



CITY OF ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

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PRESS RELEASE

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CITY LAUNCHES NEW ONLINE FEATURE FOR TRACKING PLANNING PETITIONS UNDER REVIEW

ANN ARBOR, Mich., Feb. 20, 2009 — Citizens now have immediate access to planning-related petitions currently under review in the City of Ann Arbor. The city planning and development services unit has launched a new, cutting-edge online feature which allows Web visitors to track the status of site plans, zonings, area plans, annexations, land divisions, special exception uses, street vacations and Historic District Commission applications. In other words, once the city accepts the petition for review and enters it into its permit tracking system, it becomes available for the public to review — No more waiting for the notice of public hearings to learn about petitions.

Information is provided in three different formats, described on the city's Web page

www.a2gov.org/PetitionsUnderReview —

- ❑ **View Petitions on a Map** — view all current petitions under review geospatially using *Microsoft Live Maps* and/or *Google Maps*.
- ❑ **Receive Updates via RSS** — subscribe to the *Ann Arbor Petitions Under Review RSS Feed*.
- ❑ **Receive Updates via E-mail** — sign up to receive emails when new petitions are available to view.

The launch of this feature is an important step to improve communication between the city, petitioners and interested or potentially affected citizens throughout the application review process. Another sign of improving communications is the Citizen Participation Ordinance that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2009. The ordinance states that petitioners of projects are required to hold a public hearing to provide early and effective citizen participation in conjunction with their proposed projects. The Petitions Under Review online feature is yet another resource the city can now use to enhance its communications with citizens.

The idea for this online feature came when a citizen at a city public meeting shared that another community was offering petitions under review information online. The City of Ann Arbor Planning and Development Services Unit and the Information Technology Services Unit expanded on this concept and determined an efficient way to use existing technologies to automate the online availability of this information.

For questions or comments about this new feature, please contact Senior City Planner Connie Pulcifer at 734.794.6265, ext. 42602 / CPulcifer@a2gov.org.

Ann Arbor has 114,000 residents, spans 27.7 square miles, and was named the No. 1 Healthiest Hometown in the U.S. by AARP The Magazine in 2008. Other notable recognitions include: No. 27 of the top 100 U.S. cities to live in by CNN/Money Magazine in 2008, as well as the fourth smartest city in the U.S. by Forbes Magazine. The city's mission statement reads: The city of Ann Arbor is committed to providing excellent municipal services that enhance the quality of life for all through the intelligent use of resources while valuing an open environment that fosters, fair, sensitive and respectful treatment of all employees and the community we serve.

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