



TEXAS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

Empowering Texas cities to serve their citizens

President **Karen Hunt**, Mayor, Coppell
Executive Director **Bennett Sandlin**

April 20, 2021

The Honorable Joe Deshotel
Chairman, Land and Resource Management Committee
Texas House of Representatives
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, TX 78768-2910

Dear Chairman Deshotel:

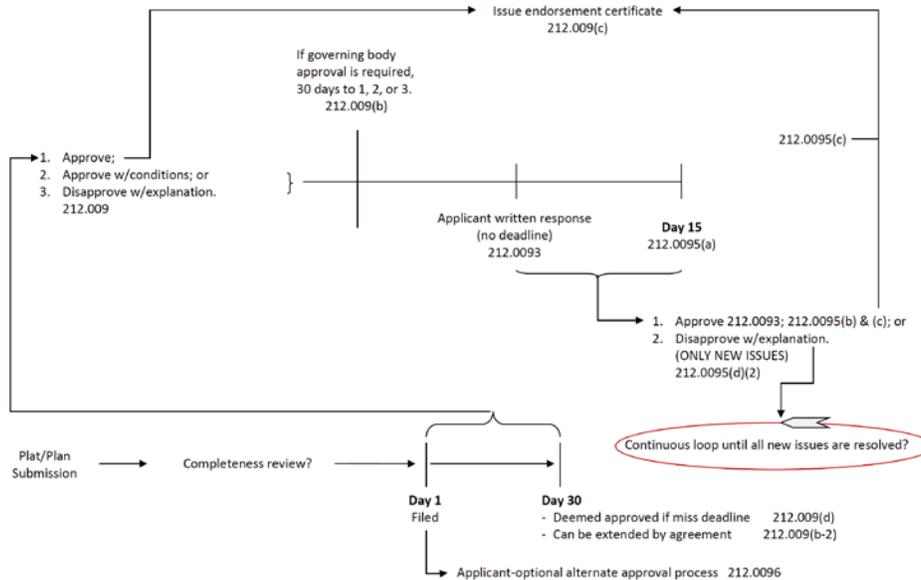
I am writing on behalf of the Texas Municipal League to express our opposition to **House Bill 4447** by **Oliverson**. The bill – like another your committee heard earlier this session – looks to be a “second bite at the apple” by one or a tiny handful of developers in a misguided attempt to speed up land development applications. The first bite was taken last session, and – in some cases – turned over decades of collaboration between cities and developers.

Those who seek the passage of this bill sought the passage of H.B. 3167 last session for the same reasons. Cities opposed the passage of H.B. 3167, which is now referred to as the “subdivision shot clock bill.” We also oppose H.B. 4447 because: (1) it is needlessly proscriptive and complex; and (2) it removes the flexibility of each city to collaborate with the development community based on local values and growth.

The subdivision shot clock bill was, by most accounts, wholly unsuccessful at forcing the targeted political subdivisions to expedite the approval of certain land development applications. In fact, the bill forced some to cities to develop extremely complicated procedures, whereby they denied most applications in a vicious cycle to avoid premature approval.

Following the passage of H.B. 3167, at the request of city attorneys and planners across the state, the Texas Municipal League hosted a meeting to discuss ways for cities to comply with its mandates. The following chart was subsequently prepared by League staff as part of a larger primer on the bill.

H.B. 3167 Development Approval Process



As you can see in the red circle, the 30- and 15-day “shot clocks” don’t speed up the process. Rather, they create a continuous loop of denials and re-submissions that do the exact opposite. House Bill 4447’s 14-page proposed committee substitute language is even more complicated. More words on paper rarely lead to faster processes in real life.

In the past, cities could work together with developers to speed up their projects. The process has always been a balancing act: cities expect quality development and developers want quick approvals. It’s been a balancing act that has made Texas the star of the nation.

The League and the Texas Association of Builders are actually working together to continue the implementation H.B. 3167. At this point, cities would rather continue doing that without new, complex legislation that will cause more problems than it will solve.

Sincerely,

Monty Wynn
Director, Grassroots and Legislative Services
Texas Municipal League