



Steps to take prior to submitting permits to the City of Covington:

Consider these things before building, leasing or remodeling business space.

- **Speak with the property owner or manager regarding any tenant improvement:**
As the owner, they will be required to sign all permit applications.
- **Find the right professional to assist in the process:**
Consider hiring an architect, planner, engineer or other professional early in the process to assist with the permitting process. For a first time applicant, the process can seem overwhelming and complicated, and having a professional help to navigate the code requirements is money well spent. Include your professional in any meetings.
- **Submit quality plans stamped by a professional:** Most expansions and improvements to any tenant space will require plans stamped by a professional architect or engineer. The City cannot stress enough that the quality of plans provided for review will result in the timeliness of review and ease of permitting. Be sure the applicant or professional is skilled and familiar with the applicable codes. Having a professional not versed in how to design plans will only add time and money to any project approval.
- **Undertake research:** The City's downtown zoning code and design standards can be found on the City website. These documents are applicable to development in our downtown core and are filled with quick reference charts regarding zoning, parking requirements, height limitation, and more.

Online Resources

The City website has all the forms and checklists you'll need to complete your project.

There are also helpful handouts for all permitting processes that can save time and money.



- **Compile a list of questions:** Project requirements are often interrelated between planning and building. To better assist applicants when they contact the City, it's helpful to be able to discuss the full scope of the project and related questions.
- **Contact the City early and often:** Throughout the process, the applicant is encouraged to contact the Permit Center to ask questions, seek advice, and request city codes, permitting guidelines, or handouts to assist with a new or remodeled business location.

Covington City Hall

Contact the City Permit Center to find information on:

- **Zoning:** Is your business use allowed in the zoning district? (Retail, office, storage, or assembly and manufacturing)
- **Permit Applications:** What tenant improvement permits will be required? (Building, mechanical, plumbing, electrical, and fire)
- **Signs:** What sign permits will be required? (permanent, temporary, banners)
- **Required Improvements:** Based upon project scope, the building code will determine which improvements are required. Building codes are updated every three years, as required by the State of Washington.
- **Required Modifications:** Many times new regulations are passed by local, state or federal governments that require modifications to business spaces to protect workers and customers from fire and life safety hazards, including Americans with Disabilities requirements. These regulations are generally implemented for permits related to an addition, a major improvement, or an actual new business.
- **Review Times:** Some permits are issued same-day, over-the-counter and others require more extensive review and could take up to three to four weeks.
- **Current City & State Laws:** It's better to learn what is required by city and state laws initially, than to act first and spend extra time making corrections that can be very costly.
- **Pre-Application Meetings:** Depending on project scope, the City may request a one-hour pre-application meeting with Planning, Building, Fire, and Public Works staff. It's a great time to discuss details of a project with the staff who will be completing the project review.

Track permits online!

You can track your permit review online via PermitTrax. (A link is on the City website.)

Permit Center Hours: Monday – Thursday, 8am – 4pm

The City permit counter operates by appointment only for both submittal and pick-up of permits. It allows our small permitting staff (only 2.5 persons) to manage their time and provide each customer with undivided attention while discussing a project. The City encourages appointments, even for front counter questions, but does not require them. Drop-ins are served as staff time is available, but be aware that one may have to wait at times.