preliminary plat or any amendments thereto.
- The applicant incurs obligations and expenses, commences construction of the residential subdivision or planned community, and is continuing in good faith with the development of the property.⁷²

Once the applicant's vested rights are established, a governing body of a county or municipality may not make substantive changes to the preliminary plat without the applicant's written consent.⁷³

⁷² [S. 177.073\(8\), F.S.](#) See also *Monroe Cnty. v. Ambrose*, 866 So.2d 707, 710 (Fla. 3rd DCA 2003).

⁷³ [S. 177.073\(9\), F.S.](#)

BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
Intergovernmental Affairs Subcommittee	13 Y, 1 N, As CS	2/5/2026	Darden	Darden
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided additional definitions. • Removed provisions relating to a model ordinance. • Revised process for the creation of the registry of qualified contractors. • Clarified when an applicant may use a private provider for review of a permit related to the expedited approval procedure of residential building permits. • Prohibited local governments from conditioning its issuance of building permits on specified actions by the applicant. 			
Commerce Committee	17 Y, 4 N, As CS	2/18/2026	Hamon	Fletcher
THE CHANGES ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specified that the requirement for certain local governments to create a qualified contractors program begins January 1, 2027, rather than October 1, 2026. • Specified that qualified contractors are not authorized to review land use matters that are discretionary or quasi-judicial in nature. • Exempted counties with populations of less than 25,000 and municipalities with populations of less than 10,000 from the requirement to create a qualified contractor program. • Allowed local governments to consider the number of years' experience of potential qualified contractors. • Provided that a qualified contractor's certification of an application as administratively complete does not constitute substantive approval of the permit submitted. • Broadened the authority of a local government to audit a qualified contractor. • Removed the provision that granted sovereign immunity to qualified contractors, and the provision that expanded the expedited approval process for certain residential building permits to planned unit developments. • Eliminated the state preemption over activities related to the expedited approval process for residential building permits before a final plat is recorded. 			
State Affairs Committee				

THIS BILL ANALYSIS HAS BEEN UPDATED TO INCORPORATE ALL OF THE CHANGES DESCRIBED ABOVE.
