

Permitting Process Help Document

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 online through the Citizen Self-Service (CSS) web portal <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>

eReviews – Electronic Review of Permits and Construction Documents

The CSS web portal allows applicants such as design professionals and contractors to apply for permits online, from anywhere with an internet connection, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Applicants simply set up a CSS account with their contact information, confirm their email address, and are then ready to apply online.

- Instructions for applying for a permit can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>

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 <https://www.como.gov/finance/business-licenses/>. Applicants for trade permits (Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing) must also be licensed by the City of Columbia as masters of the trade (unless otherwise allowed by law). For more information, contact Building and Site Development at 573-874-7474 or go to <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>.

- A homeowner may obtain a permit for work on their own home if the requirements of the Owner Affidavit are fulfilled. Permit application can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>

Request for Installation of new Water and Light Services

To avoid project delays it is imperative to contact the Water and Light Department pertaining to utility design and service as early as possible. Contacts can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/utilities/>

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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 and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses, provided the floor area is not greater than 120 square feet for commercial uses or 200 square feet for single family uses.
2. Fences not over 7 feet high for commercial or 7 feet high for residential.
3. Oil derricks.
4. 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.
5. Water tanks supported directly on grade if the capacity is not greater than 5,000 gallons (18 925 L) and the ratio of height to diameter or width is not greater than 2:1.
6. Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above adjacent grade, and not over any basement or story below and are not part of an accessible route.
7. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops and similar finish work.
8. Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
9. Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R-3 occupancy that are less than 24 inches (610mm) deep, are not greater than 5,000 gallons (18 925 L) and are installed entirely above ground.
10. Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes, not including service systems.
11. Swings and other playground equipment accessory to detached one- and two-family dwellings.
12. Window awnings in single family, Group R-3 and U occupancies, supported by an exterior wall that do not project more than 54 inches (1372 mm) from the exterior wall and do not require additional support.
13. Nonfixed and movable fixtures, cases, racks, counters and partitions not over 5 feet 9 inches (1753 mm) in height.

Time limitation of application

An application for a permit for any proposed work shall be deemed to have been abandoned 180 days after the date of filing, unless such application has been pursued in good faith or a permit has been issued; except that the building official is authorized to grant one or more extensions of time for additional periods not exceeding 90 days each. The extensions shall be requested in writing and justifiable cause demonstrated.

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Expiration of Permit

Every permit issued shall become invalid unless the work on the site authorized by such permit is commenced within 180 days after its issuance, or if the work is authorized on the site by such permit is suspended or abandoned for a period of 180 days after the time the work is commenced. The building official is authorized to grant, in writing, one or more extensions of time, for periods not more than 180 days each. The extensions shall be requested in writing and justifiable cause demonstrated.

Suspension or revocation of Permit

The building official is authorized to suspend or revoke a permit issued under the provisions of this code wherever the permit is issued in error or on the basis of incorrect, inaccurate or incomplete information, or in violation of any ordinance or regulation or any of the provisions of this code.

Placement of permit

The building permit or copy shall be kept on site of the work until the completion of the project.

Common Permit fees

The applicant for a permit shall provide an estimated permit value at the time of application. Permit valuations shall include total value of work, including materials and labor, for which the permit is being issued, such as electrical, gas, mechanical, plumbing equipment and permanent systems. For additional fee information, refer to “Building Permit Fee Calculator” and “Building Permit Fee Schedule”. No application fee is required at the time of application.

- **New Buildings and Additions**

City staff calculate permit fees for new commercial buildings using the building’s square footage, construction type and occupancy use, and the International Code Council building valuation data tables. The tables establish a cost per square foot. Once staff determine the project valuation, we multiply it by the permit fee multiplier, which is .0025. The fee is rounded to the nearest dollar.

- **Mixed-use buildings**

Provide a breakdown of each use group and construction type by square foot.

