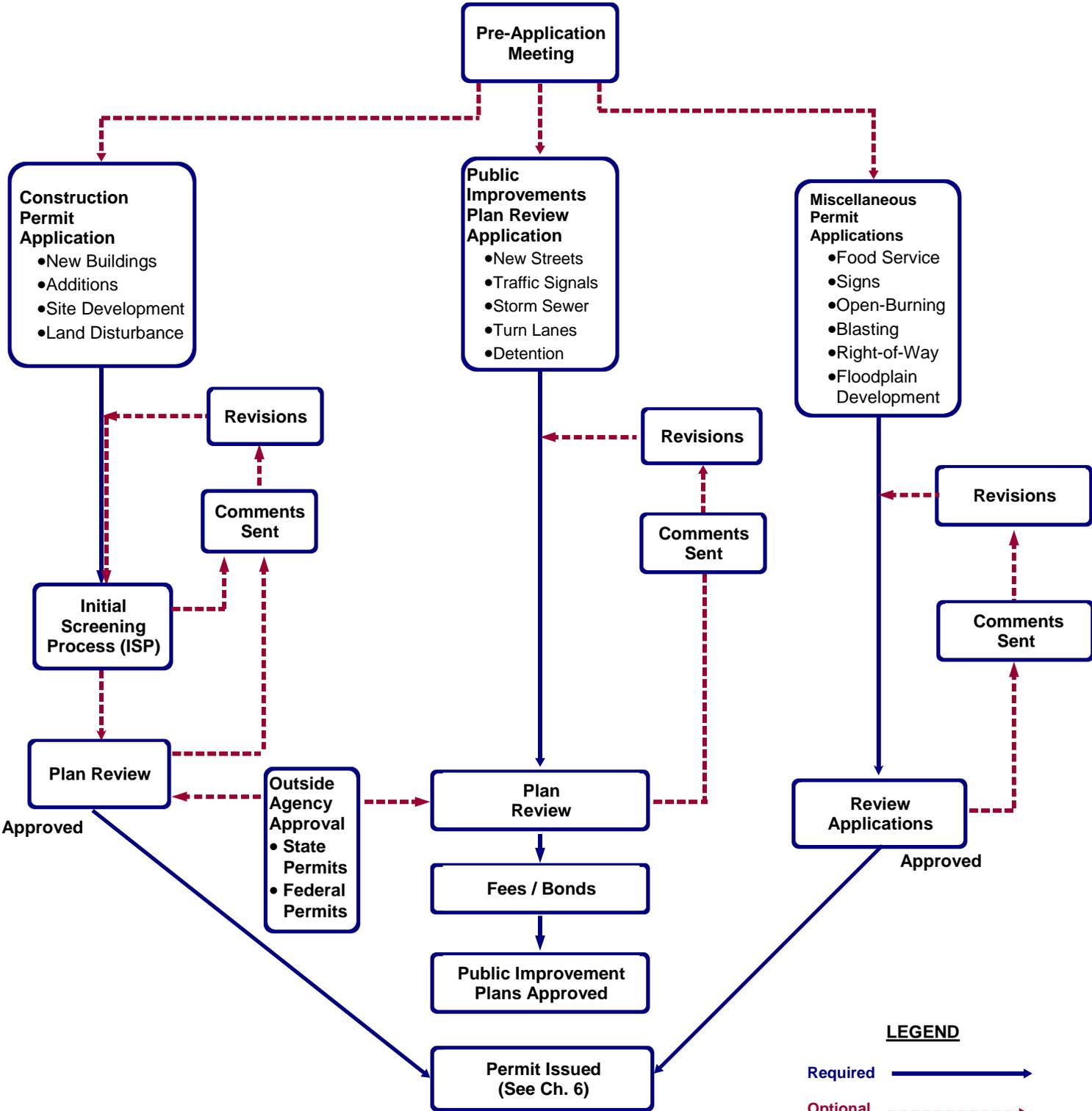


# PLAN REVIEW

## Chapter 7



# Chapter 7 - Construction Plan Review

## Purpose of this Step

Plans are reviewed to ensure compliance with the City of Overland Park's adopted codes, ordinances and policies for commercial, subdivision and multifamily residential development. The reviews focus primarily on public safety issues, compliance with final development plans, the development's effects on existing and proposed public infrastructure, impact on neighboring properties, ensuring sound engineering principles and the overall quality of development. Although the staff reviews plans for these issues, the ultimate responsibility for the construction documents rests with the design professionals. Construction plan review minimizes field changes because it necessitates interpretation of standards prior to the construction occurring, thereby saving time and expense for both the city and developer.

