



Pittsburgh Department of City Planning

SITE PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

WHAT IS SITE PLAN REVIEW?

Site Plan Review is an administrative zoning review process for medium-sized projects. The purpose of the Site Plan Review is to ensure that a proposed development complies with applicable zoning standards. This is not an “over-the-counter” permit, but a more detailed review. The process is intended to result in well-designed projects that improve quality of life, enhance neighborhood character, and provide economic and environmental benefits.

WHEN IS SITE PLAN REVIEW REQUIRED?

Applications for Building, Occupancy, or HVAC permits may trigger Site Plan Review. Site Plan Review is required in these situations:

- Any new construction, building addition or use enlargement or exterior renovation of an existing structure in the NDO, LNC, NDI, UNC, or P district on a lot of 2,400 SF or larger;
- Any new construction or building addition, enlargement, or exterior renovation of an existing structure in the HC, UI, or GI district on a lot of 8,000 SF or larger;
- Any off-street parking area in the NDO, NDI, LNC, UNC, UI, or P district that includes more than 10 parking spaces or more than 2,500 SF of surface area;
- Any construction (including additions and rehabilitations) in the H district;
- Any new construction, enlargement, or renovation of a multi-unit residence of 4 or more units;
- Any development requiring Site Plan Review listed in Section 911.04 - Use Standards; or
- Any development subject to Residential Compatibility Standards in Section 916.

Properties without a valid Certificate of Occupancy may also be subject to Site Plan Review.

IS THERE A PUBLIC HEARING FOR SITE PLAN REVIEW PROJECTS?

Development projects under Site Plan Review that are in compliance with all applicable zoning regulations can be approved by the Zoning Administrator and do not need a public hearing.

Development projects that cannot be approved by the Zoning Administrator and therefore need a Special Exception or Variance to be approved, will need a public hearing with the Zoning Board of Adjustment

(ZBA). During Site Plan Review, Zoning staff can help identify Special Exception and Variance requests that the development would need from the ZBA in order to be approved as proposed. For more information on the ZBA process, please see the Zoning Board of Adjustment handout.

IS THERE A FEE FOR SITE PLAN REVIEW?

Yes. The fee varies depending upon the scope of work. See the Development Review section on the Zoning Fee Schedule for the formula used to calculate the fees. The fee will be assessed after the Site Plan Review has been completed and before final zoning approval is issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE SUBMITTED IN THE SITE PLAN REVIEW APPLICATION PACKAGE?

The Site Plan Review application package must include:

- Development Review Application form (completed and signed);
- Site Plan;
- Landscape plan with materials labeled; and
- Other documentation as required depending on the scope and/or location of the project.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE SHOWN ON THE SITE PLAN?

Site Plans are the drawings used to show most of the required information required for Site Plan Review. Simplified site plans are used for Occupancy Permits, accessory structures, and additions to primary structures less than 2,400 SF. Detailed Site Plans must be sealed by a professional and are used for construction of primary structures over 2,400 SF and for signs. Both Simplified and Detailed Site Plans include, as a minimum, the following information:

- Name of property owner;
- Date of preparation;
- Location and dimensions of all existing and proposed property lines;
- Locations and dimensions of all applicable utilities and other easement;
- North arrow;
- Width and name of all streets and ways;
- Locations, dimensions, and heights of all existing and proposed structures, parking, and driveways, and other features on the property;
- Landscaping, screening, and street trees; and
- Depending on your scope of work, additional information may be required.



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WHAT OTHER DRAWINGS ARE NEEDED FOR SITE PLAN REVIEW?

Depending on the scope of work and location of the site, additional documentation may be required. Zoning staff will help identify what these will be. Commonly required items include:

- Grading plan;
- Geotechnical Report;
- Stormwater Management Plan;
- Labeled photos of surrounding context;
- Elevations (all sides) with materials labeled;
- Contextual renderings of the proposed development;
- Roof plan and screening illustrations for HVAC;
- Other drawings as required for specific projects to fully demonstrate the scope of work and how it complies with the Zoning Code.

IS A PROFESSIONAL SURVEY REQUIRED?

Any project involving new construction, building additions, substantial accessory structures and/or parking must be submitted on a professional stamped survey. Zoning staff will make the final determination whether or not your project requires a professional survey.

IS DESIGN REVIEW OR ANY OTHER REVIEW REQUIRED?

All projects that require Site Plan Review also require Design Review. Please see the Design Review handouts on the City Planning website for additional information.

Some projects may require additional reviews not handled in the Zoning Division. These may include stormwater management reviews, flood plain applications, and address applications/verifications. Zoning staff will help identify when these reviews are required and will provide the applicant with the appropriate contacts to complete these reviews.

WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP TO APPLY FOR SITE PLAN REVIEW?

Email the required application package to Anne Kramer, Planner 2 for Design Review, at anne.kramer@pittsburghpa.gov. If the applicant is unable for any reason to submit the application package electronically, paper submissions will be accepted. If the application is submitted electronically, no paper larger than 11x17 is accepted. DO NOT submit full-sized construction drawings to the Zoning Division. Once you have made your submission, staff will review and will reply with initial comments.

HOW LONG WILL THE PROCESS TAKE?

The length of the review process depends on the complexity of the project; the number of revisions required; and the volume of other projects currently being reviewed by the Department of City Planning.

WHEN IS THE SITE PLAN REVIEW COMPLETED?

There are two conditions that must be met before a Site Plan Review project can be approved:

- The project must comply with all Zoning Code requirements (or have obtained appropriate variances); and
- The project must meet the appropriate Urban Design Targets as determined in the design review process.

Once Zoning staff confirms that a project meets the above conditions, staff will prepare the Zoning Voucher and access the fee. Staff will then inform the applicant of the next steps in the application process for the appropriate permits.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact Anne Kramer, Planner 2 for Design Review, at anne.kramer@pittsburghpa.gov or 412-255-2470 Ex. 2.