

Commercial and Residential Building Permitting Process

WHO NEEDS A BUILDING PERMIT?

Any work that is being done to a Single-Family Residence with the exception of painting, papering, carpeting, cabinets, counter tops, similar finish work and roof shingle replacement, when no decking is being repaired or replaced requires a Building Permit as per the Technical Code of the City of Birmingham. All commercial construction work regardless of size of the project requires a building permit as per the Technical Code of the City of Birmingham.

WHERE DO I OBTAIN A PERMIT?

A permit may be obtained from the Department of Planning, Engineering and Permits located in Room 210, 2nd floor of City Hall, telephone number 254-2211.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

The applicant must fill out a permit application, (3) sets of plans for Commercial Renovations unless they include exterior changes in a Design District, which would require (4) sets; New Commercial buildings require (4) sets and Single Family Residential requires (2) sets. Drawings must be submitted on 18 inch by 24-inch size paper minimum.

The drawings must include a site plan, a floor plan, a typical wall section, foundation plan and a framing plan. A code review sheet is required for all commercial work (copies of the code review sheet are available at the counter or may be downloaded from our website

<https://www.birminghamal.gov/work/building-codes/>

All drawings that are for an Assembly or Educational Occupancy or if the work is being performed in a building 2,500 square feet or larger or is a change of Occupancy, must be sealed by an Alabama licensed Architect or Engineer according to Alabama law.

STEPS FOR OBTAINING A PERMIT

1. The Property's address must be obtained and/or verified by the Engineering Staff at the Permits counter
2. Zoning and Land use requirements such as: zoning, flood plain, design review districts, historic districts regulations and land slide areas must be reviewed by the staff at the front counter to determine if applicable and if further review / approvals are required. If plans cannot be approved by the counter staff, then the applicant will be counseled on the requirements for approval.
3. Once Zoning and Land use requirements are approved by the counter staff the plans are routed to Inspections and Fire Department plans examiners for compliance with applicable codes.
4. The counter Staff routes one set of plans to the **Planning Division**, two sets to **Permits Division** and one set to the **Fire Department**.
5. If after the plan reviews are performed and are found to be in compliance with the pertinent codes then the permit is ready to be issued and the applicant is notified. If there are code violations found or insufficiencies requiring further clarification are identified during the plan review process, then the applicant will be sent a plan review letter. The applicant or the architect will be responsible to bring in revised plans for further review. Once all noted issues are addressed and approved, the permit is ready to be issued and the applicant is notified.
6. The permit is issued along with the job copy stamped plans and a yellow permit card is given to the contractor. The job copy stamped plan must always be on the job for inspections to be

performed and the permit card shall be posted for the inspections to be documented as the job progresses.

7. After the completion of the project and all Building Trades are finalized and the permit card is executed, the contractor shall return the signed card to Planning, Engineering and Permits Department, Room 210 to request either a Certificate of Occupancy or Certificate of Completion.

THE PLANNING DIVISION WILL REVIEW FOR:

Zoning, Planning and Special Use Districts regulations.

THE PERMITS DIVISION WILL REVIEW FOR:

Compliance with the pertinent adopted codes listed below, as amended by the Technical Codes of the City of Birmingham:

International Building Code, 2015 edition

International Existing Building Code, 2015 edition

International Plumbing Code, 2015 edition

International Fuel Gas Code, 2015 edition

International Mechanical Code, 2015 edition

National Electric Code, 2014 edition (note: no plan review required)

Safety Code for Elevators and Escalators

Existing Elevators and Escalators

Contact Alabama Department of Labor Boiler / Elevator Division

(334) 242-3066

THE BIRMINGHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT WILL REVIEW FOR:

International Fire Code, 2015 edition

NFPA 101- Life Safety Code, 2015 edition – (Note: see Technical Code for specific sections enforced)

WHAT IS THE REVIEW PERIOD?

The review period is ten (10) working days or less for commercial projects, (3) working days or less for single family residences. Express Permit review of three (3) working days or less, that is available for commercial renovation projects less than 5,000 square feet. The plans will be reviewed, and a permit issued if there are no violations found or a plan review letter sent if deficiencies are identified and are required to be addressed.

If there are Zoning or Land use issues identified that require further hearings for the property use, then please refer to the Zoning brochure for further instructions.

ARE THERE ANY FEES?

Construction project permit fees are \$9.50 per \$1,000 of the total cost as described in the Technical Code. \$1.00 per 1,000 for State of Alabama on Commercial Permits. \$125.00 minimum fee. Valuation is based upon the latest International Code Congress's most current valuation tables for new structures or the contract value, whichever is higher. See applications for **commercial** plan review fees. You may download a copy of the Technical Code from our website that gives further detail and addresses stand-alone permits.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER REQUIREMENTS BEFORE OBTAINING A BUILDING PERMIT?

If earth is being disturbed, a soil erosion permit is required and may be obtained from the front counter Engineering Staff (please see Engineering's guidelines). If dirt is being removed, a building permit cannot be issued until a soil erosion permit has been obtained.

If plumbing is being added or changed a copy of the sewer impact permit is required. The sewer impact permit is obtained from the Jefferson County Environmental Services. A permit cannot be issued until this is received, if applicable. If the work is valued at ten thousand dollars, (\$10,000) or more for a single-family dwelling and the owner is not doing the work themselves, then a Home Builders Licensed Contractor is required ... this is a State Regulation. If the work is valued at Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) or more for a commercial job and the owner is not doing the work themselves, then a State General Licensed Contractor is required to obtain the permit... this is a State regulation.

Note: If an owner is doing the building work and intends to obtain the Building Permit themselves, then they must sign an affidavit affirming that no building contractor is involved... this makes the property owner responsible. The subcontractors will still be required to obtain appropriate State and City License, if applicable

Pre-construction meetings are available upon request. These meetings will include the Plans Examiners, Planning and Zoning, Stormwater, Fire Marshal's office and Chief Inspectors. Please call 254-2252.