This step will also carry forward Planning Commission and/or City Council stipulations or conditional approvals from any of the development process steps outlined in previous chapters. Approvals necessary from outside agencies such as the Unified Wastewater District of Johnson County and Johnson County Water District No. 1 may also be required at this step prior to the issuance of a permit. Coordination with other agencies is the responsibility of the developer and/or his or her agents.

Construction plan review must be completed prior to issuance of building permits and the start of construction. Look for information in Chapter 6 - Permits.

## Timeframes for Plan Review

For new construction, the city has established a goal of completing the review within 15 working days. "Day 1" begins when the plans have been accepted for review through the **Initial Screening Process (ISP)** (see Step 2). Our goal is to process plans through ISP the next working day after plans have been submitted. When workload is heavy and plans are submitted late in the day, it occasionally takes two working days to move plans through ISP. Resubmitted plans (revisions) may require the same 15-working-day time period depending on the thoroughness of the applicant and staff workload. The staff tries to accelerate the review of revisions prior to starting new projects, especially when the number of plan review comments is low. The average number of submittals required to obtain a permit ranges from three to five. The time can be minimized if applicants are thorough in their responses and obtain any necessary clarification from the staff. Depending on responsiveness to comments, complexity of the project and the design professional's timeframe for resubmitting plans; the entire plan review process (starting at acceptance in ISP to the issuance of a construction permit) takes from seven to 20 weeks. Workload and submittal volumes fluctuate, making it difficult to project an exact review timeframe.

Small Projects, which include tenant finish and remodel projects in Group B and M Occupancies, will be reviewed within three working days provided that they do not include any of the following types of work:

- Approval of outside agencies, such as Johnson County Wastewater (grease interceptors, holding tanks, septic systems),
- Exterior modifications that require approval of Current Planning (facade changes) or Engineering Services (parking lot modifications, other than upgrade of existing spaces for accessibility),
- Change in use or occupancy,
- Fire alarm systems (new system or replacement of existing fire alarm systems),
- Fire suppression systems (submittal of plans for modifications for existing fire suppression systems or installation of new fire alarm systems; renovation involving relocation of existing heads to accommodate partitions and ceiling grids do NOT require plans),
- Fire resistive construction (installation or relocation of fire walls or fire barriers; separations creating separate fire area),
- Restaurant kitchens (installation, remodel or renovation of restaurant kitchens or the installation or relocation of kitchen hood and duct systems),
- HVAC (installation or relocation of HVAC units),
- Plumbing (modifications involving relocation of building the building drain, other than enlargement of existing sanitary facilities in the same location to accommodate accessibility improvements),
- Electrical (Commercial electrical service upgrades and new sub-panels),
- Structural changes that require supporting engineering calculations,

Other tenant finish and remodel projects may be reviewed as small projects based on the nature of the work and compliance with the above criteria.

## Plan Review Responsibilities

Depending on the type of project, one or more of the following areas may be involved in the review of your project.

Current Planning - A planner reviews plans for compliance with the approved Final Development Plan. Engineering Services - Engineers are responsible for the review of site and off-site improvements that might relate to the following categories:

- Traffic
- Land disturbance
- Storm drainage
- Stream corridors
- Stormwater detention
- Site development
- Floodplain development
- Public street or storm sewer improvements
- Streetlighting
- Sidewalks
- Erosion and sediment control
- Utility construction

Building Safety - Plans examiners review building plans for compliance with the following:

- International Building Code
- International Mechanical Code
- International Plumbing Code
- International Fire Code
- ANSI/ADAG
- National Electrical Code

Overland Park Fire Department - A fire prevention plans examiner reviews the plans for compliance with the adopted fire codes, specifically in the following areas:

- Fire lanes
- Fire flow
- Fire hydrants
- Hazardous materials

Community Services - Sanitarians review the plans for compliance with standards relating to the following:

- Food service permit
- Septic systems and holding tanks
- Smoking ordinance
- Operation and maintenance of public swimming pools

## Coordination with Outside Agencies

Overland Park does not have city-owned utilities. It is the responsibility of the developer to determine any outside agency requirements relative to their projects. The city requires verification that services for water and sewer are available prior to issuance of a permit.

