




CITY OF Boca Raton

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May 5, 2026

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Mark Sohaney 
City Manager

SUBJECT: **Ordinance No. 5785 – Lobbyist Certification and Disclosure Requirements for Development Applications**

RECOMMENDATION

I recommend adoption of Ordinance No. 5785, amending Section 28-9 of the City Code to establish lobbyist certification and disclosure requirements for development applications.

BACKGROUND

At the request of Deputy Mayor Michelle Grau, the attached ordinance has been prepared to establish a clear and consistent framework for disclosure of lobbyist participation in the City’s development review process.

Lobbyist registration in Palm Beach County is governed by a countywide ordinance applicable to all municipalities and administered and enforced by the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics. Ordinance No. 5785 establishes procedural requirements within the City’s development application process to ensure that information regarding lobbyist participation is disclosed in a clear, consistent, and timely manner.

The ordinance requires applicants to submit a written certification identifying anyone authorized to communicate with the City Council, the Community Redevelopment Agency, boards, or City staff on their behalf. The certification must state whether the person is a lobbyist, identify the principal represented, and confirm registration or exemption under the County ordinance. Applicants must keep this information updated throughout the review process if additional representatives are retained or information changes. An application will not be considered complete unless the required certification and disclosures are submitted and kept current.

Ordinance No. 5785 also requires that anyone appearing before the City Council, the Community Redevelopment Agency, or a board on behalf of an applicant state on the record whether they are a lobbyist and whom they represent.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

STRATEGIC IMPACT: This Ordinance supports the following Strategic Focus Area: World-Class Services.

cc: Mary Siddons, City Clerk
Andrew Lukasik, Deputy City Manager
Joshua Pariente Koehler, City Attorney



ORDINANCE

5785

1
2 AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF BOCA RATON, FLORIDA,
3 AMENDING CHAPTER 28, "ZONING," ARTICLE I, SECTION
4 28-9, "STANDARD APPLICATION PROCESSING
5 PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS," TO
6 ESTABLISH LOBBYIST CERTIFICATION AND DISCLOSURE
7 REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS;
8 PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR
9 REPEALER; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; PROVIDING
10 AN EFFECTIVE DATE

11
12 WHEREAS, the Palm Beach County lobbyist registration ordinance is a countywide
13 ordinance applicable throughout the County, including its municipalities, which establishes
14 definitions of "lobbyist" and "lobbying," including persons who seek to influence municipal
15 decision-making through communication with governing bodies, advisory boards, and municipal
16 officials and employees; and

17 WHEREAS, lobbyist registration under the ordinance is administered, maintained, and
18 enforced by the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics; and

19 WHEREAS, while the administration and enforcement of lobbyist registration
20 requirements are vested in the Palm Beach County Commission on Ethics, the City of Boca Raton

1 has a significant interest in ensuring that persons participating in the City's development approval
2 process comply with such requirements and that such compliance is transparent to the City and
3 the public; and

4 WHEREAS, the City of Boca Raton processes applications for development approval
5 in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 28-9 of the Code of Ordinances; and

6 WHEREAS, the City Council finds that transparency in the development review
7 process, including compliance with applicable lobbyist registration requirements, is critical to
8 maintaining public confidence in that process; and

9 WHEREAS, the City Council finds that requiring written disclosure and certification of
10 lobbyist registration status at the time of application will promote accountability and ensure
11 compliance at the earliest stage of the development review process; and

12 WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that requiring persons appearing before the
13 City Council, the Community Redevelopment Agency, and other boards and advisory bodies on
14 behalf of an applicant to disclose their lobbyist status on the record will provide clarity and notice
15 to decision-makers and the public; and

16 WHEREAS, the City Council further finds that incorporating such written disclosure and
17 certification requirements into the application completeness determination provides a clear and
18 enforceable mechanism for implementation; and

19 WHEREAS, the City Council finds that the amendments set forth herein are in the best
20 interests of the citizens of the City of Boca Raton; now therefore

21
22 THE CITY OF BOCA RATON HEREBY ORDAINS:

23
24 Section 1. Section 28-9, "Standard application processing procedures for development
25 approvals," Code of Ordinances, is hereby amended as follows

26 Sec. 28-9. – Standard application processing procedures for development approvals.

1 (1) Applications for development approval shall be processed in accordance with the
2 procedures and requirements set forth in this section, except where specifically provided
3 otherwise in this Code. An application to amend a prior development approval shall be processed
4 in the same manner as an application for a new development approval.

