



Building Permit Process For Commercial Construction

Department of Planning & Development Review, Bureau of Permits and
Inspections

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Building Permit Process for Commercial Construction

The Commonwealth of Virginia adopted and the City Of Richmond enforces the 2018 Virginia Construction Code, 2018 Virginia Existing Building Code, 2018 Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code, 2018 Virginia Energy Conservation Code, 2009 ICC A117.1 Accessible and Usable Buildings and Facilities, 2018 Virginia Mechanical Code, 2017 National Electrical Code, 2018 Virginia Plumbing Code, and 2018 Virginia Fuel Gas Code. These codes are available on The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development website.

The intent of this guide is to help professionals and citizens compile complete submittals and to better understand the City of Richmond's permit process. Please do not hesitate to contact our office to obtain additional information or clarification. We will be happy to assist you.

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Building Permit Exemptions

Below is a list of building projects that can be completed without a permit. Please note the exception for projects within a historic district.

Virginia Residential Code Section 108—Application for Permit

The below information can be found at:

https://codes.iccsafe.org/content/VRC2018P2/chapter-1-administration#VRC2018P2_Ch01_Sec108

108.2 Exemptions from application for permit. Notwithstanding the requirements of Section 108.1, application for a permit and any related inspections shall not be required for the following; however, this section shall not be construed to exempt such activities from other applicable requirements of this code. In addition, when an owner or an owner's agent requests that a permit be issued for any of the following, then a permit shall be issued and any related inspections shall be required.

1. Installation of wiring and equipment that (i) operates at less than 50 volts, (ii) is for broadband communications systems, (iii) is exempt under Section 102.3(1) or 102.3(4), or (iv) is for monitoring or automation systems in dwelling units, except when any such installations are located in a plenum, penetrate fire rated or smoke protected construction or are a component of any of the following:
 - 1.1 Fire alarm system.
 - 1.2 Fire detection system.
 - 1.3 Fire suppression system.
 - 1.4 Smoke control system.
 - 1.5 Fire protection supervisory system.
 - 1.6 Elevator fire safety control system.
 - 1.7 Access or egress control system or delayed egress locking or latching system.
 - 1.8 Fire damper.
 - 1.9 Door control system.
2. One story detached structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses or similar uses, provided the building area does not exceed 256 square feet (23.78 m²) and the structures are not classified as a Group F-1 or H occupancy.
3. Detached prefabricated buildings housing the equipment of a publicly regulated utility service, provided the floor area does not exceed 150 square feet (14 m²).

4. Tents or air-supported structures, or both, that cover an area of 900 square feet (84 m²) or less, including within that area all connecting areas or spaces with a common means of egress or entrance, provided such tents or structures have an occupant load of 50 or less persons.
5. Fences of any height unless required for pedestrian safety as provided for by Section 3306, or used for the barrier for a swimming pool.
6. Concrete or masonry walls, provided such walls do not exceed 6 feet (1829 mm) in height above the finished grade. Ornamental column caps shall not be considered to contribute to the height of the wall and shall be permitted to extend above the 6 feet (1829 mm) height measurement.
7. Retaining walls supporting less than 3 feet (914 mm) of unbalanced fill that are not constructed for the purpose of impounding Class I, II or III-A liquids or supporting a surcharge other than ordinary unbalanced fill.
8. Swimming pools that have a surface area not greater than 150 square feet (13.95 m²), do not exceed 5,000 gallons (19 000 L) and are less than 24 inches (610 mm) deep.
9. Signs under the conditions in Section H101.2 of Appendix H.
10. Replacement of above-ground existing LP-gas containers of the same capacity in the same location and associated regulators when installed by the serving gas supplier.
11. Flagpoles 30 feet (9144 mm) or less in height.
12. Temporary ramps serving dwelling units in Group R-3 and R-5 occupancies where the height of the entrance served by the ramp is no more than 30 inches (762 mm) above grade.
13. Construction work deemed by the building official to be minor and ordinary and which does not adversely affect public health or general safety.
14. Ordinary repairs that include the following:
 - 14.1 Replacement of windows and doors with windows and doors of similar operation and opening dimensions that do not require changes to the existing framed opening and that are not required to be fire rated in Group R-2 where serving a single dwelling unit and in Groups R-3, R-4 and R-5.
 - 14.2 Replacement of plumbing fixtures and well pumps in all groups without alteration of the water supply and distribution systems, sanitary drainage systems or vent systems.
 - 14.3 Replacement of general use snap switches, dimmer and control switches, 125 volt-15 or 20 ampere receptacles, luminaires (lighting fixtures) and ceiling (paddle) fans in Group R-2 where serving a single dwelling unit and in Groups R-3, R-4 and R-5.
 - 14.4 Replacement of mechanical appliances provided such equipment is not fueled by gas or oil in Group R-2 where serving a single-family dwelling and in Groups R-3,

