DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING

Q&A

General Municipal Law Section 239 Referrals

Q: How can mandatory NYS GML 239 referrals for subdivisions, site plans, special use permits, area variances, use variances, or local laws (zone changes and comprehensive plan amendments) be sent to the OC Department of Planning (OCDP) by municipalities when OCDP office are closed because of Covid-19 precautions?

A: The Department will continue to process NYS GML 239 reviews that are referred to the Orange County Planning Department. We are in the process of identifying employees who have the capability to work remotely from home and are coordinating with the County’s IT to get this in place. Municipalities can assist us in this effort by providing a digital copy of your referrals to our Department, including a digital copy of the Plan sets and supporting reports. Most licensed design professionals (i.e., engineers, land surveyors or architects) have the capability to provide these documents to you in a PDF format, which is our preferred format. Please send your GML referrals to Planning@orangecountygov.com. OCDP staff will then access the referrals and send a review letter response within 30-days of obtaining a full statement of the proposed action. A Full Statement of a Proposed Action is defined as “all materials required by and submitted to a referring body (Town or Village Board, City Council, Planning Board or Zoning Board of Appeals) as an application on a proposed action.”

Q: Who do I contact for more information about a specific project?

A: The respective municipal board for the municipality in which the project is located.

Transit

Q: Are the Transit Orange buses still running?

A: Yes, however given the situation we recommend contacting your local bus operator for the most up-to-date service information.

Q: Where do I find contact information for my local bus operator?

A: Simply go to www.transitorange.info and click on the “Bus Services” tab on the top where you will find the various bus services and bus operator contact information.

Q: Will you still be processing ADA Paratransit Applications?

A: Yes, but there is potential for a delay in the processing. In an effort to avoid this we will be accepting emailed applications at planning@orangecountygov.com.

Transportation
The Orange County Transportation Council (OCTC) staff continues to carry out planning and programming activities. Staff will continue to work with our local, state, and Federal partners as necessary and feasible during this time. Should our situation change we will update this notice and email members. Should you need to contact us, please email us at OCTC@orangecountygov.com.

Q: Will OCTC still be holding Planning and Policy Committee meetings?

A: Currently, the April 14th Planning Committee meeting is still being held as scheduled. In the event the meeting is cancelled, staff will email a cancellation notice to members and the distribution list as well as post an announcement on the OCTC webpage.

Q: I am a local project sponsor, will OCTC still be processing administrative modifications and amendments for the FFY 2020-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)?

A: Yes, as of now staff will continue to work with local project sponsors and NYSDOT Region 8 to process administrative modifications as they do not require a vote by the Council. All TIP amendments will be reviewed on a case by case basis as they do require a vote by the Council. The next anticipated Policy Committee meeting will be held on June 9th and action may be taken on TIP amendments then.

Q: How can I contact OCTC staff?

A: You can contact OCTC staff by emailing us at OCTC@orangecountygov.com or calling the main Planning Department phone line at 845-615-3840.

Grants

The Grants Unit will continue to work with County Departments to develop competitive grant applications, identify new grant opportunities, provide post-award grant oversight, and supply technical assistance and guidance to departments. County Departments can assist us by providing a Concept Approval Form and communicating early their intent to apply for new funding. The Unit does not distribute grant funding.

Q: Does Orange County give grants to small businesses?

A: At this time, the County does not offer any grants to small businesses. Check with your local Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Small Business Administration or New York State Empire State Development for potential grant or loan resources.

Q: Does the Orange County Grants Unit give money/grants to individuals, businesses or groups?

A: The Unit does not distribute grant funds.

Q: Does the Orange County Grants Unit assist Orange County residents, businesses and municipalities with researching grant opportunities and writing grant applications?
A: The Orange County Grants Unit works primarily with Orange County Departments to secure competitive funding from federal, state and private foundations for programs and services to benefit Orange County residents. A list of potential resources to assist municipalities, not-for-profits, and businesses is on our webpage at: https://www.orangecountygov.com/329/Grants

NYS Census 2020 Outreach Grant

The County submitted its Census Outreach grant application to New York State on 3/2/2020. Awards were anticipated on or about 3/10/2020; however, they have not been received. With the Novel Coronavirus, the Outreach work that was planned is not feasible at this time. We are awaiting guidance from the State, and we will contact our not-for-profit partners when we hear news.

GIS

Q: Are we still processing requests through the online request system?

A: Yes, however the timeline for completion of projects may be impacted.

Water Authority

Q: Who do I contact about my water service?

A: The Orange County Authority does not operate central water systems. Call the water department in your town, village, or city with questions.

Agriculture

Q: My town/neighbor is complaining about my farm operation but I am a farm operation in an agricultural district. Where can I get support in dealing with this issue?

A: Bob Somers at NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets (845-457-8887) can be of assistance and help discuss your options. Alternately, Maire Ullrich at Cornell Cooperative Extension (845-344-1234) can also help you navigate a path to resolving your issue.