Levy County Board of County Commissioners Agenda Item Summary Form

1. **Name and Title:** Bernard "Bo" Cox, Building Official
2. **Department:** Development Services
3. **Meeting Date:** Tuesday, November 17, 2026
4. **Requested Action:**
   Public Hearing - Approve ORDINANCE NO. 2026-7: AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEVY COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING CHAPTER 50, LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE (LDC), FOR COMPLIANCE WITH FLORIDA STATUTES; AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE I OF THE LDC CONCERNING GENERAL PROVISIONS, INCLUDING SECTION 50-1 CONCERNING DEFINITIONS AND SECTION 50-2 CONCERNING NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS; REPEAL AND REPLACEMENT OF ARTICLE II, DIVISION 2 OF THE LDC DESIGNATING THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AS THE LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY; AMENDMENT OF SECTION 50-350 OF THE LDC CONCERNING SPECIFIC PROHIBITIONS; AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE XIII OF THE LDC CONCERNING ZONING; AMENDMENT OF SECTION 50-700 OF THE LEDC CONCERNING THE USE TABLE; AMENDMENT OF SECTION 50-755 OF THE LDC CONCERNING SPECIAL EXCEPTION REVIEW CRITERIA, LIMITATIONS, AND PROCESS; CREATION OF ARTICLE XIII, DIVISION 4, SUBDIVISION III, SECTIONS 50-845 THROUGH 50-850 OF THE LDC CONCERNING CERTIFIED RECOVERY RESIDENCES AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION REQUEST PROCES; AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE XIII, DIVISION 6 OF THE LDC CONCERNING PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT; AMENDMENT OF SECTION 50-645 OF THE LDC CONCERNING AMENDMENTS AND LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY REVIEW; AMENDMENT OF ARTICLE XIII, DIVISION 2, SECTIONS 50-664 AND 50-665 OF THE LDC CONCERNING AMENDMENTS TO THE ZONING MAP ATLAS; AMENDMENT OF APPENDIX B OF THE LEVY COUNTY CODE OF ORDINANCES CONCERNING SCHEDULE OF FEES, RATES AND CHARGES; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

5. **Cost & Funding Source:**
   There could be a potential savings of $101,803.20 associated with eliminating the Planning Commission.

6. **Justification of Request:**
   The proposed ordinance amends Chapter 50 of the Levy County Code of Ordinances to bring the County's Land Development Code into compliance with applicable Florida Statutes, modernize development review procedures, and improve administrative efficiency.

   The amendments address recent changes in state law relating to subdivision plat approvals, certified recovery residences, offsite-constructed residential dwellings, and agricultural and landscaping equipment. The ordinance also revises public hearing requirements, zoning procedures, special exception reviews, and planned unit development approvals.

Additionally, the ordinance designates the Board of County Commissioners as the County's Local Planning Agency pursuant to Section 163.3174, Florida Statutes, replacing the existing Planning Commission structure. This change is intended to streamline the development review process, eliminate duplicative hearings, reduce administrative costs, and provide more timely decisions for applicants while maintaining required public notice and participation.

Section 163.3174, Florida Statutes, provides for designation of the governing body as the Local Planning Agency. However, eliminating the separate Planning Commission would not eliminate the County's statutory planning responsibilities, required public hearings, or obligations to provide appropriate public participation.

Eliminating the Planning Commission does not eliminate planning services or the County's responsibility to regulate development. It changes the decision-making structure and reduces the number of separate review bodies involved in the process.

Changes include:

1. **Streamlined Development Review:** Consolidating planning responsibilities with the BoCC would eliminate an additional layer of review for certain development applications, potentially reducing processing times and allowing applicants to receive decisions more quickly.
2. **Elimination of Duplicative Hearings:** Certain land use applications currently require consideration by both the Planning Commission and the BoCC. Consolidating these responsibilities could reduce repetitive presentations, hearings, and administrative coordination while maintaining all applicable statutory notice and public participation requirements.
3. **Improved Service to Property Owners and Businesses:** A more efficient review process could reduce delays and expenses for applicants seeking zoning changes, special exceptions, and other development approvals, creating a more predictable and timely process.
4. **Greater Accountability and Consistency:** Designating the BoCC as the Local Planning Agency would place planning responsibilities directly with the County's elected governing body, promoting consistency between development decisions, the Comprehensive Plan, and established County policies.
5. **Reduced Administrative and Operational Costs:** Eliminating separate Planning Commission meetings could reduce staff time and expenses associated with agenda preparation, public notices, meeting coordination, legal support, facility operations, audiovisual services, and recordkeeping.

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For September 2026, the County incurred the following expenses associated with the Planning Commission:

Expense Category	September 2026
Legal Services	$4,649.50
Planning Commissioner Compensation	$500.00
Commissioner Travel	$148.92
Public Advertisements	$3,185.18
Total Monthly Expenses	$8,483.60

Estimated Annual Cost Based on September Expenses: $101,803.20

September expenses of $8,483.60 × 12 months.

These figures do not include salaried County Staff time associated with preparing agendas, reviewing applications, coordinating meetings, attending hearings, preparing minutes, or providing administrative support.

Eliminating the Planning Commission could reduce expenditures for legal services, commissioner compensation and travel, public advertising, and administrative support. Additional operational efficiencies could be achieved by redirecting staff time toward other tasks.

Actual savings would depend on which expenses are eliminated rather than transferred to the Board of County Commissioners, as certain legal services, public notices, and hearings would still be required under Florida law.