R-4 and R-5.

- 14.5 Replacement of an unlimited amount of roof covering or siding in Groups R-3, R-4 or R-5 provided the building or structure is not in an area where the nominal design wind speed is greater than 100 miles per hour (44.7 meters per second) and replacement of 100 square feet (9.29 m²) or less of roof covering in all groups and all wind zones.
 - 14.6 Replacement of 256 square feet (23.78 m²) or less of roof decking in Groups R-3, R-4 or R-5 unless the decking to be replaced was required at the time of original construction to be fire-retardant-treated or protected in some other way to form a fire-rated wall termination.
 - 14.7 Installation or replacement of floor finishes in all occupancies.
 - 14.8 Replacement of Class C interior wall or ceiling finishes installed in Groups A, E and I and replacement of all classes of interior wall or ceiling finishes in other groups.
 - 14.9 Installation or replacement of cabinetry or trim.
 - 14.10 Application of paint or wallpaper.
 - 14.11 Other repair work deemed by the building official to be minor and ordinary which does not adversely affect public health or general safety.
15. Crypts, mausoleums, and columbaria structures not exceeding 1,500 square feet (139.35 m²) in area if the building or structure is not for occupancy and used solely for the interment of human or animal remains and is not subject to special inspections.
16. Billboard safety upgrades to add or replace steel catwalks, steel ladders, or steel safety cable.

Exceptions:

- 1. Application for a permit may be required by the building official for the installation of replacement siding, roofing and windows in buildings within a historic district designated by a locality pursuant to Section 15.2-2306 of the Code of Virginia
- 2. Application for a permit may be required by the building official for any items exempted in this section which are located in a special flood hazard area.

Submission Requirements

To submit construction documents for review, you need to make application through the City Of Richmond's Online Permit Portal. All construction documents shall be uploaded as PDF's using the portal. Your application will be invoiced through the permit portal after an initial administrative review. Without payment your permit submission will not be move forward. The issuance of your permit and start of your project will be delayed.

Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, and Gas work is not included on a commercial *Building* permit. Each trade has a separate application that must be completed and submitted with the appropriate fee. All trade permits associated with a building permit will be "On Hold" until after the building permit is issued.

Where multiple buildings on the same site are being constructed each building shall be submitted individually. This does not apply to single structures separated into individual "buildings" by use of a fire wall with the intent to increase the size of the proposed structure.

Click on the link below for the Online Portal.

https://energov.richmondgov.com/EnerGov_Prod/SelfService/richmondvaproduct#/home

General Information

Application through the Online Permit Portal requires such information as the project's street address; description of work; estimated construction value including labor & materials; contact information for the owner, contractor, architect/engineer (where applicable), and contact person.

Contractor's Licenses or Owners Affidavit

Confirmation of a valid State Contractors License with the appropriate DPOR (Department of Professional and Occupational Regulations) classification is needed before a submission will move forward. Contractors are required to confirm they hold a valid Virginia business license. If the total construction value of their work in the City of Richmond totals \$25,000 or more in the previous 12 months (From date of submission back 12 months) then confirmation of a City of Richmond Business License is required before a submission can be accepted.

An applicant can apply for a permit without designating a contractor, as long as, an owner affidavit is submitted stating that he/she is not subject to licensure or certification as a contractor per Title 54.1-1111 of the Code of Virginia. Refer to The Code of Virginia Title 54.1-1101 for a list of exceptions from meeting the Code of Virginia Contractor Requirements. The owner affidavit form can be found on the City website in the Planning & Development Review Form Section or click on the link below.

