

Guide to Commercial Plan Review and Approval

**CITY OF WOOSTER
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Building Standards Division**

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***For better customer service,
appointments are preferred.***

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COMMERCIAL PLAN REVIEW SUMMARY

The Building Standards Division has two simple objectives:

1. Reduce the City's review time and
2. Get permits issued as quickly as possible
These objectives are obtained by the collaborative efforts of the Divisions of Fire, Building Standards, Planning and Zoning, Utilities, and Engineering. Instead of passing plans from one department to another, we will all start at the same time. If corrections or more information is required from any Division, you will be contacted by that division. Each City Division has developed a checklist for minimum information necessary to begin plan review. Contact each division for details

There are 3 components to the process of applying for a commercial building permit.

1. A Completed Application for Plan Review
2. 4 Sets of Construction Documents
Application and construction documents will be checked for completeness and logged into the computer in order to track the plan review process. Plans and documents will be scanned into an electronic file and distributed the appropriate personnel.
3. Payment of Plan Review Fees
See fees section next page

Plan approval is required prior to Issuance of permits

Zoning, building, and other permits must be applied for on separate applications after plan approval is obtained.

How do I submit drawings to obtain a certificate of plan approval?

The required items are submitted directly to the Building Standards Division. See the checklist page for a list of everything needed with your submission. You must accurately complete the plan review application. 4 copies of the construction documents must be submitted. OBC 106.3 Requires one approved set to be kept at the work site for reference by inspectors. Additionally, the Building Standards Division will keep the other identical set on file during the construction project.

What are the fees for plan review?

Fees are collected up front for plan review as follows:

\$80.00 base fee for all submittals + \$.03 per square foot.

This fee covers the review of the site plan, building and all building components with the following exceptions that require separate plan reviews and fees:

Fire suppression - \$80

Fire alarm - \$80.00

Commercial kitchen hood - \$80.00

The square footage fee will be charged only once when the initial submittal is made. All other submittals and re-submittals will be charged the minimum \$80.00 fee when the submittal is made. For example, if building plans are submitted without the electrical, plumbing, and hvac pages, the initial fee will be still be \$80.00 + \$.03 per square foot. If the plumbing drawings are then submitted, an additional fee of \$80.00 is required. If the electrical and hvac pages are then submitted together, an additional fee of \$80.00 is required. Each time an additional page or submittal is made, it will be charged an \$80.00 fee no matter how many pages are submitted. Additionally, each time plans, partial plans, mechanicals or electrical, or other information is submitted, an application for plan review must be submitted and the \$80.00 fee paid.

Note: Other reviews may be required. For example, the Engineering Division may require sub-division review. This review will have an additional fee. Consult the Engineering Division for your project. Normal site-plan review of a developed lot by the Engineering Division will be performed (storm water management and erosion control) with no additional fee when plans are submitted to the Building Division. Normal site-plan review by the Planning and Zoning Division will be performed with no additional fee when plans are submitted to the Building Division. If special zoning approval is needed there may be additional fees. Consult the Planning and Zoning Division for details regarding your project.

Note: Building plan approval is not a permit for Construction. Building plan approval is not zoning approval. Construction and Zoning permits must be purchased prior to construction and after plan approval is obtained.

How much detail do my construction drawings need? OBC 106.1.1

The scope of the project will determine how much information and detail is required for any construction project. Simple projects will not require everything listed in the OBC code section. For example, a storage building with no plumbing or heating equipment will not require as much as an office building. See the checklist for some guidelines. If you are unsure, check with the Building Official for an interpretation.

As a rule of thumb, ask yourself if it is enough detail for the Building Official to build the building himself. The Building Official must satisfy himself in two areas:

1. The documents submitted show that structure will meet the code requirements when completed.
2. The building inspectors will be able to consult the approved plans to verify the structure has been built as the approved plans show.

Do drawings need the seal of a registered Engineer or Architect? OBC 106.3.4

Whenever the preparation of construction documents requires the technical analysis (this means design elements of a complex nature, generally requiring computations, evaluations of the loads, stresses, etc.), the documents must be sealed by a registered design professional (required by the State of Ohio). Based upon technical analysis, the registered design professional specifies the performance of a building or building system necessary to meet the needs of the owner/occupant and the requirements of the OBC.

The City of Wooster plans examiner will check drawings for code compliance in many areas such as height & area limitations, use & occupancy, exits, etc. The plan examiner does not re-do the technical analysis that is certified by the seal of the design professional.

There are cases when documents provide location and descriptions of physical characteristics of the construction independent of technical analysis/design. These documents can be submitted for review without a seal.

