



City of Whitehouse Developer's Guide

A publication to help understand the building process
in the City of Whitehouse.

Development Services

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Introduction

The City of Whitehouse is pleased to present the Developer's Guide handbook. We hope you find the information here to be helpful and useful as you plan your project.

The information contained herein is subject to periodic change so please be sure to check back frequently for any updates.

Each section contains a summary, flowchart and checklist which is followed by frequently asked questions to better communicate the process of development in Whitehouse. The sections are ordered to match that of a development project from zoning approval to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.). A list of meeting submittal deadlines and meeting times is provided as are submittal requirements for the various processes.

Staff has made every effort to simplify and condense portions of the various Ordinances that govern development in Whitehouse for the benefit of developers; however, it is advised that the Ordinances be consulted for full details and clarifications. **The Ordinances shall have precedent over this document if any discrepancies or conflicts should arise between this document and the Ordinances.**

The Developer's Guide will be updated as often as possible, but its effectiveness will depend on input from the development community. Please feel free to send comments or suggestions to the development office.

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Building Permits

Building Permit Process Overview

Building permitting is the process through which the City ensures compliance with all codes and ordinances, relative to the construction of buildings and building sites. The process includes Development Permit (for drainage, erosion control and flood plain considerations) and Site Plan approval. Development and construction procedures for projects include the issuance of a building permit and the issuance of a C.O. upon successful completion of the project.

Building Permits

The building permit process begins with the applicant submitting a complete building permit application, for residential development two (2) complete sets of plans and for commercial development four (4) complete sets of plans which include a site plan showing drainage and energy compliance documentation to the Development Office. After review, approval and the appropriate fees are paid, the building permit is issued. Construction must begin within 180 days of the issuance of the building permit. At least one building inspection must occur for each 180 days or the work will be considered abandoned and will require a new permit to be issued. Permits are good for one (1) year only. One extension of time may be granted at the request of the Developer and at the discretion of the Development Office.

Site Plan

Detailed requirements for the Site Plan are outlined in the Submittal Requirements section in the appendix of this guide. Site Plans will be reviewed by the following departments:

- Development
- Public Works

- Fire
- Police

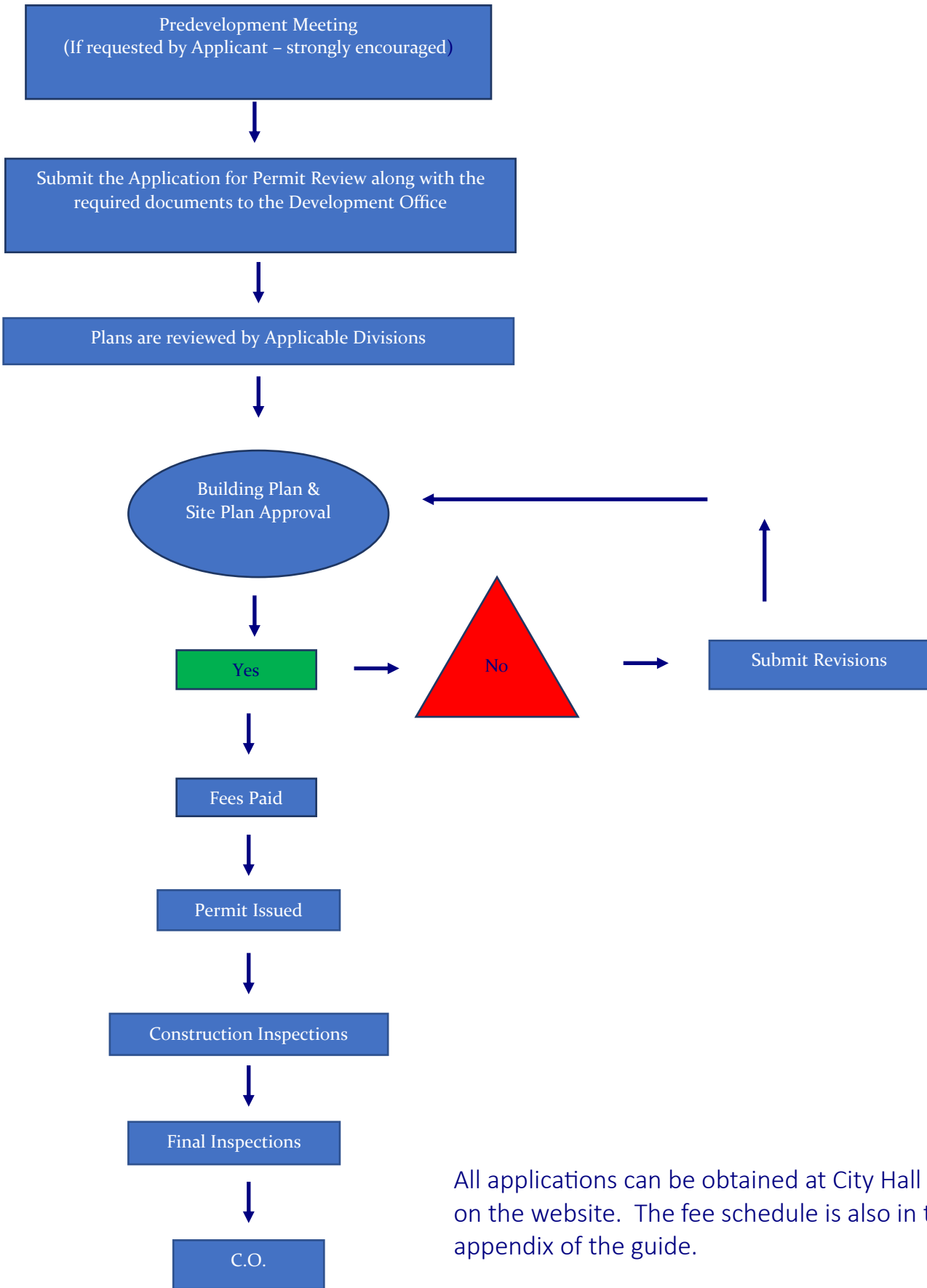
Each division possesses a specific area of responsibility. The Development Office will coordinate the process and inform the applicant of the results.