<https://www.rva.gov/sites/default/files/2022-06/BuildingPermitOwnerStatement.pdf>

Construction Documents

All documents must be submitted as pdf files and uploaded during the application process. The pdf files shall be named per the following format:

Document Title-Submission Date (four digit year, two digit month, two digit day {ie. YYYYMMDD})-Address

For example a soil report submitted on April 1, 2023 for a project at 901 E Broad St would be named:

Soil Report-20230401-901 E Broad St

Below is a list of acceptable document titles:

- Plans
- Soil Report
- Asbestos Report
- COMcheck
- Specs
- Structural Report
- Narrative
- Response Letter (Submit with responses to comments or revisions)

Architectural Plans must be combined into a single pdf. If Civil plans are provided, they shall be combined into a separate pdf. Structural, Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing if provided can all be combined into separate pdf files by discipline. If plans are provided for multiple disciplines, the document titles will be as follows:

- Plans Arch
- Plans Civil
- Plans Struc
- Plans Mech
- Plans Plumb
- Plans Elec

For example, Structural Plans submitted on April 1, 2023, for a project at 901 E Broad St would be named:

Plans Struc-20230401-901 E Broad St

Plans should be blue/black lined. Plans which are incomplete or illegible will not be accepted. The scale must be noted on the plans, along with a graphical scale. All architectural and engineering plans shall be sealed and sign by a certified professional architect or engineer

responsible for the design in the Commonwealth of Virginia except where, exempted by Section 54.1-402 of the Code of Virginia.

Fees

The City of Richmond permit fees are generated on the provided construction costs and R. S. Means Estimating Calculations based on square footage and type of work. You will be invoiced for the fee amount once your application has been reviewed and processed by a Permit Technician. Fees that are \$5,000 or less should be paid through the Portal. Fees greater than \$5,000 must be paid by check. To avoid delays we advise you to request a fee quote prior to submitting your application. You can receive a quote by emailing PDRPERMITSANDINSPECTIONS@RVA.GOV. Please be clear on your email your intent is to receive a fee quote.

Construction Document Requirements

The following construction documents are required when submitting a commercial building permit application for any new building, addition, alteration, repair, change of use, interior demolition or partial demolition of an existing building.

Plans

All plans shall include the project address, the project name, and the name, address, phone number, and occupation of the designer. All sheets shall be numbered. Title 54.1-402 of the Code of Virginia can be referenced to determine if an Architect's seal is required. Below is a list of drawing set requirements:

1. Cover Sheet
 - a) Name of Project
 - b) Address
 - c) Drawing index

2. Life Safety Sheets
 - a) Name and edition of the code
 - b) Design Criteria
 - Seismic design category
 - Snow load
 - Wind load
 - Flood load and flood elevation
 - Geotechnical information.
 - Live load
 - Dead load
 - c) Type of Construction
 - d) Number of Stories and Building Height
 - e) Use and Occupancy Classification
 - f) Area and height limitations
 - g) Previous use if Change of Occupancy
 - h) Separated or non-separated mixed use (Mixed use buildings only)

- i) Occupant Load Analysis
 - j) Fire suppression system and type
 - k) Fire alarm system and type
 - l) Fire wall, Fire barrier, Fire partition, and Smoke barrier locations
 - m) UL Details for all rated assemblies
 - n) Fire penetration details
 - o) Means of egress analysis
 - p) Accessibility requirements
3. Site Plans (Required for new construction, additions, and exterior modifications)
- a) Building location and proposed modifications in relation to property lines
 - b) Site work
 - c) Erosion & sediment control
 - d) Parking (Indicate accessible spaces and route)
 - e) Encroachments on public roads, alleys, or sidewalks
4. Key plan
- a) Required for large projects and projects in strip centers or larger complexes
 - b) Provide building use of adjoining tenants were applicable
5. Architectural Plans
- a) Floor Plans
 - Clearly identify new, existing, and building elements to be removed
 - Provide Dimensions
 - Label Rooms
 - Provide Ceiling Heights
 - Show new and existing plumbing fixtures
 - Indicate accessibility clearances
 - Locate Stairs, Elevators, Lifts, and Ramps
 - Locate exist signs and egress lights
 - Locate Fire extinguishers
 - Provide system furniture and equipment layouts as it affects egress
 - b) Roof plan, including covering material and slopes (Where applicable)
 - c) Building Elevations

