

Commercial Construction Permitting Process
Southfield, Michigan

BEFORE STARTING CONSTRUCTION

Before beginning a building project, whether new construction, alterations or repairs, the building owner and/or builder should be aware that permits may be required.

As a general rule, any construction involving a structural change to a building, complete or partial rehabilitation or renovation, new or re-roofing, or any new construction, will require a building permit. Work not requiring permits includes: most routine maintenance and repair, such as painting, caulking, vinyl sheet flooring, new cabinets and tuckpointing.

It is important to note that the City of Southfield and State of Michigan Law requires separate permits for electrical, plumbing, and heating systems. Building owners should take care to select qualified, licensed contractors to perform this work.

PERMITS ARE A NECESSITY

Building permit guidelines in the City of Southfield have been instituted to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The process protects residents from the hazards of unsafe construction and helps residents understand local laws and ordinances. Since the City of Southfield requires all builders to be licensed by the State of Michigan, building owners can be assured the companies and independent contractors they employ for construction on their property meet State licensing requirements.

By obtaining a building permit, building owners provide code officials with the means to inspect construction sites, ensuring that acceptable standards are met and appropriate materials used. The City of Southfield appreciates the cooperation of its building owners and licensed builders.

Any approvals required from the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) must be obtained prior to the issuance of a building permit. ZBA approvals are required for moving any structure into or within the City, or for any waiver required by an administrative body at the City. Obtain ZBA applications at the counter of the Building Department at Southfield City Hall, 26000 Evergreen Road (at Civic Center Drive).

WHAT TYPES OF CONSTRUCTION NEED A BUILDING PERMIT?

A building permit is a license giving legal permission to begin construction of a building project. All commercial construction requires a building permit. Builders must be licensed by the State of Michigan. Contractors for electrical, mechanical and plumbing must also be licensed by the State of Michigan.

Typical projects requiring building permits include, but are not limited to:

- New buildings
- Additions
- Renovations
- Demolitions
- Prefabricated structures
- Electrical systems
- Plumbing systems
- Heating, air conditioning, or ventilating
- Temporary buildings
- Miscellaneous residential including fireplaces, pools, decks, re-roofing or new roof, sheds and garages

- Miscellaneous commercial projects (parking lots, etc.)

The following repairs are considered normal maintenance if they are not part of a structural addition or completion and will not increase the property's assessed valuation. ***These projects still may require permits.*** Check with the Building Department before beginning any of these projects to determine if a permit is needed:

- Outside painting
- Repairing or replacing siding, roof, porches, steps, sidewalks or driveways
- Repainting, repairing or replacing existing masonry
- Replacement of awnings
- Adding or replacing gutters and downspouts

COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION PERMIT PROCEDURES

Approvals must be obtained from the City of Southfield Departments of Planning, Engineering and Building prior to constructing new commercial structures or any change to the site which would alter the previously approved site plan. **Applicants are encouraged to simultaneously submit complete plans and associated paperwork to the three departments to expedite the approval processes.**

HOWEVER, changes requested during the Planning Department's review may require changes to subsequent engineering and building drawings. Permits will not be issued until Planning and Engineering Departments have given plan approval.

Each department involved in the process requires specific documentation to be filed and fees to be paid in advance. No building or site construction can commence until initial approvals are obtained from the applicable departments. A final Certificate of Occupancy will not be given until all requirements are met.

Each reviewing department will provide information and answer any questions regarding the building permit application. The Building Department works in conjunction with the Departments of Planning and Engineering.

The total number of plans required for approval is as follows:

- PLANNING DEPARTMENT - 10 for administrative review or 20 for Planning Commission and City Council review. Site plans shall be prepared, signed and sealed by a Michigan licensed architect or engineer.
- BUILDING DEPARTMENT – Two (2) sets of building plans.
- ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT – Seven (7) or eight (8) sets of engineered site plans.

Incomplete submissions will not be reviewed until all information has been received.

Specific requirements for commercial construction or additions are described in subsequent sections of this handbook. **Please read them carefully.** No site work shall be commenced until all approvals are obtained from the reviewing departments and conditions of these approvals are met. A Certificate of Occupancy will not be given until all requirements listed herein are met.

For site plan review procedures, refer to the site plan review handbook or contact the Planning Department at (248) 796-4150.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

Initial Requirements

- PR Step 1: Submit 20 sets of the site plan (10 sets for an administrative review) prepared by a Michigan licensed architect or engineer. Items required to be included on the site plan as well as the fees required can be found in the SITE PLAN APPLICATION PACKAGE which may be obtained from the Planning Department. Items to be included may also be found in Section 5.22, Article 4, Chapter 45 of the Southfield City Code, more commonly known as the Zoning Ordinance.
- PR Step 2: Initial review of the plans will take approximately two weeks. Comments will be relayed back to the petitioner.
- PR Step 3: Plans will need to be revised and re-submitted back to the Planning Department.

Requirements after initial review but prior to receiving building permits

- PR Step 4: Landscape and irrigations plans (if required) must be approved, if required by the Landscape Design Coordinator or Environmental Planner (standard on ALL Planning Commission/City Council reviews). Landscape plans must be prepared by a licensed landscape architect and must include the following:
- Type, size, and location of all existing and proposed landscape materials
 - The applicable City of Southfield General Landscaping Specifications (obtain a copy from the Planning Department)
- PR Step 5: Site Maintenance Agreement must be signed by the owner and submitted with the appropriate fee Site Maintenance Agreements may be found in the SITE PLAN APPLICATION PACKAGE or may be obtained separately from the Planning Department
- PR Step 6: Construction limit (tree) fencing and/or soil erosion controls must be installed per the approved engineering plans AND inspected by planning staff. Call the Planning Department to schedule inspection at least 24 hours in advance
- PR Step 7: Lot split or combination applications (if required) must be submitted to the Assessing Department. Applications may be obtained from the Assessing Department.
- PR Step 8: Zoning Board of Appeals waivers must be obtained (if required). Applications may be obtained from the Building Department.
- PR Step 9: Any miscellaneous conditions of site plan approval (which are specifically listed on the approval label of the approved site plan) must be met before any construction permits are issued.