These cases are listed in the OBC 106.3.4.1.

For example, structural systems are not modified and any new load applied to the structural system can be shown to have been accounted for as part of the original design or electrical drawings which provide sufficient information describing work that does not increase the load on the electrical load center. If you are unsure, check with the Building Official for an interpretation.

What happens to the plans after they are submitted?

When all the required items are submitted to the Building Standards Division, the project will be scheduled for a plan review. OBC 105.3.2 requires an examination of the plans and a report to be made within 30 days of the day of submission. Also, OBC 105.3.1.2 states plans must be examined in the order they are received.

The City has registered design professionals who are state certified plans examiners on staff as employees. The plans examiner assigned to your project will examine the plans for compliance with the OBC and make a report to the Building Official.

One main objective is to reduce plan review time. The Building Standards Division will distribute the plans to other divisions for approval (when required). Instead of passing plans from one department to another, all start at the same time and perform plan review concurrently. One site plan will be distributed to the Engineering Division for a review of the storm water management and erosion control provisions. One site plan will be delivered to the Planning and Zoning Division for zoning review. One site plan and one set of construction documents will be delivered to the Fire Division for review. When all reviews are complete, plans will be collected by the Building Standards Division. You will be notified directly by each Division if the plans are not acceptable. The respective Division and submitter will interact directly to solve any problems.

Note: Building plan approval is not a permit for Construction. Building plan approval is not zoning approval. Construction and Zoning permits must be purchased prior to construction and after plan approval is obtained.

How will I know if plans are approved?

When the Building Official finds that plans submitted for approval conform to the applicable provisions of the OBC, he shall stamp such plans as approved (OBC 106.301). **A certificate of plan approval will be issued** and according to the OBC 105.7.2, it shall be posted at the job site until the completion of the job.

If the plans cannot be approved in their entirety, other approvals may be requested by the submitter (OBC 106.3.1 – 106.3.3).

1. Nonconformance approval 30 day approval while resolving matters that do not pose a serious hazard.
2. Conditional Approval A license to proceed up to the point of objection.
3. Phased Approval Such as: footing/foundation, shell, etc. This is a license to proceed up to the point for which approval has been given.

When these approvals are obtained, A certificate of plan approval stating the type of approval will be issued and according to the OBC 105.7, it shall be posted at the job site until the completion of the job. Along with these types of approvals, an adjudication order will be issued that details what will be required to obtain complete approval. This will also contain information on how to appeal the decisions of the Building Official. An appeal may be made to a State of Ohio Board of Building Appeals.

What happens if my plans are not approved?

An adjudication order will be issued detailing what will be required to obtain approval. This will also contain information on how to appeal the decisions of the Building Official. An appeal of the state building code (OBC) may be made to a State of Ohio Board of Building Appeals.

No construction permits may be purchased until plans are approved.

How can I ensure plans will be approved?

It is up to the person applying for plan approval to make sure he understands the requirements in this guide. Complete and accurate information must be provided. High quality plans are necessary not only for plan approval, but also in order to have a construction project proceed smoothly. Why should planning and review time be compromised for a building that may stand for 100 years and be used by hundreds of thousands of people? Proper planning and good quality documents are keys to success!

COMMERCIAL PLAN SUBMITTAL CHECKLIST

In order to perform a thorough building plan review and avoid needless delays, the following items must be included in your submittal:

An application for plan review that is filled out completely and accurately.

4 copies of the construction documents with the following information included:

Size & location of all existing and proposed structures on the site and parking areas

Distances from lot lines and between structures

Established street grades and proposed finished grades

Storm water management & erosion control details – other details may be required,

Landscaping plans

see Engineering and Planning and Zoning Division

Fully dimensioned drawings “sealed” by an Architect or Engineer (some exceptions)

Detailed Electrical, Plumbing, and HVAC plans

Building design data: use info, construction type, height and area limitations, etc.

Structural detail to evaluate: Soil bearing capacity, structural design criteria, etc.

Adequate detail to evaluate: egress, occupant loads, exit arrangement, corridors, doors,

stairs, emergency lights, accessibility, fire resistive construction, applicable material

specifications and fire protection system details when required.

Fees paid in advance

Note: Construction documents required to be submitted must be accepted for review by the Building Dept. If the Building Official does not approve the plans, this denial will be indicated in an adjudication order. Plans lacking the above will be accepted, however, incomplete drawings will not be approved. The above information is provided to expedite the plan approval process by allowing the submitter to provide all required information on the initial submission.