- d) Building Sections and details
- e) Wall Sections
 - Indicate Material types
 - Identify Required fire-resistant assemblies
 - Indicate Insulation R values
- f) Sections of all new stairs including tread, riser, handrail, and guard dimensions
- g) Partition Types
- h) Door and Window Schedules
 - Indicate sizes
 - Provide Fire rating
 - Provide Hardware information
 - Indicate location of safety glazing
 - Provide U Factors
- i) Structural Plans (Where Applicable)
 - Provide sealed drawings where required by Title 54.1-402 of the Code of Virginia
 - Foundation plans
 - Floor framing plans
 - Roof Framing plans
 - Sections and details

Soils Report

A Soils Report including foundation recommendations are required for new buildings and additions.

Asbestos Report

Virginia Construction Code Section 110.3

In accordance with § 36-99.7 of the Code of Virginia, the *local building department* shall not issue a building permit allowing a *building* for which an initial building permit was issued before January 1, 1985, to be renovated or demolished until the *local building department* receives certification from the *owner* or his agent that the affected portions of the *building* have been inspected for the presence of asbestos by an individual licensed to perform such inspections pursuant to § 54.1-503 of the Code of Virginia and that no asbestos-containing materials were found or that appropriate response actions will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Clean Air Act National Emission Standard for the Hazardous Air Pollutant (NESHAPS) (40 CFR Part 61, Subpart M), and the asbestos worker protection requirements established by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration for *construction* workers (29 CFR 1926.1101). Local educational agencies that are subject to the requirements

established by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) shall also certify compliance with 40 CFR Part 763 and subsequent amendments thereto.

To meet the inspection requirements above, except with respect to schools, asbestos inspection of renovation projects consisting only of repair or replacement of roofing, floorcovering, or siding materials may be satisfied by a statement that the materials to be repaired or replaced are assumed to contain friable asbestos and that asbestos installation, removal, or encapsulation will be accomplished by a licensed asbestos contractor.

The provisions of this section shall not apply to single family dwellings or residential housing with four or fewer units unless the renovation or demolition of such buildings is for commercial or public development purposes. The provisions of this section shall not apply if the combined amount of regulated asbestos-containing material involved in the renovation or demolition is less than 260 linear feet (79.25 lm) on pipes or less than 160 square feet (14.86 m²) on other facility components or less than 35 cubic feet (1 m³) of facility components where the length or area could not be measured previously.

An abatement area shall not be reoccupied until the *building official* receives certification from the *owner* that the response actions have been completed and final clearances have been measured. The final clearance levels for reoccupancy of the abatement area shall be 0.01 or fewer asbestos fibers per cubic centimeter if determined by Phase Contrast Microscopy analysis (PCM) or 70 or fewer *structures* per square millimeter if determined by Transmission Electron Microscopy analysis (TEM).

To obtain Asbestos Certification form please click on the link below:

<https://www.rva.gov/sites/default/files/2022-08/Asbestos-Certification.pdf>

COMcheck

Clearly communicate on the submitted documents that you meet the thermal envelope requirements established in Table C402.1.3 of the 2018 Virginia Energy Conservation Code or provide COMcheck documentation showing the proposed design meets the Virginia Energy Conservation Code.

COMcheck software is available at the website listed below. The software is intended to simplify the process of determining if the intended design meets the requirements of the Virginia Energy Conservation Code and ASHRAE Standard 90.1.

<https://www.energycodes.gov/comcheck>

Specifications

Provide Specifications as needed, if they contain building code information not provided on the plans. For example, hardware specifications may be required if the plans do not include locking information or door closer information. Roofing specifications may be required if the plans do not communicate the roof covering classification.

Special Inspection Documents

Chapter 17 of the Virginia Construction Code requires special inspections above and beyond those performed by the City of Richmond. The applicant is responsible for requesting all special inspections in addition to requesting those required by the City of Richmond. The approved Special Inspector shall be employed by the Owner.

Once an application is received, the plan reviewer assigned to the project will provide information concerning the required Special Inspections Meeting. They will forward contact information for the City employee designated to coordinate the requirements established in the Virginia Construction Code.

