



TO: Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission
FROM: Michelle Portier, AICP | Planning Services Manager
DATE: January 28, 2026
FILE #: 2-A-26-OA, Agenda Item # 5
SUBJECT: Public Notice Requirements

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Planning recommends approval of amendments to the City of Knoxville Zoning Code, Article 15.2.B, pertaining to public notice requirements.

BACKGROUND

An amendment to state law changed the newspaper publication public notice requirement for zoning ordinance amendments from 15 days to 21 days (prior to the scheduled hearing date). These noticing requirements apply to text amendments, rezonings, and zoning map amendments. The proposed amendment aligns the City of Knoxville public notice requirement with state law.

Attachment: Proposed Amendments to the Administrative Rules and Procedures



To: Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission
From: City of Knoxville Law Department
Date: January 22, 2026
Re: Notice for Zoning Map & Text Amendments

Recommendation

The City of Knoxville recommends a minor amendment to bring City Code into compliance with changes to Tennessee law. The only proposed change is to Article 15.2 regarding notice for Zoning Code amendments. Items heard by the Board of Zoning Appeals are not impacted by the Tennessee law change or the proposed Code amendment.

Background

The state legislature amended TENN. CODE ANN. § 13-7-203 by requiring twenty-one (21) days of notice published in a newspaper of general circulation for any amendments to the Zoning Code. The previous version of the statute required fifteen (15) days. See below.

13-7-203. Hearing on ordinance or amendment — Notice — Publication — Procedure.

(a) Before enacting the zoning ordinance or any amendment thereof, the chief legislative body shall hold a public hearing thereon, at least twenty-one (21) calendar days' notice of the time and place of which shall be published in the official municipal journal or in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality.

(b) No change in or departure from the text or maps as certified by the planning commission shall be made, unless such change or departure be first submitted to the planning commission and approved by it, or, if disapproved, shall receive the favorable vote of a majority of the entire membership of the chief legislative body.

(c) Notwithstanding the requirements of any municipality's charter to the contrary, the entire text of a comprehensive zoning ordinance need not be published in a newspaper. For those municipalities whose charters do require ordinances to be published in a newspaper, it shall be sufficient for the comprehensive zoning ordinance that its caption and a complete summary be published.

Summary of Proposed Changes

Staff members from Planning and from the City departments of Policy, Law, and Plans Review & Building Inspections met and reviewed the attached proposed ordinance amendment. The amendment to Article 15.2 strives to bring the ordinance into compliance with the updated state law by removing the fifteen (15) day notice requirement and replacing it with twenty-one (21) days for all Zoning Code amendments.

Document:

Tenn. Code Ann. § 13-7-203

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Tenn. Code Ann. § 13-7-203

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Current through the 2025 Regular Session.

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History

Acts 1935, ch. 44, § 3; C. Supp. 1950, § 3407.3; T.C.A. (orig. ed.), § 13-703; Acts 1984, ch. 811, § 3; 2024, ch. 701, § 3.

15.2 NOTICE

A. Required Notice

Table 15-2: Zoning Approvals Required Notice indicates the types of notice required for zoning applications. If the specific requirements of a zoning approval process contain contradictory information to Table 15-2, the specific requirements of the zoning approval control.

Table 15-2: Zoning Approvals Required Notice			
Zoning Application	Notice Type		
	Published	Mailed	Posted
Zoning Text Amendment Notice for Public Hearing	•		
Zoning Map Amendment Notice for Public Hearing	•	•	•
Comprehensive Updates and Revisions to Zoning Code and/or Zoning Map Notice for Public Hearing	•		
Variances Notice for BZA Public Hearing	•		•
Special Use Review Notice for Public Hearing	•	•	•
Planned Development—Concept Plan Notice for Public Meeting		•	•
Planned Development—Preliminary Plan Notice for Public Hearing	•	•	•
Appeals of Zoning Administrator Interpretations and Decisions Notice for BZA Public Hearing	•		•

B. Published Notice

When published notice is required, the City will publish notice in a newspaper of general circulation within the City. The notice must include the date, time, place, and purpose of such hearing/meeting, the name of the applicant, and the address of the subject property. Notice must be published no less than ~~15 days~~ **21 days** in advance of the scheduled action, except that the notice of BZA public hearings must be published no less than ten days in advance of the scheduled action.

C. Mailed Notice

1. Knoxville-Knox County Planning will send written notice of the application, as specified in Table 15-2, and public hearing/meeting date to all property owners whose property is within 200 feet of the subject property.
2. Notice will be to the last known address of the property owner as listed on the tax rolls.
3. Notices will be mailed at least 12 days before the date of the first advertised hearing.

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4. Notice is also required when an application is removed from the table unless the matter is being untabled for withdrawal only.
 5. Mailed notice for map amendments and for general amendments to the zoning map initiated by the City Council or Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission will also be provided to all property owners whose property is within the proposed amendment to the zoning map, the cost of which is born by the initiator of the request.
 6. Nothing in this section prevents the City, Knoxville-Knox County Planning, or the applicant from giving additional notice as he/she may deem appropriate.
 7. Mailed notice is not be required for changes to the annexation-related map amendments initiated by the City of Knoxville.
 8. Mailed notice is not required for comprehensive updates and revisions to the Zoning Code and/or Zoning Map.

D. Posted Notice

1. The applicant will post a sign no less than 12 days prior to the public hearing/meeting date. Calculation of the notice period commences on the first date of posting, but does not include the hearing date.
2. The notice sign must state the nature of the proposal or application, reviewing body contact information (telephone number and internet address), and the date and time and of the public hearing/meeting.
3. Failure to post the notice sign as required is sufficient cause for postponement of the public hearing/meeting. However, failure to post notice signs as required does not preclude the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission from acting on any application or proposal properly before it.

(Ord. No. O-44-2020, § 1, 3-24-20; Ord. No. O-21-2023, § 1, 1-24-23)