A list of area utility companies and agencies is provided in the Development Directory, found in the Appendix.

The following are some of the agencies that may require contact and approval prior to proceeding with phases of work or obtaining permits.

- Johnson County Wastewater District - sewer connections, main extensions and grease traps require approval
- Johnson County Water District No. 1 - water connections, main extensions and public hydrants require approval
- Johnson County Environmental Department - any food service establishment requires a health permit from the state of Kansas. Johnson County employees are under contract to perform this work for the state.
- Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) - if the project proposes construction in or immediately adjacent to state rights-of-way, a permit from KDOT may be necessary
- Kansas Department of Agriculture - Kansas Division of Water Resources - if the project proposes construction in the federal floodplain, or if the project proposes a water impounding structure, or the drainage area exceeds 160 acres, a permit may be necessary
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (agent for EPA) - if the project disturbs Waters of the U.S. or Wetlands, a permit will be necessary
- Kansas Department of Health & Environment - if the

## Process Improvement Points

project proposes the disturbance of more than five acres, an NPDES permit is necessary

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) - if the project alters the federal floodplain, a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) may be necessary

## Step 1 - Pre-Application Meeting

A preliminary plan review meeting is recommended prior to submitting construction plans for a permit. The preliminary meeting is particularly appropriate for developers, design professionals and contractors who have minimal experience with developing in Overland Park.

A pre-application meeting allows the applicant to explain issues that shaped the design of the project. At the same time, the staff can identify issues that may be addressed prior to plans being submitted. An explanation of the plan review process can be offered and the applicant can ask questions regarding Overland Park's procedures.

These reviews are preliminary and the decisions may be subject to change as more information becomes available. Primary responsibility for compliance with the codes and ordinances remains the responsibility of the design professional and the contractor.

The level of detailed assistance from city staff will depend on the completeness of the information provided and the time to review the information. Final determination on any issue will be made at the time full plans are submitted.

It is important to check for conditions or stipulations attached to rezoning cases, special use permits, final development plans, plats or any other type of previously approved plans for the site.

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For individual meetings with a representative from Current Planning, Engineering Services, Building Safety, Fire or Community Services, contact that office.

Provide information in advance to allow the staff more time to study the project. Include any specific questions you have.

Summarize the results of the meeting in writing and fax or e-mail your conclusions to the staff members at the meeting.

As new questions arise, use e-mail to send questions and get responses so you have documentation in writing.

**Important Note:** The city does not coordinate services from utility companies. Building permits are conditioned upon verification that sewer and water services are in place and/or available. Contact utility companies early in the process to ensure the issuance of permits is not delayed.

**Be careful!** Being unaware of stipulations attached to your site can cause delays. Make sure you research your site so that you have adequate time to fulfill all requirements. Even after staff review of your plans is complete, permits will not be issued if there are outstanding stipulations tied to permit issuance.

## Step 2 - Initial Screening Process (ISP)

Applications for building permits are submitted to the Permit Services Section of the Building Safety Division. Prior to distribution of the plans for review by city personnel, the plans enter the ISP process. This process is an initial “quick check” to determine if the plans and information submitted are sufficiently complete for a review to be performed. If the plans are deficient, the applicant will be notified within one or two working days with a list of the deficiencies noted. The goal of ISP is to benefit the developer and design professional by reducing review time. If information necessary for plan review is omitted or insufficient, a response from the city is generated in only one to two days instead of waiting the full review period to find out a review could not be completed. Plans are not considered to be under review until **after** they have been accepted through ISP. The applicant and owner will receive a fax or e-mail indicating whether plans have been accepted or rejected.

## Step 3 - Staff Plan Review

After acceptance through ISP, plans are distributed to each area responsible for review. An individual from each area is assigned to review the project. The Building Safety Plans Examiner will consolidate all information and make the formal response back to the applicant.