Material Safety Data Sheets

MSDS sheets must be submitted for hazardous materials stored in or near the building. A list of materials and quantity of material stored is required to accurately review the project design.

Plan Review and Approval of Construction Documents

After submitting your application and construction documents, a Permit Technician will: review your package for the minimum requirements. If the submission is complete then the Permit Technician will Invoice the Permit Fees. Once the payment has been processed, your submission will be technically reviewed by the appropriate plan examiners in accordance with applicable codes, ordinances, regulations and standards. The various agencies will review your documents simultaneously verses sequentially.

Below is a list of Departments or Divisions that your plans could be routed to based on the scope of work submitted:

- Building
- Zoning
- Planning and Preservation
- Public Utilities
- Water Resources Division
- Public Works

At the time of submission, your application will be given a tracking number referred to as a “Plan Number”. Once your application is approved a “Permit Number” will be issued. These two numbers will be unique and will not match. While under review you can check on the status of your application using the Online Permit Portal.

Once approved, the City of Richmond will send an email to the applicant stating the permit and City stamped documents can be downloaded from the Online Permit Portal. A copy of the Permit and the City stamped documents must be kept on the building site and the inspector must have access to this set while the structure is under construction.

Responding to Plan Review Comments

If questions arise or discrepancies are discovered when the construction documents are examined, plan review comments will be uploaded on the Online Permit Portal. An e-mail will be sent to the Applicant notifying him/her the comments are available for downloading. If a submission is routed to multiple departments/divisions, an applicant potentially could receive review comments from multiple reviewers on different dates.

Once all questions and discrepancies have been addressed, revised documents must be submitted through the Online Permit Portal and the Building Plan Reviewer must be notified via email. Revised documents shall be resubmitted as pdf files and organized in the same format as the initial submission. Do not email revised plans directly to the plan reviewers. It is important that all routed departments receive resubmissions. This will be accomplished if you follow the procedure above.

Revised documents must be resubmitted in their entirety. Do not resubmit a single sheet from a full set of drawings or one revised detail from an engineer's report. The goal is to have one complete stamped and approved set of drawings and reports when the review process is complete. The plan examiners and intake staff are unable to create complete plan sets from multiple submissions. This is the responsibility of the applicant.

Post Permit Revision Process

Every building must be constructed per the construction documents approved by the City of Richmond, Bureau of Permits and Inspections. If construction changes are required after the permit is issued, those changes need to be reviewed and approved by the City of Richmond, Bureau of Permits and Inspection before initiation and incorporation of the work.

Post permit revisions must be submitted through the City's One Drive system with the attached Plan Intake Form. An invoice will be generated and made available to the Applicant through the Online Permit Portal once the OneDrive submission is processed by a Permit Technician. The applicant will be charged 10% of the original permit fee plus fees for any increased construction costs based on the change in scope. There is a \$30.00 minimum fee for all post permit revisions.

Inspections

Construction can begin after the submitted documents are approved and a permit is issued. You can schedule inspections through the Online Permit Portal.

Below is a list of typical building inspections. An applicant needs to request only those inspections related to their scope of work.

BUILDING INSPECTIONS

Footing – The footing trench must be completely prepared for concrete. Grade pegs must be in place. Location, depth, width, reinforcing, and soil conditions will be checked.

Foundation –Footing inspection must have been approved. For poured concrete foundations, call for the inspection when forms are in place and before placing the concrete. For masonry foundations, call before framing starts. The inspector will check materials, size of foundation, anchoring, vent placement, access doors, and reinforcing.

Slab – If there are underslab electrical or plumbing installations, trade inspection approvals must be obtained before calling for a slab inspection. The inspector will check soil condition, compaction, thickness, reinforcing, vapor barriers and expansion joints.

Framing – Rough in inspections must be approved for electrical, plumbing, and mechanical work prior to requesting a framing inspection. Approved plans must be on the job site. The inspector will check lumber grades, nailing schedules, cutting, notching, and adherence to approved plans.

Insulation – The insulation inspection can be requested after the framing inspection has been approved, and all insulation has been installed.

Sill – For siding replacement or installation, call for the sill inspection when the bottom boards of existing siding are removed and the existing sill is exposed. The inspector will check for soundness of existing sills.

