Information Bulletin -
SHX Annotations in Plan Submittals

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A high number of plans are being submitted to the City of Franklin with hundreds or even thousands of annotations in the pdf files submitted for review. The annotations are the result of text that was created using a "SHX font" being converted to annotations when exported to PDF. The annotations slow down the plan review process and cause some of our pdf viewers to crash when trying to view the plans. Staff will begin declining submittal of plans that have these annotations created by the SHF text font. The following information provides applicants simple steps to turn off the feature in AutoCAD that creates the annotations.

SHX Annotations in Plan Submittals

Beginning in AutoCAD 2016 a new feature was introduced where any text that was created using SHX fonts would be converted to annotations when exported to PDF files. This was a creative way to enable text searching on non-standard fonts within the resulting pdf file. While this seems like a great tool from a product development standpoint, it quickly became apparent that this caused huge problems in the real world. PDF files were being generated with tens of thousands of annotations, most of which consisted of only a single letter or number. That doesn't provide much value when it comes to indexing or searching a pdf file and the excessive annotations very frequently cause industry leading pdf viewers such as Adobe Reader and Adobe Acrobat to crash.

In response to community feedback AutoDesk quickly released an update that allows you to turn this feature off. Follow the instructions below to turn off this feature and significantly improve your pdf output.

1. Open AutoCAD
2. From the command prompt type "EPDFSHX" and press enter
3. Enter 0 to turn the feature off and press enter

That's it! The next pdf file that you export will automatically convert SHX fonts to geometry and prevent the explosion of pdf annotations.