

Please Sign In and use this article's on page print button to print this article.

Commercial Real Estate

# Attorney: Phoenix development deadline extensions add flexibility amid pandemic 🔑



Jason Morris, partner at Withey Morris PLC law firm in Phoenix.

PROVIDED BY WITHEY MORRIS



By Corina Vanek Reporter, Phoenix Business Journal  
May 28, 2020, 12:00pm EDT

A move by the city of Phoenix to extend development deadlines in response to Covid-19 will give developers and businesses flexibility during uncertain times, a Phoenix attorney said.

Phoenix City Council approved extensions for several items, including preliminary plats, construction plan reviews, purchased permits, sign permits and permits for zoning adjustment.

“The ability to get work done takes time, it takes time for a sale to be made,” Jason Morris, partner at Withey Morris said. “All constituents are adapting to a new normal.”

With changes to operations at city halls and moving some consultations and other meetings to virtual setups, having extra flexibility will help people adapting to different working conditions, he said. Phoenix has been among the first cities to

lengthen the deadlines, but other cities in Arizona and nationwide are looking to follow suit. Other places that have opted to extend deadlines include the state of Massachusetts; Pasadena, California; Snohomish County, Washington; and several others around the country.

In Phoenix, changes include:

- Preliminary plats, which are currently required to obtain Council approval within 24 months, will be extended to 36 months.
- Projects given preliminary development approval between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020, will have three years from approval before they expire, an extension from the two-year deadline. If the project is phased, preliminary approval will be valid for up to four years.
- All active construction plan reviews from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020, will have up to two years to obtain approval from the date of submittal, up from one year.
- Construction projects that have purchased permits and those that have started construction after purchasing permits will be allowed three years before the permits expire, up from two.
- Sign permits, which usually expire in 180 days, will have an additional 180 days.

Morris said in general there was more worry and concern about looming deadlines than people who were actually backed into a corner over them, but he had some clients who had preliminary development reviews that were on the verge of expiring that will be aided by the extended deadlines.

The extension for sign permits has also been crucial, he said, for businesses that have had to get signs to notify customers of changes in operating hours, or businesses that were planning to open but have not yet been able to, so they know their sign permit will not expire.

As many offices remain closed and some deals have been put on ice, Morris said it is still a good time for property owners to look at ways to increase their property values, like through rezoning or other land use changes.

**Massive redevelopment planned in Old Town Scottsdale** 🔑



**Experts: Office investors still bullish on Phoenix, despite Covid-19** 🔑





Developer to Elon Musk: Bring Tesla to Arizona 🔑



Scottsdale real estate tech firm raises \$60 million 🔑

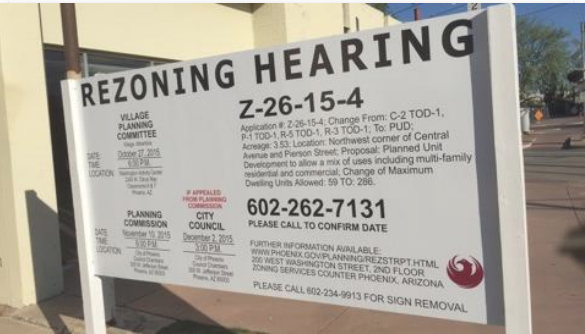


Scottsdale real estate consultant expands into marijuana industry 🔑



MORE FOR YOU

More >



Attorneys: Downturn amid Covid-19 may be good time to rezone property



Phoenix City Council votes unanimously to approve controversial \$85M condo tower



Idaho developer has eye on downtown Phoenix land for multifamily project



Two top office brokers move to JLL in Phoenix



Which towns and cities will be post-pandemic winners?



Opportunity zones and U.S. manufacturing drive economic recovery

Latest Listings

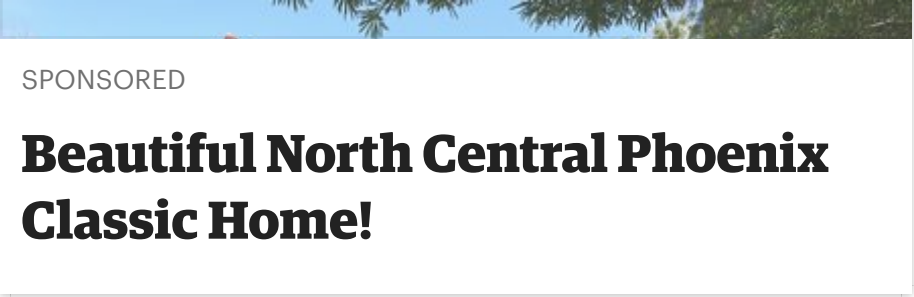
More >

HOME OF THE DAY

🏠 18

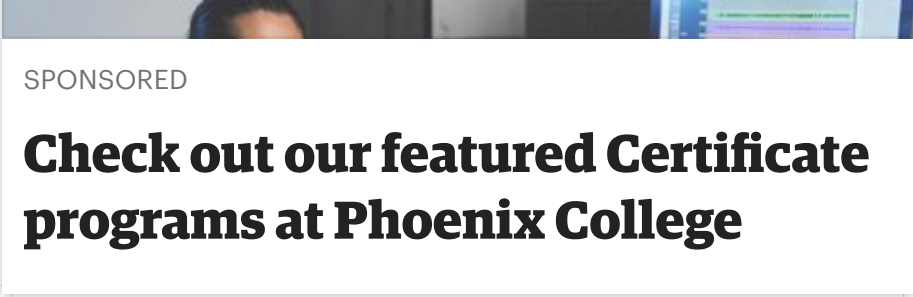
GRADUATION SHOWCASE

🏠 14



SPONSORED

**Beautiful North Central Phoenix  
Classic Home!**



SPONSORED

**Check out our featured Certificate  
programs at Phoenix College**

[Back to Top](#) ▲

PHOENIX **BUSINESS JOURNAL**

[User Agreement](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) [Your California Privacy Rights](#) | [Ad Choices](#)

© 2020 American City Business Journals. All rights reserved. Use of and/or registration on any portion of this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement (updated 1/1/20) and Privacy Policy and Cookie Statement (updated 1/1/20). The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise used, except with the prior written permission of American City Business Journals.