



Meeting Date:	January 19, 2026
Submitters:	Dan Ritter, AICP, Community and Economic Development Director Ron Mentzer, Community and Economic Development Consultant
Department:	Community & Economic Development
Agenda Item:	Ordinance Granting Lockport Township Fire Protection District's Request for a Minor Change to the Non-Residential Planned Unit Development Conditions in Ordinance 2016 Passed on April 7, 2025

Summary:

The PUD ordinance that the City Council approved for the Lockport Township Fire Protection District's (LTFPD) new Division Street training and maintenance facility project (#2016) included numerous approval conditions, including the following one, which impacts when building permits for this project can be issued:

5. Prior to issuance of any building permit(s), the District must secure IDOT approval for the construction of the proposed driveway improvement and curb cut onto Division Street.

LTFPD has submitted the January 6, 2026, letter attached as Exhibit 1 to document its request for the City to modify this condition to allow the full building permit for the project to be issued while the IDOT permit review process for the project's Division Street access improvements continues. The letter also explains the rationale behind LTFD's request and documents the Fire District's commitment to comply with all final IDOT permit requirements.

According to Section 10.4-2 of the Zoning Ordinance, *"The City may approve minor changes in the Planned Unit Development which do not change the concept or intent of the development. Minor changes shall be any change not defined as a major change."*

Background:

On October 30th, 2025, the City issued the site development/grading permit for the project. The majority of the mass site grading for the project has been completed, and the Fire District's contractor is ready to begin foundation work for the building. City staff has received and is prepared to issue a foundation building permit for the project. Staff anticipates it would be able to issue the full building permit for the project before the end of January 2026.

Staff Conclusions and Recommendation:

Given the history and scope of this project, staff has determined it would be appropriate for the City Council to review and make a final decision on the requested minor PUD change. The City Attorney recommends any City Council approval of this request be memorialized in a new PUD Ordinance for the project that would include revised language for approval condition #5.

City Council - January 19, 2026
LTFPD Minor PUD Change Request

City staff supports the approval of the requested minor amendment based on the following conclusions:

- LTFPD's commitment to comply with IDOT's yet-to-be issued permit requirements for these improvements (see attached Exhibit 1).
- LTFPD's documented and consistent efforts over the past year and a half to secure IDOT's direction on the scope and design of required Division Street access improvements for their project (see attached Exhibit 2).
- The completion and operation of the project would have a positive impact on public safety in the community. The sooner the project is completed, the sooner these benefits will be realized.

Based on these conclusions, City staff recommends approval of a minor PUD change that would replace the existing language of condition #5 with the following language:

5. Permanent Division Street Access Improvements: No permanent Division Street Access-related improvements shall be constructed prior to IDOT issuing a permit for said improvements. No occupancy permit for the new training and maintenance facility shall be issued until the IDOT-required Division Street access-related improvements have been installed and are operational.

Recommended Council Action: Approval of an Ordinance Granting Lockport Township Fire Protection District's Request for a Minor Change to the Non-Residential Planned Unit Development Conditions in Ordinance 2016 Passed on April 7, 2025.

Attachments:

Exhibit 1 – January 6, 2026, Lockport Fire Protection District Minor PUD Change Request Letter

Exhibit 2 – Timeline for Lockport Fire District Correspondence With IDOT

Exhibit 3 – Ordinance Granting Lockport Township Fire Protection District's Request for a Minor Change to the Non-Residential Planned Unit Development Conditions in Ordinance 2016 Passed on April 7, 2025.

EXHIBIT 1

JANUARY 6, 2026, LOCKPORT FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT MINOR PUD CHANGE REQUEST LETTER

Lockport Township Fire Protection District

19623 RENWICK ROAD | LOCKPORT, ILLINOIS 60441
OFFICE 815.838.3287 | FAX 815.838.9141 | WWW.LOCKPORTFIRE.ORG



January 6, 2026

Mayor Ray Soliman
City of Crest Hill
20600 City Center Blvd
Crest Hill, Illinois 60403

Dear Mayor Soliman,

I am writing to formally request an amendment to the previously approved ordinance requiring full building permit approval for the Fire District Training Facility located at 20115 W. Division Street.

The IDOT permit process related to required roadway improvements has been extensive and is currently delaying construction of the facility. We have been actively working with IDOT since November 2024, and despite ongoing communication, the matter remains unresolved. A meeting with state legislators and IDOT representatives is scheduled for January 12, 2026, at which time we are hopeful to receive a final determination regarding the proposed variances. However, it is possible that the final permit approval could still take several additional months.

