Permitting Process

Introduction

This document will help applicants understand the process of applying for permits from the City of Columbia. Included is information about permit applications, plan review, permit fees, the steps involved when phasing building projects, and other information necessary to obtain permits.

Applications for permits are obtained from Building and Site Development on the third floor of City Hall, or can be found online at http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/community-development/bsd/building-permits/. Direct links for a variety of permit types can also be found in this document.

See Construction Calculator and Building Permit Fee Schedule for fee information.

Licensing

Permit applicants must obtain a City of Columbia Contractor License prior to issuance of a building permit. Please contact the City of Columbia Business License office at 573-874-7378, or visit Business Licenses and Permits. Applicants for trade permits (Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing) must also be licensed by the City of Columbia as masters of the trade. For more information, contact Building and Site Development at 573-874-7474 or go to **Trade Licensing**.
(A homeowner may obtain a permit for work on their own home if the requirements of the Owner Affidavit are fulfilled)

Request for Installation of new Water and Light Services

In addition to other permit requirements all persons desiring water or electric service connections to new or previously un-served facilities must provide a **service application** to the Water and Light Department located on the fourth floor of City Hall at 701 E. Broadway. The information required for this application is contained in the **Columbia Water and Light Service Manual.**

NOTE: TO AVOID PROJECT DELAYS IT IS IMPERATIVE TO CONTACT THE WATER AND LIGHT DEPARTMENT PERTAINING TO UTILITY DESIGN AND SERVICE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE.

What Requires a Permit?

Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert, or replace any electrical, gas mechanical or plumbing system must obtain a permit.

Permit Exceptions –

1. One-story detached accessory structures used as tool/storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area does not exceed 120 square feet for commercial uses or 200 square feet for single family uses.
2. Fences not over 6 feet (commercial) or 12 feet (residential) in height.
3. Retaining walls that are not over 4 feet (1219 mm) in height measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or IIIA liquids.
4. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops, and similar finish work.
5. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a single family occupancy that are less than 24 inches (610mm) deep, do not exceed 5,000 gallons (18 925 L) and are installed entirely above ground.
6. Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes.
7. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family *dwellings*.
8. Window *awnings* supported by an *exterior wall* which do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the *exterior wall* and do not require additional support, for single family and utility occupancies.
9. Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches (1753 mm) in height.

Land Disturbance Permit

City Ordinance defines Land disturbance as any activity, including mechanized clearing, which removes the vegetative cover. This includes:

1. Clearing, grubbing, and earthmoving on private property
2. Activities not associated with a specific development plan, such as fill in the regulatory flood plain, stockpiling, earth/topsoil removal, etc.
3. Construction of parking lots, detention basins, retaining walls, etc.
4. Major utility construction
5. Sites larger than 1 acre shall be accompanied by a detailed site development plan which shall include, a tree preservation plan, a landscaping plan, a soil erosion control plan, and a stormwater management plan conforming to the provisions of this chapter. Where practical, drawings may be combined to contain all of the required plans.
6. An application for a land disturbance permit shall be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of two hundred dollars ($200.00). This requirement shall not apply to plot plan applications for sites one (1) acre or less or for individual lots in R-1 and R-2 zoned developments.

Suspension of Permit - A permit may be suspended if no activity has been recorded or substantial progress has not been made for six months. The permit can be suspended if issued in error or on the basis of incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete information, or in violation of any ordinance or regulation.

Clean Fill Permit

Clean fill. Uncontaminated soil, rock, sand, gravel, concrete, asphaltic concrete, cinder-blocks, brick, minimal amounts of wood and metal, and inert solids which are approved by rule or policy of the State Department of Natural Resources for fill, reclamation or other beneficial use.

Application must be made for clean fill permits subject to the following parameters:

1. No clean fill permit shall be issued unless an application for such permit has been filed which sets forth the location and street address of the clean fill site and the name and address of the legal owner of the clean fill site.

2. No clean fill permit shall be issued on sites two (2) acres or larger unless all applicable requirements of a land disturbance permit are satisfied.

3. No clean fill permit shall be issued on sites less than two (2) acres unless the application for the permit sets forth reasonable and effective methods to control erosion and to keep adjacent streets and properties free from the clean fill and any mud or other material from the clean fill site.