- **Alterations and Repairs**

Applicants shall provide the project valuation, including the total value of all the construction work, except the value of the land for which the permit will be issued. Once staff determine the project valuation, we multiply it by the permit fee multiplier, which is .0025. The fee is rounded to the nearest dollar.

- **Site development**

When an applicant submit site development plans before construction plans, a separate permit fee is required.

When an applicant includes site development plans for a new commercial construction project, the project valuation derived from the International Code Council tables includes the site development work. If the contractor requests a separate land disturbance permit prior to full

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building permit approval, a separate permit and permit fee is required.

Entire Building Demolition Permit

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

- Application for a permit can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>
- Intent to demolish sign will be posted on the property for **ten working days** by City staff.
- Utility disconnect certificates for gas, water and electric. (From Utility provider)
- Sewer tap inspection by City Sewer Maintenance Division. (874-6287)
- 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.
- Refundable \$2,000.00 cash bond.

Land Disturbance Permit

- Additional information and application can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>.

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

- Clearing, grubbing, and earthmoving on private property
- Activities not associated with a specific development plan, such as fill in the regulatory flood plain, stockpiling, earth/topsoil removal, etc.
- Construction of parking lots, detention basins, retaining walls, etc.
- Major utility construction
- 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.
- 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.

Clean Fill Permit

Clean fill is defined as 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.

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- 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.

Residential

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. Application for a permit can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/> and shall include:
 - 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 Floodplain Development Application Permit. Application can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/> under Site Development heading.

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

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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. The Owner Affidavit application can be found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>. Typical uses of this permit are remodeling, finishing basements, re-roofing, additions, decks, etc.

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. Typically only a “Commercial Building – Alteration” building permit is applied for as there is no need for a phased process. The 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. Apply online thru the CSS portal
 - B. Site plans include grading plans, erosion control plans, landscaping plans, stormwater management plans and calculations
 - 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 Floodplain Development Permit application if applicable
2. Footing and Foundation Permit
 - A. Apply online thru the CSS portal
 - B. Site documents. (Make sure to include transformer location, electric meter center locations, water mains/service locations and sizes)
 - C. Geotechnical report
 - D. Structural calculations
 - E. Foundation plan and details
 - F. Schedule of Special Inspections form found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>
3. Building Permit for New Commercial, Multi-family, Addition or Alteration (typical documents listed below)
 - A. Apply online thru the CSS portal
 - A. Architectural drawings
 - B. Structural drawings
 - C. Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing drawings
 - D. Complete set of specifications, if applicable
 - E. Energy Code Compliance Documents.
 - F. Geotechnical report

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- G. Structural calculations
- H. Schedule of Special Inspections form found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>
- I. Refer to the Initial Screening Process (ISP) Help Document found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>

Multiple Buildings on a Site

A land disturbance permit with all supporting documentation shall be applied for separately. Typically this application is made for before any building permit applications are received. Then each building shall be applied for, reviewed, approved and permitted separately. The reviews can occur concurrently, however the applications for permits must be separate.

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. Permit not required for replacement of fixtures. Permit applicants must obtain both a City of Columbia Contractor License and Master Trade License (unless otherwise allowed by law) 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

The Right of Way permit application and information can be found here:

<https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>

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

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submitted along with the application. This is not a fee for a lateral or service line to tap into the sewer main. Go to www.como.gov/utilities/ for information.

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

Call (573) 874-7474 if you have 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. If work is associated with an active building permit, a "sub-record" must be applied for through the building permit on CSS. Refer to instructions found here: <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/> and select Citizen Self Service Portal.

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- **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 - Friday call (573) 874-7556. Saturday and Sunday call (573) 874-7450.

Health Department

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 www.como.gov/finance/business-licenses/

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 www.como.gov/finance/business-licenses/

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

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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)

Refer to codes listed on <https://www.como.gov/community-development/building-site-development/>

Chapter 9 - Fire Prevention and Protection

Chapter 11 - Health and Sanitation

Chapter 12A - Land Preservation

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