

Minor Site Plan Review

Minor site plans are reviewed and approved administratively by the Planning Division located on the 4th floor of City Hall. On average, the minor site plan review process takes about 2-6 weeks depending upon the complexity of the project and the completeness and accuracy of the application.

Guidelines to qualify for minor site plan review are:

- New structures and additions under 10,000 sq. ft.
- Any new parking area for less than 50 cars.
- Construction of a temporary parking area or paving of an existing parking area in excess of 1,000 sq. ft.
- Alteration of a drainage area.
- Two-family house.
- Change in the use of between 5,000 and 10,000 sq. ft. of an existing building (cumulatively within a 3-year period).
- Building additions up to 10,000 sq. ft (cumulatively within a 3-year period).

Major Site Plan Review

Major site plans are reviewed and approved by the Planning Board. Planning Board workshops and public hearings are held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month. Submissions are required a minimum of two weeks in advance. Once your project has been scheduled for a Planning Board workshop, the major site plan review process takes an average of about 6 weeks depending upon the complexity of the project and the completeness and accuracy of the application. A performance guarantee is required. Residents and property owners within 500 feet of the proposed development are notified, and a legal advertisement is placed at the applicant's expense.

Guidelines for major site plan review are:

- New construction over 10,000 sq. ft.
- Parking lot for over 50 cars.
- Building addition over 10,000 sq. ft. (cumulatively within a 3-year period).
- Change of use of over 10,000 sq. ft. (cumulatively within a 3-year period).
- A structure intended for industrial use over 45 ft. high.
- The conversion of a two-family to a three-family house.
- Subdivisions, including multi-family housing.

In order to be sure the City understands the full scope of the project, additional information may be requested prior to the issuance of a permit.

Site plan exemption application
should be filed for additions less than 500 sq. ft.

Interior construction & change of use
under 5000 sq. ft. does not require a site plan review

Submissions need to include:

- A copy of the floor plan showing dimensions to scale.
- A copy of the construction detail.
- A cover letter explaining the project in detail.

Steps to Obtain Your Building Permit

1 Obtain a general building permit application

General building permit applications can be found on-line at www.portlandmaine.gov or in the Inspections office in room 315 at Portland City Hall, 389 Congress Street.

2 Submit the completed application with 9 sets of a complete site plan

In addition, submit one (1) set of construction drawings which need to include:

- Cross-sections with framing details.
- Detail of any new walls or permanent partitions.
- Floor plans and elevations.
- Window and door schedules.
- Foundation plans with required drainage and damp proofing (if applicable).
- Electrical and plumbing layout.
- Mechanical drawings for any specialized equipment such as furnaces, chimneys, gas equipment, HVAC equipment (air handling) or other types of work that may require special review.
- A copy of the building plan on 11" x 17" paper or a pdf file.

3 Obtain separate plumbing, HVAC & electrical permits

Separate permits are required for any internal and external plumbing, HVAC and electrical installations. State law requires a Maine-licensed master electrician or plumber to perform the work and apply for the necessary permits.

4 Pay the required building permit fees

The building permit fee is based on the total construction cost of the project.

- A base fee of \$30.00 covers the first \$1,000 of construction. A \$10.00 fee is charged for each additional \$1000 of building costs.
- The minor site plan review fee is \$400.00. The major site plan review fee is \$500.00
- The engineering review fee for minor site plan review is \$100. For major site plans, a service fee deposit of \$200. will be charged to cover the initial first four hours of staff time. After the time has been expended, the applicant will receive a monthly invoice for review services rendered.

5 Receive a permit

Once you receive approval and all conditions are met, a performance guarantee must be posted for the cost of improvements required in the public right-of-way. The City will then issue a building permit and you can begin construction.

6 Complete your project

You must begin construction within six months and continue to work on the project and not have a construction lapse of more than 180 days (six months) to avoid permit expiration. During the construction process you will be required to have periodic inspections which will be outlined by the Inspections Staff in your required pre-construction meeting.

7 Obtain your final inspection & then your Certificate of Occupancy

When your work is complete, you need to call the Inspections Office to schedule your final inspection. When all final inspections have been successfully completed, if required, the Building Inspector may issue a Certificate of Occupancy.