Veneer – Call for the veneer inspection when all the sheathing is secured and the doors and windows are wrapped. The inspector will check for the type of sheathing, proper installation of sheathing, and nailing schedule.

Other – This is used for inspections other than those listed above.

Fire Separation -This inspection is used to inspect fire-resistance rated wall assemblies, vertical assemblies and fire blocking materials approved for use as fire blocking to resist the free passage of flame to other areas of the building through concealed spaces.

Partial Final – This inspection is used only on large commercial projects to final out a portion of the building. For example, a floor or wing.

Building Final – Call for the building final inspection when all work on the approved plans is completed. This inspection is required before a Certificate of Occupancy will be issued.

Zoning Final, Required for all Certificates of Occupancy.

To schedule your Zoning Final, contact: PDRZoningAdministration@rva.gov or call (804) 646-6340. Submit your request Only AFTER work is completed and Zoning Staff will inspect the site within two (2) days of your inspection request.

Additionally, please be aware of the following zoning requirements that need to be completed:

- Parking area paving, striping, buffers and interior landscaping
- Trash collection area screening (fencing).
- For new main buildings, an “as-built” survey is necessary to show building setbacks in relation to the front, rear and side property lines and the provision of on-site parking.
- For properties with special approvals, all conditions of the approval must be met. These items will be verified and may include; Building materials or color, mechanical equipment location and screening, signage, landscaping, lighting, etc.

Land Disturbing Maintenance – are conducted once every two weeks and within a 48 hour period after a significant rain event (Call 804-646-7586 to request inspection)

Land Disturbing Final- Required for New Building Certificates of Occupancy (Call 804-646-7586 to request inspection)

Public Works Final, Required for New Building Certificates of Occupancy (Call 804-646-0436 to request inspection)

Inspection requests can be made 24 hours a day. Please note that all building inspections must be scheduled before midnight the day before the inspection appointment. To find out your inspection time please call your assigned inspector the morning of your scheduled inspection between 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. To cancel an inspection and avoid a possible re-inspection fee, please call your inspector or the Bureau of Permits and Inspections office by 9:00 a.m. the day of the inspection. You can review the inspection history of your permit by going to the website listed below.

https://energov.richmondgov.com/EnerGov_Prod/selfservice#/home

Virginia Construction Code Section 113.8—Final Inspection

Upon completion of *construction* for which a permit was issued, a final inspection shall be conducted to ensure that any defective work has been corrected and that all work complies with the USBC and has been *approved*, including any work associated with modifications under Section 106.3. The *building official* shall be permitted to require the electrical service to a *building* or *structure* to be energized prior to conducting the final inspection. Approval of the final inspection indicates that all work associated with the permit complies with this code and the permit is complete. Prior to occupancy or change of occupancy of a *building* or *structure*, a certificate of occupancy shall be issued in accordance with Section 116.

Permit Expiration

Building permits expire six months after the permit is issued or six months after the last inspection. If your permit expires, you can file an Application for Permit Extension. This form can be obtained at the intake counter or using the link below. There is a \$25 fee for permit extensions.

https://www.rva.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/Permit_Extension_Application.pdf

Audit

An audit is required for projects \$1,500,000 and over. The estimated construction costs and final construction costs will be compared to determine if the original permit fees need to be adjusted. The building inspector can provide information concerning who to contact to start the audit process.

Certificate of Occupancy

A Certificate of Occupancy must be obtained prior to occupancy of a new building or new tenant space.

The Certificate of Occupancy for new construction will not be issued until there is a successful final building inspection, final zoning inspection, final land disturbance inspection, and final public works inspection.

To request a Certificate of Occupancy, submit the form linked below through the City's OneDrive system. Once all inspections are approved, the Permit Technician reviewing your request will email your Certificate of Occupancy.

[Request a Final Building Certificate of Occupancy Form](#)

Additional Submission Requirements

Additional Permits may be required above and beyond the building and trade permits depending on the project scope and project location. Refer to the Planning and Preservation, Water Resources, Zoning and Public Works sections below for general information concerning requirements for special conditions. Each department should be contacted for more specific information.

