




Zoning 101

L&I's Zoning Webinar Series

1.5 Continuing Education Credits



Zoning 101 Webinar

- Topics:
 - What is Zoning?
 - What Requires a Zoning Permit? What is Exempt?
 - Types of Zoning Permits
 - Types of Approvals
 - Ownership & Tenancy
 - Navigating the Zoning Code
 - Filing a Zoning Permit
 - Prerequisite Approvals
 - Zoning Expirations and Extensions
 - Use the Q&A feature to ask questions.
 - Please keep questions general - no address-specific questions.
 - The slide deck will be shared and posted on the website.
 - A poll must be completed at the end of the presentation to receive CEU's.
- 

Zoning Webinar Series



Zoning 101

Feb 28, 2024



Zoning Use
Classifications

April 3, 2024



Zoning
Research

May 8, 2024



Zoning &
eCLIPSE

June 12, 2024



Changes to
Zoning Permits

July 10, 2024



Zoning
Bonuses

Sept 18, 2024





About L&I

What Does L&I Do?

The Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) enforces the City of Philadelphia's construction, fire, zoning, business compliance and property maintenance codes through the issuance of licenses and permits and through building and property inspections. Contractors, business and property owners, landlords, and tenants are all served by L&I.



L&I's Mission & Vision

MISSION



MISSION

The Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) enforces the City's codes for the safe and lawful construction and use of buildings.

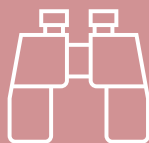
VISION



VISION

To build and sustain a safer Philadelphia, L&I embraces best practices in technology and customer service. We enable the public to access information, secure required approvals, and comply with building safety requirements in a convenient, reliable, and transparent manner. L&I achieves code compliance through collaboration, education, and effective enforcement measures that hold businesses, contractors, and property owners accountable.

VALUES




VALUES

Our core values: Accessibility, Accountability, Consistency, Integrity, Transparency



What Does L&I Do?

As part of our mission, we:

- Review building plans and applications and issue permits in accordance with the City's construction and zoning codes.
 - Inspect construction projects for code compliance.
 - Inspect higher-risk properties for compliance with the Fire Code.
 - Respond to complaints regarding suspected Property Maintenance Code, Fire Code and Business Compliance violations.
 - Inspect, monitor, seal, and demolish vacant and/or dangerous buildings.
 - Issue trade and business licenses, including rental property licenses.
 - Help landlords and tenants understand their responsibilities.
- 



Transparency

One of L&I's core values is transparency. The resources below can be used by the public to access L&I related information and records.

Atlas

<https://atlas.phila.gov/>

- History of permits, licenses, inspections and appeals at any address
- Access zoning information at any address (district, overlays and zoning plans)


L&I's Website

<https://www.phila.gov/li>

- Detailed descriptions of our services, permit status tracker, access to eCLIPSE, newsletters, FAQs, etc.

Open Data

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

- Download searchable data sets for permits, licenses, appeals, etc.
 - Data can be sorted by council district, census tract, date, status etc.
- 



What is Zoning?

What is Zoning?

- Zoning ensures that development aligns with the general character of a neighborhood to protect the quality of life.
- Zoning gives residents expectations of how properties can be developed and used in the future.
- For example, the construction of a factory on a residential block would negatively impact residents and would not be permitted.



Zoning Laws

- There are two parts of zoning laws: the text of the zoning code and the zoning maps.

Zoning Code




Zoning Maps





Zoning Laws (cont'd)


- In Philadelphia, the Zoning Code dictates what uses are permitted on a lot, the size of a building that can be constructed, where accessory structures like fences, decks, or solar panels can be located, and how much parking is required based on a given use.
 - Changes to both the text of the Zoning Code and Zoning Maps can be made when Philadelphia's City Council members pass legislation that ultimately becomes enacted.
- 



What Does Zoning NOT Control?

- There are a lot of aspects of development and quality of life that are not regulated by the zoning code. These include:
 - Zoning cannot be used to force the closure of a pre-existing, legal use.
 - Construction details are not regulated by zoning, they are regulated by the applicable Building Codes.
 - Zoning does not regulate aesthetic choices related to development.
 - Zoning does not regulate people's behavior – this means it doesn't regulate crime, litter, how a property is maintained, or if a space is rented out.





What requires a Zoning Permit?
What is exempt?


What Requires a Zoning Permit?

- Per A-301.1.5, a zoning permit and/or use registration permit is required for:
 - Construction or demolition of structures,
 - Change of the exterior dimensions of a structure,
 - Change of the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of a structure,
 - Change in use - this includes changes to parking and signage.
- A zoning permit is also required to change property lines.