One and Two Family Building Permit

All new One and Two Family structures or Townhouses (Single Family Attached) require the following for approval:

1. Completed One and Two Family Building Permit Application.

2. Land Disturbance Permit
   A. Plot Plan stamped/sealed by an engineer or surveyor licensed in the State of Missouri and including a 100-year flood plain verification statement. The property address must be shown on the plot plan.
      Lots that are located in a flood plain must be accompanied by a flood plain development permit application.
      Sample verification statement:
      This tract is not located within the 100 year flood plain as per the Boone County FIRM Map #___, dated _____.
   B. Structure must be accurately depicted on the lot with dimensions of buildings and setbacks from property lines.
   C. Show driveway location.
   D. Show location and width of sidewalk.
   E. The proposed low floor elevation in feet above or below the top of curb in front of the lot must be depicted. Two curb elevations must be given on the front of the lot.
   F. All easements must be depicted.
   G. Show all manholes/cleanouts, mains and laterals on the lot. Sewer tap must be more than 5’ from any manhole or cleanout.

Residential Alteration Permit

Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change occupancy of a building or structure must obtain a permit. The permit

may be obtained by a licensed contractor or a homeowner who intends to live in the residence for at least 1 year. (Owner Affidavit). Typical uses of this permit are remodeling, finishing basements, re-roofing, additions, decks, etc.

Demolition Permit

Requirements for a permit to demolish a structure are as follows:

1. Completed Demolition Permit Application.
2. Intent to demolish sign will be posted on the property for **ten working days** by City staff.
3. Utility disconnect certificates for gas, water and electric. (From Utility provider)
4. Sewer tap inspection by City Sewer Maintenance Division. (874-6287)
5. For occupancy **other than** one and two family dwelling, submit copies of written notice to adjoining property (lot) owners of intent to demolish the building. To be delivered one week prior to commencement of work.
6. Refundable $2,000.00 cash bond.

Commercial Building Permit and Phased Approval Process

For new commercial buildings and additions the applicant must determine the permit type when the application and plans are submitted. Permit types are explained below. The requirements for each phase must be satisfied before proceeding to a higher phase. If requirements of all phases are met in the beginning a full building permit will be issued.

1. Land Disturbance Permit ($200.00 fee if over 1 acre)
   A. Three sets of site plans on 24” x 36” sheets. Site plans include grading plans, erosion control plans, landscaping plans, stormwater management plans and calculations.
   B. Completed Land Disturbance Permit application and fee if applicable..
   C. Provide proof of MDNR permit and SWPPP if required (Currently for disturbed areas of one acre or larger).
   D. Required easements, covenants, calculations, etc.
   E. Completed and signed flood plain development permit application if applicable..

2. Footing and Foundation Permit ($54.00 fee)
   A. Completed Footing/Foundation permit application.
   B. Approved site documents. (Make sure to include transformer location, electric meter center locations, water mains/service locations and sizes)
   C. Approved soil report.
   D. Approved structural calculations.

3. Building Shell
   A. Completed Footing /Foundation Permit Application and Commercial Building Permit Application.
   B. Approved plans for anything over and above the exterior envelope of the building. (eg: elevator shaft, public bathrooms, electrical rooms, etc.)
   C. Approved mechanical, electrical, and plumbing plans for any of these areas.

4. Building Permit/Interior Finish
    A. Completed Commercial Building Permit Application.
    B. Approved Architectural drawings.
    C. Approved Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing drawings.
    D. Complete set of specifications if applicable.

Trade Permits—Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing

Trade permits are required to erect, install, enlarge, alter , repair, remove, convert, or replace any electrical, gas mechanical or plumbing system. This does not include replacement of fixtures. Permit applicants must obtain both a City of Columbia Contractor License and Master Trade License prior to issuance of a building permit. (An Owner Affidavit may be filled out allowing the owner to perform trade work on their own residence.)

Right of Way Permit

A right of way permit is needed anytime work is performed within the public right of way or easement. The right of way typically includes the grass area between the property line and the curb. A right of way permit is needed for constructing or reconstructing sidewalks, driveways, and street cuts for utility or sewer work. Permits are also needed to perform grading or construction within drainage easements. Work such as storm pipe extensions and bank stabilization also require a permit. All work must be completed in conformance with the applicable city specifications and standards. Should work in the right of way require the temporary closure or partial closure of a street or sidewalk, please refer to the **Checklist for Short-Term Street Closures for Construction Projects and Repairs**. If the work is in the downtown area bordered by Garth Avenue, Park Avenue, College Avenue, and Elm Street, there are additional requirements. For questions regarding right of way permits, contact Building and Site Development at 573-874-7474.

Right of Use Permit

A right of use permit is needed anytime a non City standard item is placed within the right-of-way. A right of use permit is not needed for constructing or reconstructing sidewalks, driveways, and street cuts for utility or sewer work, if City standards and specifications are followed. Right of use permits are needed for but not limited to the following: over hanging balconies, stamped and/or colored concrete, and subdivision entrance signs. There is no fee associated with a right of use permit although it does go to City Council for approval. For questions regarding right of use permits, contact Building and Site Development at 573-874-7474.