Certificates of Occupancy

The Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.) can be applied for with the building permit application by the General Contractor. For new and remodel construction the process is automatically done. When there is a change in use or change in occupancy of an existing building a separate application for a C.O. is required. The C.O. will be issued only after all final inspections have been approved.

C.O.s are required for all commercial structures and all commercial use property. A new C.O. MUST be obtained when the occupancy or use changes.

Building Permit Process Flowchart



All applications can be obtained at City Hall or on the website. The fee schedule is also in the appendix of the guide.

Commercial Building Permit Process Checklist

Procedural

- Meet all zoning, setback, parking and platting requirements
- Determine that property is zoned appropriately for the proposed use
- Check the Development Office for general requirements of the permit sought

Submittal

- Submit a development permit application to the Development Office
- Submit four (4) sets of building plans which include a site plan showing drainage and the completed application to the Development Office.
 - Proposed General Use
 - Current and Valid Address of the Property
 - Floor Plans and Elevations
 - Foundation Design
 - Structure Design
 - Fire Resistance Integrity Details
 - Mechanical, Plumbing & Electrical Designs
 - Architect or Engineer's Seal, if required (buildings 5,000 square feet and greater, buildings with spans of 24' or greater & retaining walls over 4' (measurement includes the footings))
 - Energy Code Compliance Data (COMcheck Energy Compliance Certificate)
 - Asbestos Survey (not applicable for new construction)
 - Proof of Submission Form from a State Licensed Registered Accessibility Specialist and a TAS Permit Number for Projects Exceeding \$50,000.

After Obtaining the Building Permit and Paying Fees

- Install Erosion Control Measures
- Commence construction
- Obtain required inspections
- Obtain certificate for storm water drainage
- Permanent erosion control in place (on all disturbed areas)
- Obtain a C. O.

Residential Building Permit Process Checklist

Procedural

- Meet all zoning, setback, parking and platting requirements.
- Determine that property is zoned appropriately for proposed use.
- Check the Development Office for general requirements of the permit sought.