### Permit Phasing - Partial Permits

A decision to phase permits may be made prior to the initial submittal or after the plans have been submitted. Requirements for each phase are explained in the “Phased Permit Submittal Checklist for New Buildings.” (See Appendix) The requirements for each phase must be satisfied prior to proceeding to a higher phase.

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**The “Phased Permit Submittal Checklist for New Buildings and Site Development” must accompany the initial submittal** (See Appendix). To assist you in the design of your project, copies of the “Plan Review Submittal Checklist for Land Disturbance Permit” are available at the Building Safety counter for each adopted code.

Revised plans must be accompanied by a cover letter detailing how each plan review comment has been addressed. (Example in Appendix.)

Contact the Permit Services Section to ensure the application, plan review fee and number of plan sets is clarified prior to submittal (especially if submitting by mail or courier).

The plan review process will not start until plans have been cleared through ISP. Make sure all the information is complete and sufficient for a full review!

Final Development Plans must be approved prior to submittal of plans for a building permit.

Public plans and stormwater detention plans, explained in Step 3A, are handled through the Engineering Services Division. They will coordinate correspondence with the applicant on those plans.

Failure of applicants to contact outside agencies and utility companies frequently delays the issuance of a building permit. For example, footings and foundation, shell and full building permits will not be issued without a sewer connection permit and certification of water availability. Make contacts early in the process; follow through with their requirements.

**Project phases are:**

- **Land Disturbance** - clearing and earthmoving on private property (no work in the public right-of-way)
- **Site Development** - all site work up to footing and foundation including public improvements and detention, if applicable
- **Footings and Foundation** - all site work including footings, foundation and base floor slab. Underslab utilities may be included if specific approval is given.
- **Shell** - all site work and the building structural frame, envelope, core, main plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems
- **Full Building Permit** - all work for the project

## Step 3A - Public Improvements and Stormwater Detention Plan Review

Public improvements are often required with projects that will develop areas where the city’s infrastructure does not already exist or where improvements are necessary to accommodate the new development. Stormwater detention improvements are required in certain areas of the city where drainage problems exist or where downstream storm sewer systems are determined to be inadequate for the proposed development. The public improvement and stormwater detention construction plans are to be prepared separately. Submit the plans directly to the Engineering Services Division. The public improvement/detention plans must be submitted prior to or concurrent with the site/building plans. Four copies are necessary for the initial review, and nine copies for final approval (or you may submit five copies plus a mylar title sheet). The public improvement/stormwater detention construction plans

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Detailed requirements for public improvements are found in the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) or the Overland Park Municipal Code (OPMC). (The Unified Development Ordinance is Chapters 17 and 18 of the OPMC. Additional information regarding public improvements is found in Chapters 13 and 15 of the OPMC.)

**Failure to carefully coordinate the submittal and review of public improvement plans with private building plans is one of the prime causes for significant delays in projects. Submit public and detention improvement plans early. Permits will not be issued until these improvement plans are approved.**

must be approved prior to receiving a site development permit (or any higher phase).

**Items required and/or reviewed prior to issuance of a permit include:**

- Performance and maintenance bonds
- Verification of bond amount (contract or engineer's estimate)
- Plan review and inspection fee (currently four percent of bond amount; will increase to five percent in 2008)
- Right-of-way or easement dedication
- Legal agreements for private maintenance of ponds and unimproved drainage systems

**Examples of Public Improvements:**

- New public street
- Public street widening
- Turn lane/median modification
- Traffic signal installation/modification
- New public storm sewer
- Improvement of existing public storm sewer

## Step 4 - Plan Revisions

Plan review comments will be sent to the permit applicant and the property owner. All comments from the city will be consolidated in one letter for the applicable phase. Individual staff members may fax or e-mail drafts of their review comments in advance of the consolidated letter to assist the designers.

When all comments are addressed, six plan sets shall be resubmitted to the Building Safety Division using the following guidelines:

- All city review comments shall be addressed by the applicant and submitted together. Partial submittals will not be accepted.
- A cover letter explaining how each comment was addressed shall accompany the resubmittal.
- The cover letter shall use the same numbering

## Process Improvement Points

Submit right-of-way/easement documents and associated legal descriptions for review with your public and detention improvement plans.

Detention basins will require certification upon completion and on an annual basis.

New private storm sewers or improvements to existing private storm sewers are processed the same as building permits as described in Chapters 6 and 7.