The Fire District will, of course, comply with all IDOT requirements. Our goal in requesting this amendment is simply to limit further delays in the building process where possible, while the IDOT review continues.

I plan to attend the meeting to answer any questions you or members of the City Council may have regarding this request. I have also attached a timeline of correspondence between the Fire District and IDOT for your review, which may help explain the length and complexity of the process.

Thank you to you and the City Council for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John O'Connor".

John O'Connor
Fire Chief

EXHIBIT 2

TIMELINE FOR CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LOCKPORT FIRE DISTRICT AND IDOT

Lockport Township Fire Protection District



January 6, 2026

Timeline of Correspondence Between the Lockport Fire District and IDOT

Regarding Road Improvement Requirements for Training Facility Permitting:

- **November 15, 2024** – A preliminary review package was submitted to IDOT, including:
 - Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for the Lockport Fire Protection District Training Facility.
 - Conceptual Planned Unit Development (PUD) Site Plan.
 - Three-page Access Road Exhibit illustrating turn movements.
- **November 21, 2024** – IDOT responded, advising that the preliminary review process could take 4–12 weeks.
- **February 19, 2025** – IDOT (Abdul Khalique) issued a response following preliminary review, recommending:
 1. Construction of a westbound left-turn lane at the proposed full access point.
 2. Installation of sidewalks along the frontage of the facility.
- **February 19, 2025** – Dwight Trostle (Pinnacle Engineering Group) responded requesting clarification and noting:
 - Traffic volumes documented in the TIS do not support the need for a westbound left-turn lane, and a revised TIS would not alter those findings.
 - No existing sidewalks, curb, or gutter exist along Division Street between the western property line and Broadway Street (IL 7/53), leaving no infrastructure to connect to or extend.
 - IDOT does not have a recorded right-of-way (ROW) in this area; Pinnacle requested documentation if any exists.
- **February 26, 2025** – IDOT (Jonathan Karabowicz) responded, stating:
 - Independent traffic studies are not definitive in determining roadway mitigation requirements.
 - Sidewalks were requested because IDOT does not construct or maintain sidewalks along state roadways and relies on developments to provide pedestrian accommodations.
- **April 16, 2025** – A request was made for an in-person meeting with IDOT staff to discuss the turn-lane requirement.

- **April 18, 2025** – IDOT denied the meeting request and recommended submitting any disagreements through the written disposition of comments.
- **April 18, 2025** – A follow-up email was sent again requesting a meeting to discuss alternatives, emphasizing that direct dialogue would be more efficient.
- **April 28, 2025** – After no response, a reminder email was sent.
 - Mr. Karabowicz responded, again declining to meet and stating that the left-turn lane was considered a safety issue affecting all motorists on Division Street.
- **May 19, 2025** – Pinnacle Engineering resubmitted plans proposing alternatives to the turn-lane requirement, including:
 1. Extending the existing 35-mph speed limit eastward past the facility (currently 50 mph).
 2. Installing “Emergency Vehicle Entering/Exiting” warning signage in both directions.
 3. Requiring emergency vehicles to activate warning lights when approaching or exiting the facility.
 4. A letter from the Crest Hill Police Department committing to assist with traffic control as needed.
- **May 19, 2025** – IDOT acknowledged receipt of the submission and advised that a follow-up response would be provided after full review.
 - Legislative Engagement – Due to continued delays, the Fire District contacted Representative Manley and Senator Cappel for guidance and assistance.
- **August 4, 2025** – A memorandum was issued by Justin Hammers, Chief of Operations (IDOC), outlining significant security concerns associated with installing a sidewalk along Division Street adjacent to IDOC property.
- **August 12, 2025** – Pinnacle followed up with IDOT regarding the May 19 submission and provided the IDOC memorandum.
- **August 14, 2025** – IDOT (Karabowicz) responded:
 - Stating he was previously unaware of the IDOC memorandum and would review it.
 - Reaffirming IDOT’s position that, while traffic volumes do not warrant a turn lane, engineering judgment is one of the criteria used in making the determination.
 - Acknowledging a legislative inquiry and referencing concerns about “compromising safety for cost”.
- **August 18, 2025** – A response was sent clarifying that IDOC’s security concerns were anticipated and valid and reiterating that the Fire District is not prioritizing cost over safety. The Fire District maintains that the proposed alternatives provide equal or greater safety benefits while avoiding unnecessary taxpayer expense.

EXHIBIT 3

Ordinance allowing a minor PUD change to the Lockport Fire Protection District's Division Street Training and Maintenance Facility PUD to update Condition 5 of the PUD Ordinance (Ord. 2016, passed 4/7/2025)