Submittal

- Submit a development permit application to the Development Office
- Submit two (2) sets of building plans which include a site plan showing drainage and the completed application to the Development Office.
 - Current and Valid Address of the Property
 - Floor Plans and Elevations
 - Foundation Design and Wall Construction Details
 - Site Plan including drainage
 - Mechanical, Plumbing & Electrical Designs
 - Door and Window Schedules
 - Architect or Engineer's Seal, if required (buildings 5,000 square feet and greater, buildings with spans of 24' or greater & retaining walls over 4' (measurement includes the footings))
 - Energy Code Compliance Data (COMcheck Energy Compliance Certificate)
 - Install Erosion Control Measures

After Obtaining the Building Permit and Paying Fees

- Install Erosion Control Measures
- Commence construction
- Obtain required inspections
- Obtain certificate for storm water drainage
- Permanent erosion control in place (on all disturbed areas)
- Obtain a C. O.

Building Permit Process FAQ

Under what conditions would I apply for a building permit?

You would apply for this permit for all types of new construction, additions and alterations for any new or existing structure, other than cosmetic or non-structural changes. Please call the Development Office if you are not sure.

Why does the City Review project plans?

The City reviews all plans to ensure that the plans are in compliance with all codes and ordinances applicable to construction and development in the City of Whitehouse. This process ensures the applicant is informed of the requirements before the commencement of construction.

Now that I have met all the zoning and platting requirements and I have submitted the required paperwork to the Development Office, what is my next step?

Once a **complete application** is received the Development Office has set a goal of reviewing commercial applications within 10 working days and reviewing residential application within 5 working days. An application that is incomplete or does not meet the minimum code requirements will take longer. The Development Office will notify you of the status of your application and whether it has been approved. You may call 903-510-7502 for a status update at any time.

When are fees required and how much are they?

All applicable building and plan review and fees are required at the time the permit is issued. Tap fees (if applicable) are also required to be paid at the time the permit is issued. Fees will be determined by the type of work being done. See appendix for permit fee schedule.

Does my building permit include the work of my subcontractors or trades?

No, each subcontractor will need to pull and pay for their own permit.

When can I start construction?

You may begin construction any time after the building permit has been issued. A building permit will expire if work has not commenced within 180 days from the issue date.

What codes are used by the City?

The City of Whitehouse uses the ICC 2012 Edition for International Building Code, International Residential Code for One and Two Family Dwellings, International Fire Code, International Energy Conservation Code, International Mechanical Code, International Property Maintenance Code, International Existing Building Code, International Plumbing Code and the 2011 National Electric Code.

How many city divisions are involved in the inspection of my construction and when will the inspections be made?

This varies depending on the project; any or all of the following may be involved:

- Planning and Zoning
- Development Office
- Public Works
- Fire Department

Building inspections are done by a third party inspector. These are done after hours – nights, early mornings and weekends. When at all possible please call the Development Office 24 hours in advance of your needed inspections to ensure that it can be performed when needed.

Fire Inspections are scheduled through the Fire Chief.

What types of building inspections are required?

- Plumbing Rough In
- Temporary Electrical Pole (done at the plumbing rough in or foundation inspection)
- Foundation
- Framing (4 pack)
(framing, plumbing top out, electrical rough in, mechanical rough in)
- Final (including landscaping)
- Fire Line
- Fire Alarm

- Fire Sprinkler System
- Commercial Hood
- Water/Sewer lines

If I am not at the site when the inspections are made, how will I know if the work has been approved?

A green or red tag will be posted in the immediate vicinity of the work inspected. Green tags indicate approval while a red tag indicates corrections must be made. If you receive a red tag please call the Development Office for a reinspection after the corrections are made. A reinspection fee will apply.

When can I use and occupy my building?

After all final inspections and approvals have been obtained. A C.O. must be issued prior to use and occupancy.

What kind of permit will I need if I plan to alter or remodel an existing structure?

You will need to obtain permits for those parts of the structure affected. For example, if you plan to install a new heating system, replace a sewer line, or rewire the existing structure, a separate permit would be required for each aspect of remodeling.

What types of contractor's licenses are required?

Electrical, plumbing and mechanical contractors require licenses. There are some exceptions to the licensing requirements for homeowners. Contact the Building Department for these exceptions.

Do I need to register with the City as a contractor?

Yes, all contractors need to register with the City and provide applicable licenses and provide proof of liability insurance.

Do I need a permit for fencing?

Yes

Do I need a permit for a sign?

Yes, for most signs. For exceptions to this contact the Development Office.

How do I obtain a C.O. for an existing building?