Requirements for Certificate of Occupancy (C of O)

- PR Step 10: Complete construction per the approved site plan. Any discrepancies found between the approved plans and on-site conditions will warrant the submission of seven (7) as-built plans which must go back through the initial review process. The process may take up to two (2) weeks to review.
- PR Step 11: Complete the installation of landscaping per the approved landscape plan. If weather does not permit the completion of landscaping or select site work (i.e. final concrete or asphalt), a surety bond will be required for the entire amount of unfinished site work. Bond forms may be obtained from the Building Department.

PR Step 12: Any site maintenance items cited during the initial review must be completed prior to issuance of a C of O.

PR Step 13: After all three of the above items are 100% complete, contact the Building Department to set up inspection for a temporary or final C of O.

Please note that the administrative site plan review process takes approximately 3-4 weeks as opposed to 3-4 months for Planning Commission/City Council review and approval

Fees: Please contact the Planning Department for the current fee schedule.

Contact info: Planning Department. 26000 Evergreen Rd. Southfield, MI 48076 (248) 796-4150

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

Initial Requirements

ER Step 1: Submit six (6) sealed sets of Drainage Plans (if required during the Planning Department initial review) for the complete site. Plans shall be signed and sealed by a registered Engineer or Surveyor.

ER Step 2: If within 500' of a stream:

- Apply for a Site Drainage and/or Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Permit.
- Pay an inspection fee and bond.
- Indicate the soil erosion and sedimentation controls on the drainage plan and include their details
- Submit one (1) additional set of plans for a total of seven (7) sets.

ER Step 3: Pay a review fee

ER Step 4: Submit a soils engineering evaluation for structures constructed on a steep slope

Requirements after initial review but prior to receiving Building Permits

ER Step 5: Install soil erosion control fencing if required by the Engineering Department

ER Step 6: Obtain Engineering Department approval for a soil erosion control fence by calling (248) 796-4810 three days in advance for an inspection.

ER Step 7: Obtain culvert permit for installation of culvert as required. Engineering establishes grade and will stake the grade upon request.

Requirements for Certificate of Occupancy:

ER Step 8: Submit three (3) copies of the sealed final approved Grading Certificate (as-built grading plan). Allow three (3) days for final Engineering inspection. Complete the following:

- Site must be fine graded
- Front, side, and rear yards must be topsoiled and sodded if weather permits (see Building Department Review Procedures for bond requirements)
- Walkways, driveways, and parking areas must be paved prior to an inspection.

Fees: Please contact the Engineering Department for the current fee schedule.

Contact info: Engineering Department. 26000 Evergreen Rd. Southfield, MI 48076 (248) 796-4810

BUILDING DEPARTMENT REVIEW PROCEDURES

Initial Requirements

BR Step 1: Submit a complete a Building Permit application

BR Step 2: Submit one (1) set of engineered site plans

BR Step 3: Submit 2 sets of Structural and Heating Plans (with the Building Plans). Architect's or Engineer's State of Michigan seal is required

BR Step 4: Submit two (2) copies of the Michigan Energy Code Calculations (ASHRE 90-75)

BR Step 5: Pay the plan review fee to the Building Department.

BR Step 6: Pay the bond fee to the Building Department.

Requirements after initial review but prior to receiving Building Permits

BR Step 7: Upon notification of approval by the Building Department, pay the total of the following additional costs per the Ordinance No. 1332 Fee Schedule:

- Permit Fee
- Administrative Fee
- Certificate of Occupancy Fee
- Structural Review Fee, if applicable

Please note that all fees shall be paid at the Building Department. A copy of Ordinance No. 1332 is available at the Building Department.

Requirements after Building Permit is issued but prior to rough inspections

BR Step 8: Licensed Master Plumber must complete the plumbing permit application

BR Step 9: Licensed Master Electrician must complete the electrical permit Application

BR Step 10: Licensed Heating & Cooling Company must complete the HVAC permit application

BR Step 11: Submit foundation certification application

BR Step 12: Pay all mechanical permit fees per Ordinance No. 1332

BR Step 13: For all Building Trades Inspections, call the lines listed below. A minimum of 24 hours in advance is required to schedule an inspection. Any call after 3:00 p.m. will not be handled until the next business day.

Requirements for Certificate of Occupancy (C of O)

BR Step 14: Contact the C of O Coordinator at (248) 796-4107.

BR Step 15: Complete C of O requirements specified by the Planning and Engineering Departments prior to requesting a final building inspection.

BR Step 16: Obtain all final electrical, plumbing, and HVAC inspections prior to final building inspection.

BR Step 17:Grade, topsoil and sod the site prior to the final building inspection. Pay landscape performance bond to the Building Department if winter season does not allow sodding to occur on site. Winter season dates shall be November 15th through March 31st and shall be subject to weather frost conditions at that time.

Fees: Please contact the Building Department for the current fee schedule.

Contact Info: Building Department. 26000 Evergreen Rd. Southfield, MI 48076 (248) 796-4100

For all Building Trades Inspections, call the lines listed below, a minimum of 24 hours in advance. Any call after 3pm. will not be handled until the next working day.

Plumbing Division (248) 796-4100

Electrical Division (248) 796-4100

Heating Division (248) 796-4100