

GA Senate Bill 447 Workshop

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Overview

- Purpose of workshop
- Summary of bill
- Changes to process
- Other changes

Refresher: what requires an LDA permit?

- Any commercial or multi-family development **over** 5,000 square feet of land disturbance
- Any commercial or multi-family development **under** 5,000 square feet of land disturbance where trees are removed or drainage is impacted
- Major single-family subdivisions

Purpose of Workshop

- Review changes to Chatham County land disturbance permitting process
- Changes implemented by SB447 related ONLY to Chatham County Engineering LDA permit review
 - Non-related changes implemented by SB447 will not be covered
- New regulations go into effect July 1st 2026
- Code for LDA submittal at the end

Summary of Bill

- *“A BILL to be entitled an Act to amend Chapter 7 of Title 12 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to control of soil erosion and sedimentation, so as to revise provisions regarding denial or nonacceptance of permits; to amend Chapter 60 of Title 36 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to provisions applicable to counties and municipal corporations, so as to provide general provisions for counties and municipalities regarding the acceptance, denial, or nonacceptance of certain permits; to require local issuing authorities to provide rejected permit applicants with a written list of reasons for denial within specified time frames; to provide definitions; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.”*

Summary of Bill

- Revises acceptance, denial, or nonacceptance of permits
- Requires list of reasons for denial
 - Within specified timeframes
- Definitions
- Other purposes
 - Permit tracking portal

Summary of Bill

- What do we mean by “permit”?
 - *“If a local issuing authority requires compliance with additional regulatory items by the applicant beyond erosion and sediment control, including, but not limited to, storm-water management or utility approvals that are subject to the approval of such local issuing authority, all such requirements shall be subject to the review time frames imposed in subsection (c) of this Code section.”*
 - Land Disturbing Activity (LDA) Permits are included

Changes to Process

- Application acceptance
- Review timelines
- Denials & Resubmittals
- Exemptions

Changes to Process

- Application acceptance
 - List of what items constitute a complete application
 - 5-day completeness check
 - Determine if external review is required
 - If applicant is not notified within 5 days, it is considered complete

| Land-Disturbing Activity Permit Application - Completeness Requirements | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|----------------|--|--|
| List of Required Plans & Documents, as Appropriate to the Permit Type | Clearing & Grubbing Permit | Grading Permit | Commercial and Multi-family Development Permit | Single Family Subdivision Development Permit |
| Project Narrative or Cover Letter | X | X | X | X |
| Land Disturbance Application & Fee | X | X | X | X |
| Content Review Checklist | X | X | X | X |
| Site & Construction Plans Must Consist of: | | | | |
| Cover Sheet | X | X | X | X |
| Existing Conditions | X | X | | X |
| Grading Plan | | X | X | X |
| Storm Drainage Plan | | | X | X |
| Utility Plan | | | X | X |
| Trees & Landscaping Plan | X | X | X | X |
| Erosion Control Plan | X | X | X | X |
| Demolition Plan | X | X | X | X |
| Staking Plan | | | X | X |
| Topographic Survey | | | X | X |
| Lighting Plan | | | X | X |
| Hydrology Report must include: | | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coastal Stormwater Supplement • Maintenance Agreement Draft <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infiltration Test • CSS Exhibit | | X | X | X |

Changes to Process

COMPLETE APPLICATION

Changes to Process

- Review timelines for County staff
 - Completeness check – 5 days
 - Initial review – 45 days
 - First resubmittal – 20 days
 - Subsequent resubmittals – 14 days
- Timer for all submittals starts when application is filed
- If a permit is not issued or denied within a timeframe, all fees are refunded (this does not include completeness check)
- **A pre-construction site meeting is still required prior to LDA permit issuance**

Changes to Process

- Denials
 - A list of reasons provided (comment letter, we already do this)
 - Reference document for each comment (e.g. ordinance, policy, etc.)
 - Expected documents for resubmittal
- Resubmittals
 - Reviewers cannot comment on missed items
 - No material additions*

Definitions

- **New Definition:** *"Material addition' means anything added to a resubmitted application that is not directly related to a comment or request of the local issuing authority."*
- *"Material additions to any resubmitted application or to any application which the local issuing authority has notified the applicant is incomplete shall be deemed new applications subject to the review timeline provided for in subsection (c) of Code Section 12-7-9."*

Changes to Process

- Exemptions
 - Development of Regional Impact (DRI)
 - State agency review
 - Example: LDA Permit will be held until GSWCC approval of ES&PC plans

Other Changes

- Permit tracking portal
 - *“Beginning January 1, 2028, each local government shall maintain a publicly accessible website or application that provides real-time status information for all building permits for which an application has been submitted.”*
 - *“Building permit’ means any permit, approval, or authorization issued by a county or municipal government relating to the construction, alteration, expansion, demolition, or substantial renovation of a structure. For purposes of this section, land disturbance permits are included.”*

Clarification

- What was discussed today applies to Chatham County Department of Engineering Land Disturbing Activity (LDA) Permit issuance
- This does NOT apply to:
 - Other County departments
 - Other jurisdictions or municipalities
 - Plat reviews
 - As-built reviews

Suggestions

- Attend pre-development meetings – Wednesdays
- Attend comment discussion meetings – Thursdays
- Communicate

Expectations

- Update revision box
- We will not hold partial applications (except fees)
- Future permitting portal

Resources

- **Bill Information:** <https://legiscan.com/GA/bill/SB447/2025>
- **Revised Code Text:**
<https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20252026/249199>
- **Chatham County DOE Development:**
<https://engineering.chathamcountyga.gov/Development/DevelopmentApplications>

Questions





Thank you for
your time and
patience as we
work through
these changes
together

Code:
LDAO2026

