City of Columbia, MO - Electronic File Submittal Standards

This document is a guide for applicants submitting electronic files online through City of Columbia's Citizen Self Service (CSS) portal found on the City's website at www.como.gov. This web portal allows applicants to apply anytime, from anyplace with an internet connection.

All documents submitted through the CSS portal must be in Portable Document Format (PDF).[1] PDF is the industry standard for electronic plans. PDF files must be properly formatted as described below. **Please read the following instructions carefully. Improperly formatted plans can delay the plan review process and approval of your project or plan.**

PDF FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

- Files must be unlocked or unprotected so that corrections may be identified by City staff. A digital signature with electronic authentication process attached to the document shall <u>not</u> be used. Any submittal containing a file that is locked or protected will be considered incomplete and must be resubmitted.
- The seal may be a computer-generated image, identical in size, design and content or a scanned, accurate depiction of the licensee's seal, and is to appear on all sheets.
- A scanned signature is acceptable if it is an accurate depiction of the licensee's actual signature, and is to appear on all sheets.
- Multiple-sheet PDFs are required (a single file with multiple sheets), not separate a PDF per sheet. PDFs are to be uploaded in the "file sets" in CSS.
- Zip files and PDF packages/portfolios will not accepted.
- After creating the pdf or printing to pdf, ensure there are no unintended, overlapping viewports that obscure the drawing when using measurement tools in Bluebeam Revu. (These viewports are sometimes created by the PDF creation software, and should be removed before submitting.).
- Files must not contain multiple drawing layers and must be fully flattened.
- All plan sheets must be landscape orientation, i.e. the top of the sheet corresponds with the top of the computer monitor.
- All reports must be rotated so that the pages are upright.
- Vector-based files are required. Raster-based files will be acceptable on a case by case basis. (See Q&A Section below)
- Drawings must be to scale (engineer or architect scale).
- Plan sheet size shall be consistent across all disciplines.
- True type fonts must be used. Files must not contain any SHX text objects which show up as markups in the PDF. (SHX text objects can result when plotting PDF files from CAD programs.)
- All text shall be readable and no font shall be smaller than 10 point or equivalent.
- Files must be submitted in black and white, however a minimal amount of color will be acceptable.
- Each sheet must be labeled to clearly identify the content of the page, e.g. *Sheet A1.0 Architectural Site Plan*.
- A minimum 2" x 2" space must be left blank near the lower right-hand corner of all drawing sheets for City staff to apply an approval stamp. (See Q&A Section below)
- Each sheet needs to include the project name and address.
- Non-drawing documents (e.g. reports, calculations, specifications, etc.) must be submitted as separate files.

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[1] An option does exist for uploading of non-PDF documents using the Miscellaneous Files category, but non-PDFs should only be submitted when specifically requested by City staff or in other special cases.

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FILE NAMING CONVENTIONS

Naming files to properly describe the file's contents will help keep review cases organized and will reduce the potential for delay-causing mix-ups. Mistakes are reduced when the applicant uploads files, and City staff will more easily be able to organize uploaded files. Best practices would be to name your files to describe the contents of the document.

Examples include:

Site/Civil Plans.pdf	Landscape Plan.pdf (if not included in Site/Civil)
BMP Covenant.pdf	Stormwater Drainage Calcs.pdf
SWPPP.pdf	Easement Documents.pdf
Stormwater Water Quality Calcs	Stormwater Drainage Calcs.pdf
Building Plans.pdf	Geotechnical Report.pdf
Energy Code Compliance report.pdf	Structural Calcs.pdf
Specifications.pdf	Request for Deferred Submittal.pdf
Schedule of Special Inspections	Fire Sprinkler Plans.pdf
Fixed Suppression Plans.pdf	Fire Alarm Plans.pdf

ADDITIONAL PREFERENCES - NOT CURRENTLY REQUIRED.