You can apply for an existing building C.O. and pay the required fee. The C.O. will only be issued after all required inspections are done and approved.

How can I request an appeal of the interpretation of the code by the Development Office or a variance to the code?

Variance and appeal applications forms are available at City Hall or online. Submit the application and any necessary fees.

What are the structural plan submittal requirements for Pre-Engineered Buildings?

If complete stamped structural plans are not submitted with the building plans, a letter of certification by a Qualified Texas licensed engineer verifying that the design of the building conforms with the City's building codes must be submitted.

Are there special requirements for the construction of a food service establishments?

If the permit involves a for service area, a Food Establishment Permit **MUST** be obtained prior to opening the establishment. A list of specific requirements for construction of a food establishment may be obtained by contacting the Northeast Texas Health Department:
<https://www.mynethealth.org/> or 903-535-0037

Are there special requirements for building in the flood plain?

Yes; please contact the Development Office to discuss.

Zoning

Zoning Process Overview

Zoning is one of the major functions of municipal government, authorized by State Law, which divides the City into distinct districts for the purpose of regulating the use and development of land. Through the zoning process, the City attempts to ensure compatible land use patterns by minimizing conflict between uses thereby protecting property values and enhancing the urban environment.

The Zoning Ordinance is a body of regulations pertaining to allowable uses within given zoning districts, characteristics of the sites occupied by those uses, and the geographic area contained within the boundaries of zoning districts.

If it is determined that your proposed use conflicts with the allowable uses within the existing zoning district, you may consider making an application for a request to change the designated zoning of your site to one that will accommodate your proposed use. This change may entail expansion of existing adjacent zoning boundaries, change of the existing district to another standard zoning district, or a request for the establishment of a Planned Development district. Planned Development districts (PD's) are designed to allow creative site design, flexibility in use, or additional regulation not provided for within the standard zoning districts.

The second step will be the submission of your application for zoning change or Specific Use Permit. If your application requires the submission of a general site plan which is required of all Planned Developments, the information must be submitted along with the zoning application. Note that all property owners within 200' of the subject property are notified of the requested zoning change and are invited to attend all public hearings concerning the zoning change. If the change in zoning is for the sale of alcohol the distance of notification changes from 200' to 300' of the subject property.

Specific Use Permits, while not zoning districts within themselves, are special permits mandated by the Zoning Ordinance allowing particular use of a site within a standard zoning district under certain conditions and restrictions.