We're Here To Help

Enforcement of the City's building, housing, health and land use codes is important in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of all Portland residents. This brochure is intended to answer commonly-asked questions about requirements for building permits and to help you move through the City's regulatory processes as easily as possible by removing unnecessary confusion, delays and costs. This information is meant to act as a general guide. If you would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact our staff.

Who Needs a Building Permit?

A building permit is required for anyone seeking to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, remove, improve, convert, demolish a structure or change its use.

The permitting process is the best way to ensure quality construction and safe building conditions.

The building permit must be obtained **before** the start of any work and prominently posted at the job site. Submissions for commercial work over \$50,000 must be done by a design professional. Depending on the scale of the project, there are two different types of review.

Building permit applications and checklists are available on line at www.portlandmaine.gov

Planning and Development Department
Portland City Hall
389 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101

Inspections Division
Room 315
(207)874-8703

hours of operation
Mon-Fri 8am-4pm
Thurs 8am-1:00pm

Planning Division
4th floor
(207)874-8719

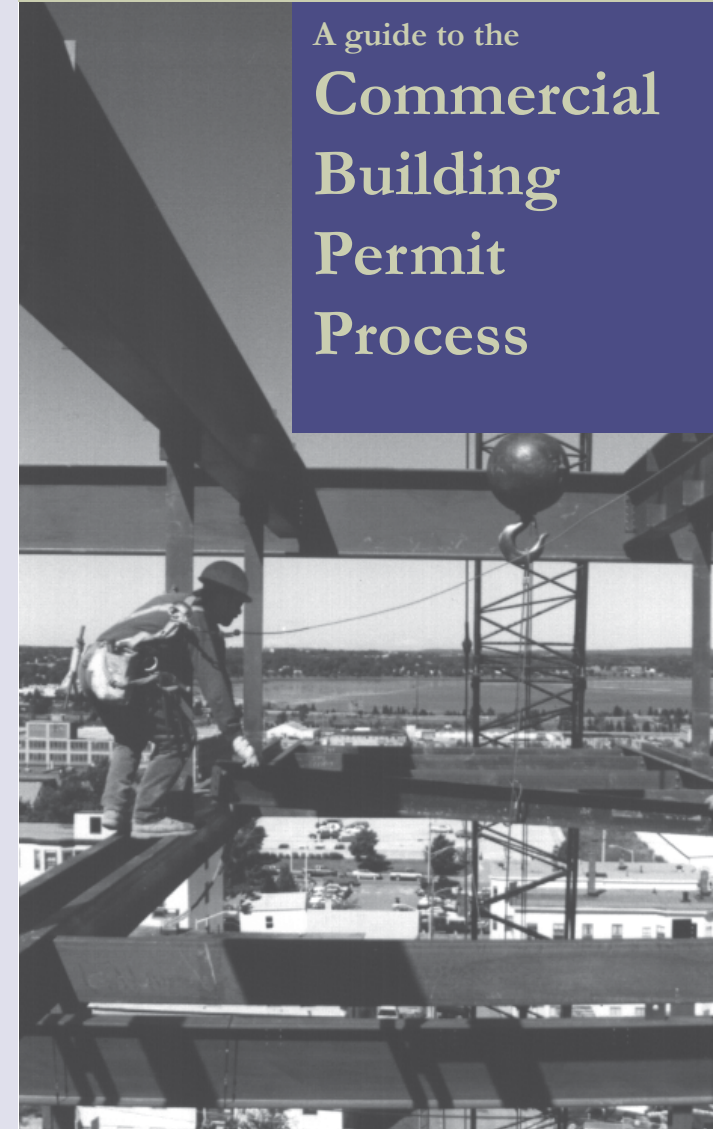
hours of operation
Mon-Fri 8am - 4:30pm

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**PORTLAND
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Planning and Development Dpt.
389 Congress Street,
Portland, Maine 04101
www.portlandmaine.gov

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Planning and Development Department

A guide to the Commercial Building Permit Process



We look forward to helping you design and build a better community for all of us in which to live, work and play.