- Search https://www.bluebeam.com/ for many helpful how-to videos, webinars, and additional information.

Bluebeam Extreme (https://www.bluebeam.com/) **is required to perform the following batch processes:**

- Getting Started: Drawing Management.
  - Learn about a brief overview here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Io0eizVCJXk
- Create Bookmarks and Batchlinking with page numbers and page title.
  - Learn about bookmarks here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5P-rbYixZUE

FORMATTING Q & A

Question: Why does the City of Columbia only accept PDF format for most documents?
Answer: The Bluebeam Revu software being utilized for plan review markups utilizes the PDF format. In addition, the City of Columbia is responsible for maintaining records of plans and providing the public with access to them. Files kept in our electronic database must be compatible with a wide range of computer software for storage, viewing, and printing.

Question: How do I perform required formatting of PDFs, such as combining multiple PDFs into a single file?
Answer: Modern CAD programs include the ability to create PDF drawings with the required settings. In addition, free PDF tools are available online which can create, merge, rotate, and rearrange PDF files. However, the City of Columbia recommends design professionals use Bluebeam Revu, the same PDF software that City staff uses to view, review and markup PDF documents. This software contains excellent document markup functionality and is specifically intended for the design and construction sectors.

Question: Are raster-based PDF files acceptable?
Answer: Yes, but all submitted drawings must meet PDF formatting requirements. Vector-based files are preferred.
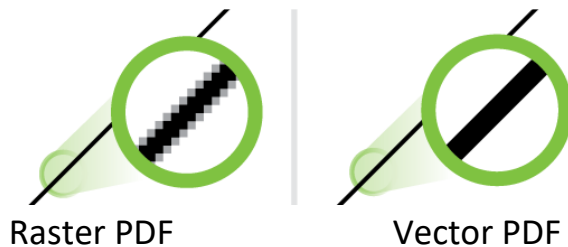
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Question: What is the difference between Raster and Vector files?
Answer: Depending how a PDF is created, it can be either a Raster or a Vector file. A raster image is comprised of a series of square dots called pixels which form a complete image. Each pixel is separately defined. One example of a raster PDF is a file created from scanning paper documents. A vector file uses line segments and shapes to define the PDF content. Most PDFs created directly from CAD programs are vector-based. The City prefers vector PDFs created from the CAD source as opposed to raster PDFs created from scans, as they make it easier to perform plan review tasks such as taking measurements and snapping to content.


Raster PDF   Vector PDF

HELPFUL LINKS

Question: Where do I get permitting, plan review or inspection help?
Answer: Follow this link: https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/

Question: Where do I go for business license or general contractor information?
Answer: Follow this link: https://www.como.gov/finance/business-licenses/

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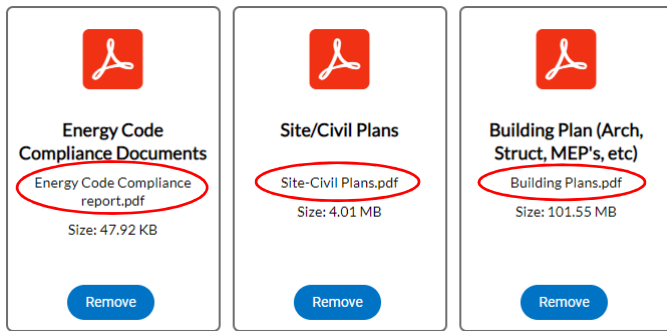
File naming examples in Citizen Self-Service

✓ **Correct**

Plans.pdf (multiple sheets)

✓ **Correct**

Blank space for City Staff approval stamp

✓ **Correct**

Incorrect sheet size, scale, or margins will not be accepted

Color plans will not be accepted

Incorrect orientation will not be accepted

The applicant is responsible for compliance with all codes and regulations, whether or not described in this document.
More information: City of Columbia, Community Development | Building & Site Development | www.como.gov (573) 874-7474.

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