

To: Sandi Watkins, Planning & Inspections Director
From: Chad Meadows, CodeWright
Date: 3.17.24
CC: Cathy Campbell, Town Clerk; File
RE: Advance Morehead City - UDO codification options memorandum



MESSAGE

This is a memorandum that describes the discussions regarding codification of the Advance Morehead City UDO document following adoption. How the UDO is codified has a significant impact on the document's structure and appearance. Some local governments choose to use a third-party codifier like Civic Plus or American Legal Publishers to codify their UDO as part of a larger municipal code of ordinances. While this approach helps keep all the regulations in one document, it also can limit the appearance and functionality of a UDO. Third-party codifiers use a standardized typeface, uniform indentation format, a standardized paragraph numbering system, and the .html autoflow requirements result in disrupted table graphics that can make tables difficult to view on a computer screen.

Page 3 of the City's request for proposals for an updated UDO indicates that the UDO would likely be codified by Civic Plus as part of the City's current Code of Ordinances. At the same time, the RFP suggested that the updated UDO should include more graphics and summary tables than are found in the current UDO.

During contract formation, CodeWright and City staff discussed the City's desire for the updated UDO to include more graphics and tables while at the same time continuing to use a third-party codifier for codification of the adopted UDO. The CodeWright team suggested that some communities choose to self-codify their development regulations and simply maintain a cross reference to these regulations in the code of ordinances. This approach allows a local government to maintain more control over UDO page layout, numbering scheme, use of color text, and how tables will appear in the on-line version of the document. City staff agreed to further discussions about the possibility of self-codification of the UDO during Task 1 of the project.

City staff and the consulting team had a conversation about the codification issue on February 12, 2024. The focus of the conversation was whether or not City staff wished to use a third-party codifier or to self-codify the UDO. In the event that the City opted for a third-party codifier, CodeWright staff would format the UDO in ways that would mimic, as closely as possible, the standardized Civic Plus fonts, indentation, and numbering scheme. In the event the City opted to self-codify, CodeWright would follow its typical Microsoft style set establishment process with unique typefaces, colors, indentation, and numbering prepared solely for the City.





As part of the conversation on February 12, City staff and the CodeWright team conducted a short video conference with Civic Plus staff to understand the ramifications to the current City Code of Ordinance in the event the UDO was removed from the City Code and self-codified as a stand alone document (with cross references to the updated UDO). Civic Plus staff also provided some examples of other visually-dynamic codes they had prepared, including one for High Point, North Carolina (where CodeWright was a primary author).

After a review of the examples from Civic Plus and further discussion, City staff and the CodeWright team made the following decisions about the Advance Morehead City UDO:

1. Morehead City will self-codify the updated UDO and ask Civic Plus to include a cross reference and link, as appropriate, in the City's Code of Ordinances.
2. Morehead City will serve a pdf version of the updated UDO on the City's webpage after adoption of the document.
3. CodeWright will prepare a unique style set, complete with colored typefaces, a unique numbering system, custom indentation, and multi-page formatted tables that blend images and text in the same cells in the updated UDO.
4. CodeWright will develop Microsoft Word style settings unique to Morehead City and that are configured to ensure easy maintenance and conversion to pdf format following any subsequent amendments of the UDO text.
5. Morehead City staff will provide guidance to the CodeWright team on page layout, typeface colors, numbering, and similar aspects during the Code Diagnosis and UDO drafting portions of the project.
6. CodeWright will provide training to City staff on Microsoft style sets and document amendment protocols to ensure City staff can maintain the updated UDO after adoption.
7. These decisions may be revisited at any time throughout the process of developing the updated UDO.