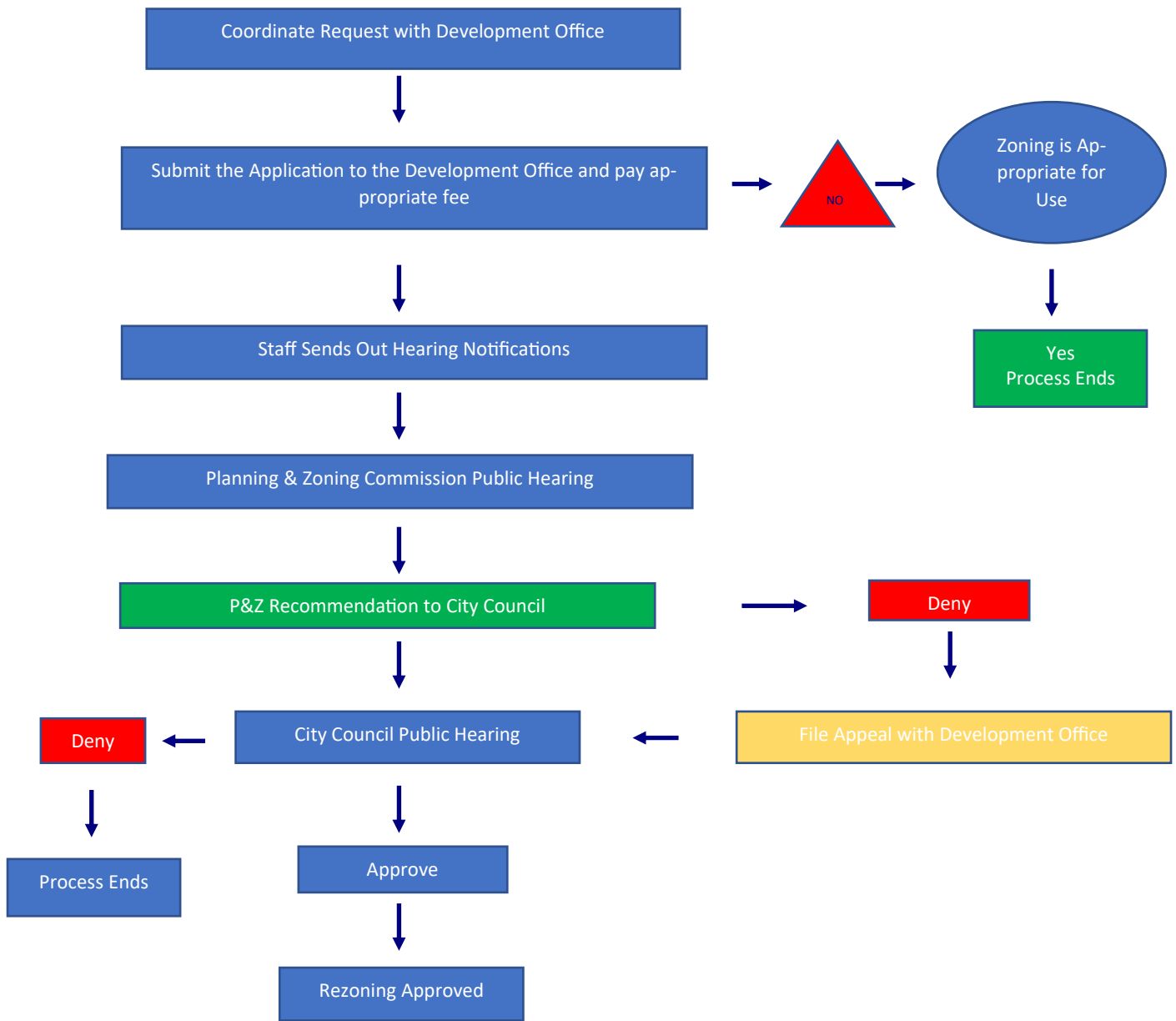
Planned Developments (PD's)

Planned Developments, or PD's, accommodate planned associations of uses developed as integral land use unites. These can include industrial districts, offices, commercial or service centers, shopping centers, residential developments of multiple or mixed housing including attached single-family dwellings or any appropriate combination thereof. Planned Developments may be used to permit new or innovative concepts in land utilization not permitted by standard zoning districts in the City Zoning Ordinance.