Public plans explained in Step 3A are submitted directly to the Engineering Services Division and comments are sent directly to the design professional and the owner.

If you receive faxed comments from one division; e.g., Current Planning, Building Safety or Engineering Services, do not resubmit until you have received the consolidated city comment letter with comments from all review areas.

Each resubmittal = DELAY! If the design professional spends an extra DAY OR TWO reviewing the plans before submitting, it may mean WEEKS in overall time savings.

system as the consolidated city comment letter.

- If phasing of the permit is desired, responses to comments for each phase may be submitted together with a corresponding cover letter. For example, if plans were submitted for a full permit and after the first review the applicant chose to concentrate on the site development permit, all comments relative to site development may be submitted without addressing all comments for the full permit.

## Step 5 - Plan Approval

When the plans meet the requirements of the city, the plans will be approved. Plan approval is frequently given with stipulations which must be satisfied prior to issuance of the permit or at other stages of the work, such as prior to occupancy. Pre construction conferences are required for most projects; the need for one is determined during the plan approval process.

## Step 6 - Permitting

Overland Park participates in the Johnson County Contractor Licensing Program. All persons undertaking work that requires a permit are required to hold a valid Johnson County Contractor License. Contact Johnson County Contractor Licensing at 913/715-2233, or [contractor.licensing@jocogov.org](mailto:contractor.licensing@jocogov.org) for information.

Even though plans have been approved, administrative information may be required prior to issuance of a permit. After approval, the file is reviewed by a Permit Services Representative to determine if all requested information has been received.

A Permit Services Representative will contact the applicant to inform them of the permit fee amount and notify them of any remaining items needed. After the fee and all required information is received, the permit is issued. Construction may not begin until after the permit has been issued.

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Make sure the required number of revisions is submitted and the project name, address and plan review number are submitted with each revision. Six sets of revisions are required for new buildings.

If the applicant has any questions regarding the staff's comments or has compliance questions, contact the staff prior to responding or schedule a meeting to ensure there are no misunderstandings which may result in additional revisions and delays.

If the plan review is phased, responses to comments for each phase must be submitted together. Contact the person listed under "Building Safety Division - Plan Review" on your comment letter to determine which comments apply to each phase.

### Items which frequently delay permit issuance include:

- Failure to comply with Overland Park Fire Department requirements for on-site water supply during construction
- Water main extension contract not executed
- Approval from outside agencies
- Approval of construction plans for public improvements (See Step 3A)
- Approval of construction plans for stormwater detention (See Step 3A)
- Planning Commission/City Council stipulations
- Dedication of rights-of-way and easements for proposed public improvements
- Legal agreements for maintenance of amenities in the right-of-way or private ponds
- Approval of variances
- Performance and maintenance bonds and plan review/inspection fee for public improvements
- Associated fees
- Property not platted or plat not yet filed
- Failure to obtain a Sewer Permit
- Surety for Land Disturbance Permit

## Step 7 – Pre-Construction Meeting

Once the permit has been approved, customers should contact the Building Safety Development Coordinator at 913/895-6237 to schedule a pre-construction meeting. Generally, there is a twenty-four hour turn-around period for pre-construction meetings.

Pre-construction meetings are designed to offer a forum where the contractor(s) and City staff can discuss the scope of the project and various procedures the contractor must adhere to. The overall intent of the meetings is to help the contractor avoid construction delays or a delay in getting an occupancy permit. Contractors should feel free to invite anyone that they want to the meetings. Generally, the project manager, the job superintendent and the erosion control contractor attend the meetings.

Pre-construction meetings are facilitated by the Development Coordinator. City staff in attendance typically consists of the lead building inspector, a representative from the fire department and an inspector with Engineering Services.

Staff will provide information on the overall scope of the project and discuss any special permit conditions being attached to the permit. Special conditions most often discussed relate to fire alarm drawings, fire sprinkler drawings, landscape requirements, special inspection requirements and impervious surface drawings. The requirements for maintaining and inspecting erosion and sediment control features are also discussed. Applicable city forms will be distributed in the meeting, as well as contact information for various individuals.

## Process Improvement Points

The pre-construction meeting is a good time for customers to ask City staff any questions they have about city requirements for their project.