Department of Planning and Development Review—Planning and Preservation Division

If your property is located within a City Old and Historic District, a certificate of appropriateness from the Commission of Architecture Review is required for any new construction or exterior alterations that are visible from the public right of way prior to the issuance of a building permit. Alterations typically exempt from application for permit may require a permit if located within a historic district per the exception in Section 108.2 of the Virginia Construction Code and Section 15.2-2306 of the Code of Virginia. To determine if your property is within a City Old and Historic District, please consult the City's Zoning Map ([here](#)). For more information on the review process of Commission of Architectural Review, please contact Planning and Preservation staff at (804)646-6335 or visit <https://www.rva.gov/planning-development-review/planning-and-preservation>

Department of Public Utilities—Water Resources Division

The City of Richmond Water Resources Division issues three types of permits. Land Disturbing permits, Richmond Stormwater Management permits (RSMP), and on-site (civil) stormwater permits. Water Resources is also a part of the review team for most other types of building permits including but not limited to residential and commercial permits for new and redevelopment projects, demolition and some trade permits. Most building permits for the construction of detached, single family dwellings that are not a part of a common plan of development, will require a separate land disturbing permit.

Land Disturbing Permit (LDIS)

LDIS Permit is required for all proposed new or redevelopment land disturbing on a site greater than 4,000 square feet, not in a Chesapeake Bay buffer area, and not in the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) area of the City. This permit will cover all erosion and sediment control, site drainage, and floodplain regulatory requirements. See below for more information on permit submittal and requirements.

Richmond Stormwater Management Permit (RSMP)

RSMP Permit is a required for land disturbance one (1) acre or greater that drains to the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) area of the City. This permit will cover all erosion and sediment control, storm drainage installation for pipes, inlets, outfalls, and

structural and non-structural best management practices, Chesapeake Bay and floodplain regulatory requirements.

*All projects in the Chesapeake Bay Areas (RMA/RPA) must submit with the permit application a Chesapeake Bay plan and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) if part of a common plan of development.

Storm Drainage Permits

A **Storm Drainage Permit (STRM)** is required when a stormwater management system must be installed, upgraded, or improved. This permit typically is required in conjunction with a land disturbing permit but can be applied for when small stormwater work is required without land disturbing.

To apply for a LDIS, Stormwater Drainage or RSMP permit, submit the following to Room 108 of City Hall:

Application for permit and fee

Water Resources Plan Review Checklist Plan with erosion and sediment controls (electronic file for review)

DPU Designation of RLD form and a copy of the RLD's license

* Agreement in Lieu of ESC Plan for Detached SFD form. Please note that the RLD needs to sign this form.

* DEQ Agreement in Lieu of Stormwater Management Plan for Detached SFD form

*The Agreement in Lieu of ESC Plan and the Agreement in Lieu of Stormwater Management Plan are only required if there are no erosion and sediment control or stormwater management plans prepared by a licensed engineer.

Land disturbance work will require a surety bond. Information regarding the surety bond will be sent to the applicant as part of the review process. Surety bond payment and agreement must be received and processed before the LDIS or RSMP or Stormwater Drainage Permit can be issued. Bonds will be returned once the site is inspected by a City of Richmond E&S inspector, 80% vegetation has been established on site, and a written request for bond release is submitted by the owner.

For more information call Water Resources @ 804-646-7586 or visit us online at

For information about LDIS, stormwater Drainage or RSMP permit applications, plan requirements and fees please go to Department of Public Utilities website.

<https://www.rva.gov/public-utilities/stormwater-management>

(This document is intended as guidance only and is subject to change based on revisions to any applicable local, state or federal code laws and regulations.)

Department of Public Works—Right-Of-Way Division

A Work-in-Streets Permit (WISP) is required whenever work is done within the public right-of-way, a public easement, or impacts a public facility. Examples of work requiring a WISP are as follows:

- The placement and/or use of equipment and materials on sidewalks, curbs and gutters, streets, alleys and easements. (i.e. use of ladders, lifts, and cranes, placement of dumpsters, PODs, and trailers)

- Any improvements to or within the public right-of-way or easement. (i.e. repairing or installing sidewalk, driveway aprons, curb, gutter and/or streets).

- The installation, repair, or removal of entrances or driveway aprons to public streets.