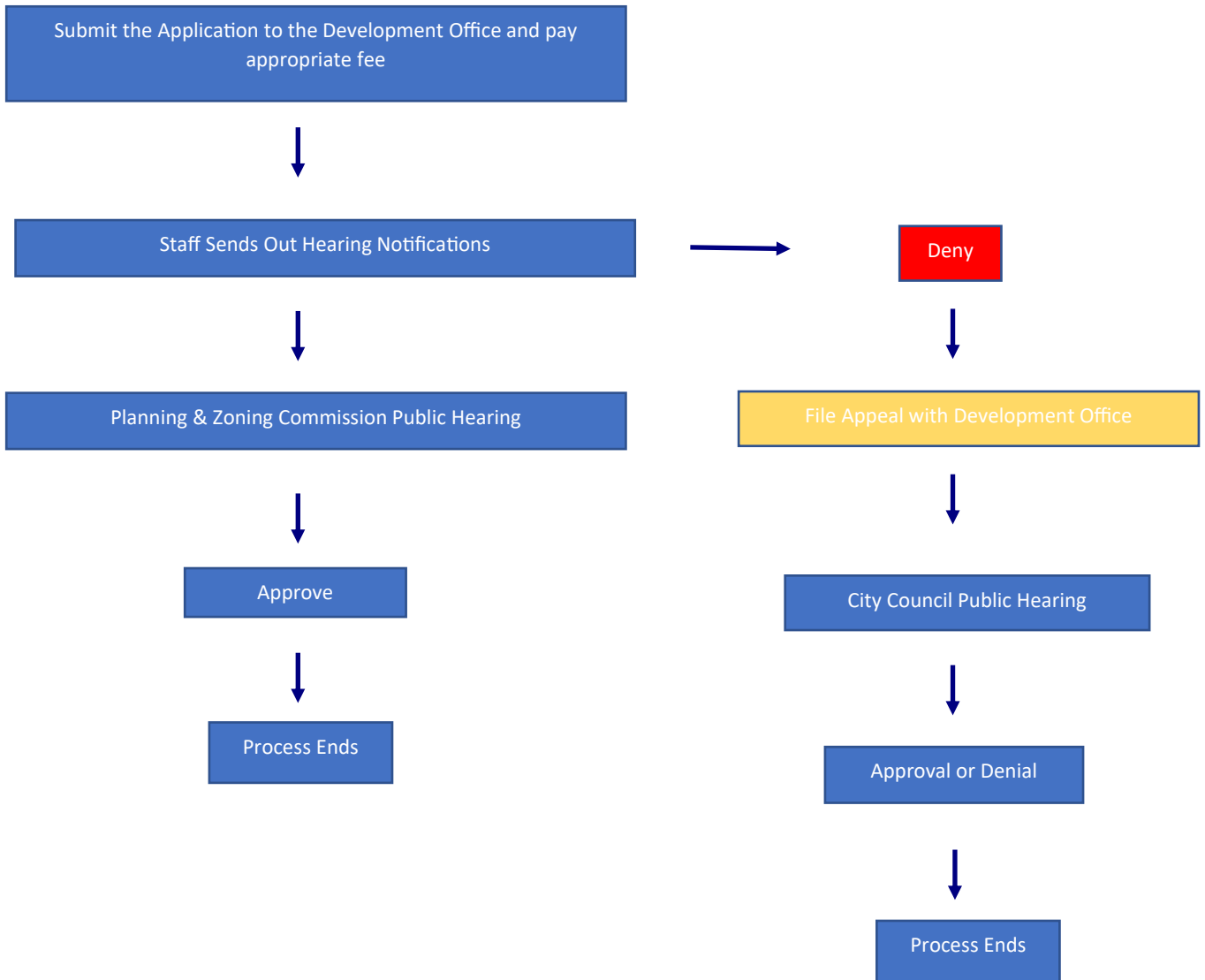
Variances

A variance is a modification of the literal provisions of the property development standards of the Zoning Ordinance granted when strict enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance would cause undue hardship because of circumstances unique to the individual property on which the variance is granted.

Zoning Flowchart



Variance Flowchart



Zoning Process FAQ

How do I check the zoning of my property?

The Development Office will be the primary contact for zoning questions. The interactive zoning map is also online at <https://www.whitehousetx.org/166/Geographic-Information-Systems-GIS>; this tool can help you determine in which zoning your property is located.

What if the zoning district does not allow my proposed use?

You may consider rezoning the property to a district appropriate for your proposed use or find property that already had the appropriate zoning. Contact the Development to see if the request is appropriate for the immediate area.

What are my options regarding zoning?

There are normally two types of requests:

The first is to request a change to another standard zoning district that allows your proposed use. The uses allowed and conditions pertaining to site development (e.g. setbacks, height, lot coverage, etc.) will be controlled by the City's Zoning Ordinance.

The second is to request the establishment of an appropriate Planned Development District. This allows the combination of uses and conditions of several zoning districts; or limits the use and conditions found within a single district in order to create a unique zoning district.

What is a Special Use Permit?

A Special Use Permit is an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance. It is a private agreement between the owner of the property and the City which is forfeited when the property ownership or business changes hands. Each zone has available uses for which a Special Use Permit may be obtained.

How do I initiate the process?

Obtain an application from the Development Office. Complete the application and return it to staff with the required information listed on the application.

How Long will the rezoning process take? How much does it cost?

A minimum of one and half months is required to complete all the different public hearings required. A list of meeting dates and deadlines is available in the Appendix of this guide as well as a fee schedule.

What does the public hearing process involve?

The Development Office will mail notice of your request to all property owners within 200' of the subject property for non-alcohol zoning changes and 300' for alcohol zoning changes 15 days prior to the first public hearing. Notices are also placed in the newspaper. Signage will be placed on the property as well 10 days prior to the first public hearing. Those persons wishing to comment will have an opportunity to do so at the public hearings. The public hearing process involves appearing before the City's Planning & Zoning Commission (P&Z) and then the City Council. Each will hear your request, Staff's report and any presentation or comments you have prepared as well as public input before reaching a decision on the matter. The P&Z will make a recommendation to the City Council regarding approval or denial of your request. The City Council then holds a public hearing in the same manner as P&Z to consider the formal approval of the request.