Sanitary Sewer Extension Permit

A sanitary sewer extension permit is needed anytime a sanitary sewer main is extended to reach a tract of land or if a significant portion of a sanitary sewer main is replaced. The cost of the permit is paid during the first plan submittal. This permit helps the City keep inventory of the size, type of pipe, manholes etc… of the sanitary sewer system. Appropriate sanitary sewer extension plans must be submitted along with the application. This is not a fee for a lateral or service line to tap into the sewer main.

Flood Plain Development Permit

A Flood Plain Development Permit is needed anytime work is performed within a regulatory flood plain. The City participates in the National Flood Insurance Program which requires city ordinance and enforcement of flood plain development regulations. The boundaries of the flood plains are established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Flood plain maps are published by FEMA. The Community Development Department reviews applications for flood plain development. Any land disturbing activity within the regulatory flood plain requires a permit. The city ordinances pertaining to flood plain regulations are found in Section 29-22 of the City's Code of Ordinances. For information regarding flood plain development permits, contact Building and Site Development at 573-874-7474.

Sign Permit

The sign ordinance regulates the type, size, and placement of both residential and commercial signs within the City of Columbia. A permit is required prior to the erection, construction, reconstruction, alteration, moving, conversion, or maintenance of any sign unless explicitly exempted by the regulations.

The purpose of the sign ordinance is:

- To allow for the effective use of signs as a means of communication in the city
- To maintain and enhance the city's ability to attract sources of economic development and growth
- To improve pedestrian and traffic safety
- To minimize possible adverse effects of signs on nearby property
- To bring all signs into compliance with the adopted regulations
- To enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these signs regulation
- To maintain and enhance the appearance of the community

Feel free to call 573-874-7474 if you have any questions regarding sign regulations or to discuss the permitting process. The complete Sign Regulations can be found in Chapter 23 of the City's Code of Ordinances.

Required Fire Systems Permits:

-Sprinkler System-An application for sprinkler systems must be submitted for all new installations and alterations. Plans must be submitted and approved and the permit must be obtained prior to installation.

-Fire Alarm and Detection System-An application for alarm and detection systems must be submitted for all new installations and alterations. Plans must be submitted and approved and the permit must be obtained prior to installation.

-Fixed Suppression System-An application for fixed suppression systems must be submitted for all new installations and alterations. Plans must be submitted and approved and the permit must be obtained prior to installation.

Open Burning and Blasting Operations - Applications for permits relating to blasting or open burning are obtained through the Fire Department. Monday through Friday call 573-874-7556. Saturday and Sunday call 573-874-7450.

Food Service Establishments - Permits for the operation of a food service establishment are obtained through the Health Department. 573-817-6407

Guidelines for Temporary Food Facilities-All temporary and seasonal food stands must have a current Columbia/Boone County Department of Public Health and Human Services Permit and City Business License. Temporary facilities require a separate permit for each event and location. The City business license is valid for a maximum of 14 days. Please contact the City of Columbia Business License office, 573-874-7378, or visit http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Finance/Services/blord.php.

Guidelines for Mobile Food Vendors-All mobile vendors must have a current Columbia/Boone County Health Department Permit. A City of Columbia Business License is also required. Please contact the City of Columbia Business License office, 573-874-7378, or visit http://www.gocolumbiamo.com/Finance/Services/blord.php.

Swimming Pools and Aquatic Facilities

In addition to plan reviews and inspections conducted by the City of Columbia for code compliance, the Health Department regulates swimming pools. Periodic inspections and an annual permit fee for the operation of all aquatic facilities other than those installed at single family residences is also required. Pools built for a home association or commercial enterprises in single-family subdivisions are also regulated by the Health Department. These pools will require the approval of a conditional use permit by the Board of Adjustment. Contact the Planning Department at 573-874-7239 for approval procedures.

Adopted Codes

All ordinances and requirements of the city are contained in the Columbia Code of Ordinances (CCO). The CCO adopts by reference nationally recognized construction codes with any amendments. The following is a short summary of relevant chapters of the CCO regulating development activity and related codes adopted by reference:

Chapter 6 - Buildings and Building Regulations (Adopted codes and amendments)

- International Building Code
- International Residential Code
- International Energy Conservation Code
- International Property Maintenance Code
- International Plumbing Code
- International Mechanical Code
- National Electrical Code
- International Fire Code
- International Fuel Gas Code
- International Fire Code

Chapter 9-Fire Prevention and Protection

Chapter 11- Health and Sanitation
Chapter 12A-Land Preservation
(Development Fee)