What is Exempt from Requiring a Zoning Permit?

- There are many exemptions that do not require a zoning permit and/or use registration permit. For a full list of exemptions, refer to [A-301.2.5](#).
 - Here are a few of the most common zoning exemptions. A zoning permit and/or use registration permit is not required for:
 - Construction and use of structures totally outside of lot lines
 - Fences at or below the height allowable by the Zoning Code
 - Sheds, playhouses, pergolas and similar structures accessory to one- or two-family dwellings, if the structure is located in the rear yard and is 120 square feet or less.
 - Decks not more than 12 inches high and not over any basement or story below
 - Decks located in the rear yard and accessory to one-family dwellings allowable by the Zoning Code
- 



Types of Zoning Permits

Types of Zoning Permits

- There are different types of Zoning Permits based on the scope of the application.
- L&I's website outlines the requirements for each type of zoning permit.
- The type of permit determines the review time, filing fee, and permit fee.
- Filing incorrectly can cause processing delays and loss of filing fees.

Get a Zoning Permit to change the use of a property

How to get a zoning permit to change the use of a property.

Get a Zoning Permit for new construction or additions

How to get a zoning permit for new construction and additions.

Get a Zoning Permit for parking

How to create, change, or remove off-street parking spaces on a lot or in a garage.

Get a Zoning Permit for signs

How to get zoning approval to install signs.

Get a Zoning Permit to adjust property lot lines

How to get zoning approval to adjust property lines.

Get a Zoning Permit

How to get zoning approval to modify a property or change its use.

Get a Zoning Permit for complete demolition


How to get zoning approval to completely demolish a property.

Get a Zoning Permit for site clearing or earth disturbance

How to get a zoning permit for site clearing and earth disturbance, not including additional development.



Types of Zoning Permits (cont'd)

- Permit types:
 - Change of Use
 - New Con./Addition/GFA Change
 - Lot Line Relocation
 - Lot Line Relocation & New Development
 - Full Demolition
 - Signs
 - Conditional Permit
 - Family Daycare
 - Fence Only *
 - Parking Only *
 - Site Clearing Only *
 - Scope of work denoted by an asterisk (*) can be included with permits that include development.
 - Full demolition and signs should be submitted as separate applications from development.
 - Fences only require a permit if they exceed allowances of the code.
- 



Ways that Zoning Permits can be Approved




Type of Zoning Approvals

- By-Right, Granted by Variance or Special Exception & Nonconforming - These terms are used to describe how a zoning permit is obtained. Sometimes how the permit was obtained can impact the property owner's rights in the future.
 - **By-Right:** A by-right permit means that the scope of the permit application complies with the zoning code in effect at the time the permit is applied for. A by-right permit can be issued without the support of the community or an appeal to the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA).





Type of Zoning Approvals (cont'd)


- **Granted by Variance or Special Exception:** If a permit is granted by variance or special exception it means that one or more aspects of the application did not comply with the zoning code in effect at the time the permit is applied for. When this happens, L&I issues a refusal or referral and the applicant appeals that decision to the ZBA. Before the hearing occurs, the owner is required to meet with the community.
 - **Nonconforming:** Nonconforming means that one or more aspects of an existing property do not conform with the requirements of the current Zoning Code because it was established either:
 - Before the adoption of zoning in Philadelphia (in 1933), or
 - Before a Zoning Code amendment was passed
- 



Ownership, Tenancy and Zoning




Ownership, Tenancy & Zoning

- Zoning approvals ‘run with the land’. This means that any parcel- or lot-specific zoning approval are granted to the land, not the property owner or tenant.
 - When the ownership of a property or tenant of a space changes, a new zoning permit is not required to document that change.
 - Exceptions:
 - Limited Lodging permits must be obtained by a primary resident so if the resident of a dwelling changes a new limited lodging permit is required.
 - Certain Reasonable Accommodation permits are issued based on the owner or tenant of a property and may not carry over to a new owner or tenant.
- 



New Uses in Existing Tenant Spaces

- If the previous tenant had a valid zoning permit for the same use that you are proposing, a new zoning permit is not required.
 - Permits are granted to the use categories outlined in 14-601. Example:
 - An application is submitted to change the use of a tenant space to a “hair salon”. The permit will be issued for “personal services” which is the use category in the Code that encompasses that specific use. Unless the permit is further restricted by proviso, that permit would then be valid for any type of use that could be described by that use category.
 - If a permit is issued by variance and there is a proviso on the permit, that proviso would apply to any new owners or tenants.
- 

New Uses in Existing Tenant Spaces Examples

- The table below provides a few examples of use changes that may or may not require a new zoning permit along with an explanation.