What if the Planning & Zoning Commission recommends a denial of my request?

If the P&Z Commission recommends denial of the rezoning, Council will still consider your application. As Council has the right to override the recommendation made by P&Z and can still pass the request.

If Council approves my zoning request, what do I do next?

The next steps may include the need to plat or replat the property, approval of the site plan and beginning the permitting process.

May I move a mobile home or manufactured home into a Single Family zoned district?

No, mobile homes and manufactured homes are only allowed in zoning districts designated for mobile home or manufactured homes.

What are zoning variances?

Variances to zoning requirements may be considered if the applicant proves that a hardship (other than financial) exists. It is a separate application not linked to zoning. This request is processed by the Development Office through the P&Z Commission. Council is only involved if P&Z denies the request and *if the applicant requests* to appeal to the City Council.

Appendix

Submittal Deadlines

P&Z Meeting Date	Plat	Variance	Zoning	City Council Meeting Date
January 17, 2023	December 19, 2022	December 19, 2022	December 19, 2022	January 24, 2023
February 21, 2023	January 23, 2023	January 23, 2023	January 23, 2023	February 28, 2023
March 21, 2023	February 20, 2023	February 20, 2023	February 20, 2023	March 28, 2023
April 18, 2023	March 20, 2023	March 20, 2023	March 20, 2023	April 25, 2023
May 16, 2023	April 17, 2023	April 17, 2023	April 17, 2023	May 23, 2023
June 20, 2023	May 22, 2023	May 22, 2023	May 22, 2023	June 27, 2023
July 18, 2023	June 19, 2023	June 19, 2023	June 19, 2023	July 25, 2023
August 15, 2023	July 17, 2023	July 17, 2023	July 17, 2023	August 22, 2023
September 19, 2023	August 21, 2023	August 21, 2023	August 21, 2023	September 26, 2023
October 17, 2023	September 18, 2023	September 18, 2023	September 18, 2023	October 24, 2023
November 2023	Call Ahead	Call Ahead	Call Ahead	November 2023
December 2023	Call Ahead	Call Ahead	Call Ahead	December 2023

Submittal Requirements

Site Plan

- A legal description of the property under review for site plan approval;
- Site conditions information, including:
 - Topographic map of the site at a scale not smaller than 1" = 100', showing two (2) foot contours;
 - Soil type and evaluation for the entire site;
 - Means or methods of controlling sedimentation and erosion.
- A site conditions map at a scale not smaller than 1' =100' showing:
 - A location map showing the relationship of the site to such external facilities as streets, residential areas, commercial facilities, and recreation/open space areas;
 - The exact location of all existing public streets, rights of way, easements, and other reservations of the land in the area of the

property in question and adjacent properties in the same frontage, indicating the locations of buildings and structures on such adjacent properties, means of ingress and egress to such properties, off-street parking, loading and service areas, if any, for or on such properties, and any screening or buffering on such properties and the nature and type thereof;

- The exact location, size, and capacity of all existing utilities, including existing fire hydrant locations;
- The exact location of all water holding or carrying facilities, natural or artificial, including creeks, ponds, sinkholes, ditches, culverts, and storm sewers.
- A site development plan at a scale not smaller than 1" = 60' showing:
 - The name of the planner, architect, or designer who prepared the plans, the name of the developer whether it be an individual, group, or corporation, the name of the proposed project or development, a north arrow and date;
 - The exact location of all proposed streets, driveways, or other facilities designed to accommodate vehicular movement in the development, points of ingress or egress, parking areas, including the exact number of spaces, and loading and service areas (locations of dumpsters) and a traffic impact analysis of projected trip generation for the development;
 - The exact locations of all proposed buildings and structures to be included in the development;
 - For commercial or industrial development, an indication of gross floor area of all buildings;
 - For residential development, an indication of the exact number of dwelling units, broken down into size by number of bedrooms (i.e. number of one bedroom units, number of two bedroom units, etc.)
 - The manner of drainage of the property, showing the manner of drainage of all impervious surfaces and all green areas, including all control devices such as storm sewers and retention or detention facilities;
 - The percentage of the site that will be covered by building and structures and the percentage that will be covered by streets, drives, parking, and loading areas.