- Excavation and connection or removal of private sanitary or storm facilities to the public sewer system.

- The installation and/or repair of signs, canopies and awnings, footings, or other building features above, at, or below public sidewalks, streets, or alleys. (A separate encroachment application must be submitted.)

There is an application for WISPs and fees for inspections, along with requirements for insurance and bonding.

Email: RightofWay@Richmondgov.com

Web: <https://www.rva.gov/public-works/right-way-management>

Zoning Review and Approval

Every property within the City of Richmond is located within a designated zoning district, which specifies the allowable use of the property as well regulating other site specific features that affect a proposed project. The most common attributes reviewed include: the distance between structures and property lines, density, lot dimensions, height, parking, and other development standards. Depending on the project, architectural design and landscaping standards may also apply to the property or project and is typically a requirement for new construction.

The Zoning Office reviews almost all building permit applications for commercial and residential development as well as inspects and approves development prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.). Zoning also reviews all electrical permits for parking lot lighting and all sign permits as well as other permits as needed.

In order, for the Zoning Office to review an application, please provide the following information:

1. Site address (If in a multi-unit building, specify Suite, Room, Unit, etc.).
2. Use (Specify what the building or area is going to be used for).
3. Scope of Work (The more detailed the information, the faster the review).
4. Site plan or survey, unless work is interior only. (The location of the work needs to be shown, with dimensions). Zoning maintains the right to request a site plan or survey as needed.
5. Floor plan (Label the areas of the building interior; include dimensions or provide scale).
6. Elevation drawing (Show the height and materials).

The better the information and plans, the better the chance of expediting the review of your application as well as the less chance we will need to contact you to provide additional information.

Finally, type or write legibly, especially with regard to your contact information. If we cannot decipher your name, phone number or E-mail, we cannot contact you about your review status.

Zoning Administration contact information:

Address: 900 East Broad Street, City Hall-Room 108, Richmond, Virginia 23219

Phone Number: (804) 646-6340

Email: PDRZoningAdministration@rva.gov

Web: <https://www.rva.gov/planning-development-review/zoning-administration>

Construction Trailers

Construction Documents for temporary construction trailers shall include the following:

1. Provide proposed Use classification and Occupant Load.
2. Provide exterior dimensions of trailer.
3. Locate trailer on site plan in relation to property lines and adjacent structures on site.
4. Show proposed parking spaces.
5. Indicate if the trailer will have a functioning restroom.
6. Provide tie down details.
7. Provide step and ramp details.
8. Provide information from trailer data plate including code under which the trailer was manufactured.
9. Indicate how long the trailer will be on site.

Contact Information

The City of Richmond, Planning and Development Review website is

<https://www.rva.gov/planning-development-review>

The International Code Council website is

<https://www.iccsafe.org/>

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development website is

<http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/>

Call the City of Richmond 311 Call Center to reach the Bureau of Permits and Inspections

Important Phone Numbers:

Main Number: (804) 646-4169

Commercial Plan Review: (804) 646-6978

Structural Plans Review: (804) 646-6978

Plumbing Plans Review: (804) 646-6966

Electrical Plans Review: (804) 646-3611

Mechanical Plans Review: (804) 646-4169

Planning & Preservation: (804) 646-6335

Zoning: (804) 646-6340

For Inspection Requests, please use our automated system: (804) 646-0770



FILLED IN BY APPLICANT – All boxes in this section must be completed if applicable

Date:	Plan # –	Permit # –
Address:		

Your Name:	Email Address:
Phone Number:	Contractor Name:
Revision Description:	

Has the permit been issued	Yes	No	Cost increase to job (if any) - \$
For revised plans, are the changes clouded	Yes	No	Are the plans signed/sealed (if applicable) Yes No
Revised due to plan review comments	Yes	No	Revised due to inspector comments Yes No Revised due to design Changes: Yes No

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received:	Date Reviewed:	10% Revision fee required:	Yes No
Original Permit Fee - \$	Original Cost of Work - \$	New Cost of Work - \$	
Comments:			

Revision Resubmittal – Plan Intake Sheet
 Department of Planning and Development Review
 Bureau of Permits and Inspections
 900 East Broad Street, Room 108
 Richmond, Virginia 23219
 Phone (804) 646-4169