5 (2) Applications for development approval shall be submitted on a form prescribed by the
6 city and shall be accompanied by all applicable fees set forth in the municipal facilities and
7 services user fee schedule. Applications shall include all information, plans, studies and
8 documentation as required for each type of development approval sought, and any additional
9 information as may be required by the development services director; provided, however, that
10 where the development services director determines that particular information, plans, studies
11 and/or documentation is unnecessary to the city's review of the particular application, the
12 requirement to submit that item may be waived in writing by the director. Applications shall also
13 include a written certification, on a form provided by the City, identifying each person retained or
14 authorized at the time of application to communicate with the City Council, the Community
15 Redevelopment Agency (CRA), any board or advisory body of the City, or any employees of the
16 City or CRA on behalf of the applicant, including: (i) a disclosure of whether such person is a
17 "lobbyist" as defined under Palm Beach County Code Section 2-352, as may be amended, (ii) a
18 disclosure of the principal(s) or entity(ies) that retained such person, and (iii) an affirmation that
19 such person has either registered in the Palm Beach County Central Lobbyist Registry or is not
20 required by law to do so. Any identifying information associated with such lobbyist registration
21 shall be provided. The applicant shall update and supplement such certifications, and the
22 disclosures contained therein, throughout the pendency of the application, including upon the
23 retention or authorization of any additional person subject to this requirement or any change in
24 the information previously provided. Any person appearing before the City Council, the CRA, or
25 any board or advisory body of the City on behalf of an applicant shall, prior to addressing such

1 body, verbally disclose on the record whether such person is a lobbyist and, if so, the principal on
2 whose behalf such person is appearing.

3 # # #

4 (3) Upon receipt of an application for development approval, the department shall proceed
5 as follows:

6 # # #

7 (b) The department shall conduct an initial review for completeness. If the department
8 determines that the application appears to be complete, the department shall proceed to a
9 substantive review of the application as set forth below. If during the substantive review of the
10 application, the department determines that additional plans, studies, information or similar
11 materials are needed to properly review the application, then the application shall return to the
12 completeness determination step. If at any time the department determines that the application is
13 not complete, the department shall notify the applicant what application components or
14 information have been found to be missing or deficient, whereupon the applicant shall provide
15 such missing or deficient components and information within 30 days from such notification. If the
16 applicant fails to provide such missing or deficient components and information within 30 days,
17 the application shall be deemed to be abandoned. Fees and charges paid at the time of
18 application shall be refunded, except that an administrative fee shall be retained, as provided in
19 the municipal facilities and services user fee schedule. For purposes of this subsection, an
20 application shall not be deemed complete unless the lobbyist certification(s) required under
21 subsection (2), including the disclosures contained therein, have been submitted and remain
22 current.

23 # # #

24 Section 2. If any section, subsection, clause or provision of this ordinance is held
25 invalid, the remainder shall not be affected by such invalidity.

1 Section 3. All ordinances and resolutions or parts of ordinances and resolutions and
2 all sections and parts of sections in conflict herewith shall be and hereby are repealed.

3 Section 4. Codification of this ordinance in the Code of Ordinances is hereby
4 authorized and directed.

5 Section 5. This ordinance shall take effect immediately upon adoption.

6 PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Boca Raton this ____ day
7 of May, 2026.

CITY OF BOCA RATON, FLORIDA

8
9
10 ATTEST:

11
12
13 _____
14 Andy Thomson, Mayor

15 _____
16 Mary Siddons, City Clerk

17 Approved as to form:

18
19 

20 _____
21 Joshua Pariente Koehler
22 City Attorney
23
24
25

COUNCIL MEMBER	YES	NO	ABSTAINED
MAYOR ANDY THOMSON			
DEPUTY MAYOR MICHELLE GRAU			
COUNCIL MEMBER YVETTE DRUCKER			
COUNCIL MEMBER JONATHAN PEARLMAN			
COUNCIL MEMBER STACY STIPPLE			