- A development timetable if project is to be constructed in phases.

Fee Schedule

Residential Construction
New Construction:

Type	Permit Cost
Permit	\$.20 per square foot
Minimum fee	\$100
Re-inspection fee	\$100

Residential Alterations, Additions, Repairs and Swimming Pools
Alterations, additions, repairs and swimming pools:

Type	Permit Cost
Permit	\$.15 per square foot
Minimum fee	\$100
Re-inspection fee	\$100

Commercial, Non- Residential and Industrial Construction
New Construction, Alterations, Additions and Repairs:

Type	Permit Cost
Permit	\$.25 per square foot
Minimum fee	\$100
Re-inspection fee	\$100
Plan Check fee	25% of calculated permit fee

Cooling and Heating Systems

Permit	\$.06 per square foot
Mechanical Commercial Hood	\$30

Minimum fee	\$50
Re-inspection fee	\$100

Plumbing Permits

\$5 each fixture

Water Closet	Sink	Lavatory or Basin	Laundry or Wash Tray
Bathtub	Shower	Grease Trap	Drinking Fountain
Urinal	Floor Drain	Beer or Soda Bar	Fixed Washing Machine
Wall Heater	Sewer Service	Water Service	

Gas Openings	\$20 for the first 10 openings \$.25 each additional opening
Boiler	\$25
Gas Meters (additional)	\$10
Sand Trap	\$25
Temporary Service	\$25
Yard Sprinkler	\$40
Minimum fee	\$50
Re-inspection fee	\$100

Electrical Permits

Circuits	\$3.50 for the first 3 circuits \$1.50 each additional opening
Switches, Base Plugs, and Fixtures (totalled together)	\$3.50 for the first 5 \$.30 for each additional
Dryer	\$3
Electrical Water Heater	\$3
Heating Unit	\$3
Motor (1/2 HP to 5 HP)	\$3
Motor (over 5 HP)	\$10
Range	\$3
Sanding Machine	\$3
Saw Service	\$25
Sign	\$25
Smoke Detector	\$3

Swimming Pool	\$25
Temporary Service	\$25
Minimum fee	\$50

New Service or Service Change

0 to 200 amps	\$25
201 to 300	\$30
301 to 600	\$45
601 to 800	\$65
801 to 1000	\$80
1001 and over	\$110

Sign Permits

50 square feet and under	\$25
51 square feet and above	\$50

Demolition Permits

No fee will be required for demolition, but all work must comply with State law including the possession of a bond as required by the State of Texas. The City's contract with the solid waste provider, Republic Services, requires that all roll off dumpsters be provided by Republic Services.

House Moving Permits

Less than 500 square feet	\$70
501 to 750 square feet	\$80
751 to 1000 square feet	\$90
More than 1001 square feet	\$125

Miscellaneous Permits

Certificate of Occupancy	\$60
Commercial Driveway	\$25
Residential Driveway	\$25

New Residential Fencing	\$20
New Commercial Fencing	\$50
Duplicate Permit	\$150
Renewal of Expired Permit	\$200
Mobile Home	\$100
Temporary Use Permit	\$30

Fire Permits

Commercial Plan Review	\$75
Commercial Fire Suppression System Review	\$50
Commercial Fire Alarm System Review	\$50
Commercial Fire Inspection	\$50.00 including (1) re-inspection. All subsequent inspections shall have a \$25.00 re-inspection fee.
Residential Fire Inspection	\$20.00 including (1) re-inspection. All subsequent inspections shall have a \$10.00 re-inspection fee.
Commercial Burn Permit	\$100 (10 work days)
Residential Burn Permit	\$10 (10 consecutive days)

Fire Permits

Zoning Request	\$300
Variance Request	
Plat Review	Current Engineering Rates
Construction Plans Review	Current Engineering Rates

Additional Resources

The City of Whitehouse offers other resources that may assist you in the development process and help answer any technical questions you may have.

- [Whitehouse Code of Ordinance Online Tool](#)
- [Zoning Ordinance](#)
- [Subdivision Ordinance](#)
- [Platting Guidelines](#)
- [Zoning Maps Online](#)