Existing Use	Proposed Use	Is a New Permit Required?
Nail Salon, Permit issued for Personal Services	Fitness Club, Permit issued for Personal Services	No – both a fitness club and a nail salon are categorized as personal services.
Real Estate Office, Permit issued for Business and Professional Office	Architecture Office, Permit issued for Business and Professional Office	No – both types of offices are categorized as business and professional offices.
Daycare for 12 children, Permit issued for Group Child Care	Daycare for 14 children, Permit issued for Child Care Center	Yes – Although these are both childcare uses, they are separate use categories.
Take-Out Restaurant	Sit Down Restaurant	Yes – Although these are both restaurants, they are separate use categories.

Zoning Research

- Before buying a property or signing a lease, it is important to conduct research and plan accordingly.
- If the required approvals are not already in place, it could cause months of delays.
- If uses are not permitted by right, there is no guarantee that a variance will be granted.
- Refer to the [Commercial Leasing Notice Guide](#) for more information about determining the legal use of a property.

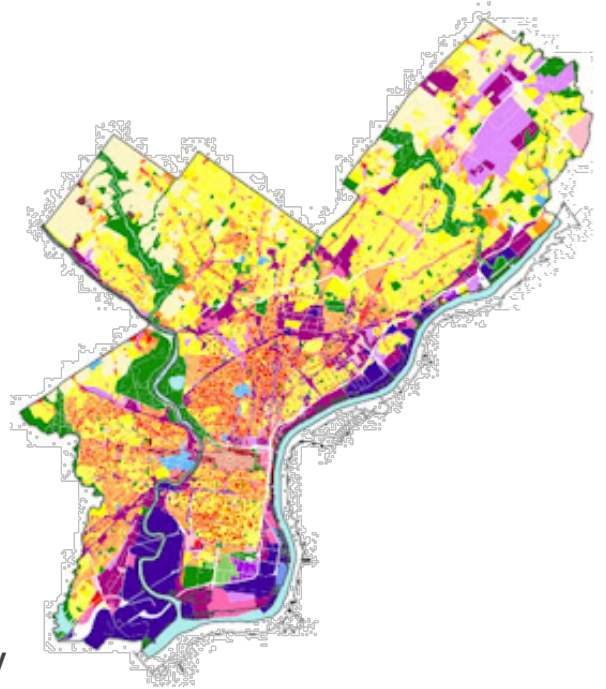





Navigating the Zoning Code

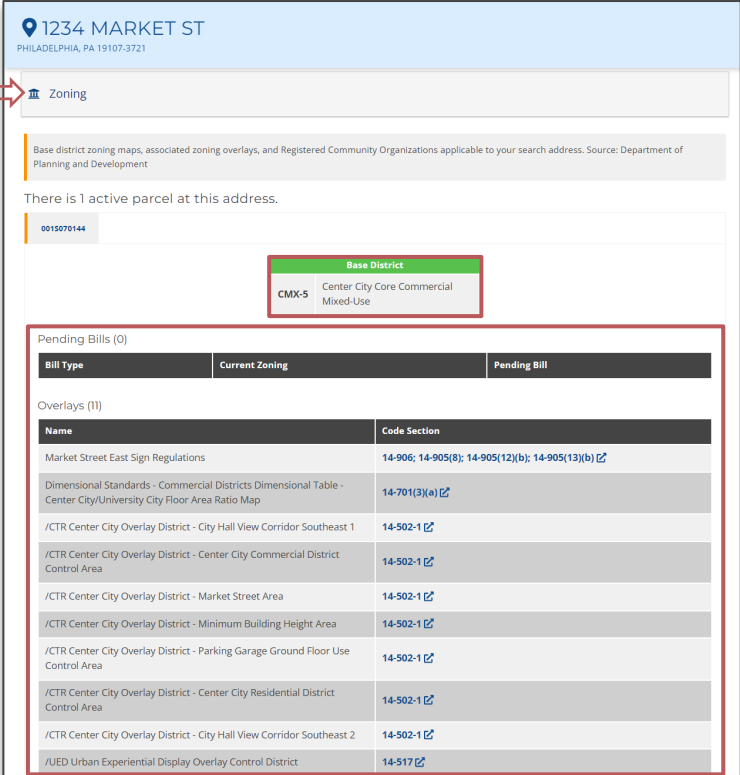
Philadelphia Zoning Code

- Zoning regulations govern:
 - Land use
 - The height and bulk of buildings
 - Population density
 - Parking requirements
 - Placement of signs
 - Character of development on private property
 - Development in protected areas and on steep slopes
- The Base Zoning District and any applicable Zoning Overlays determine specific requirements.
- Use [Atlas](#) to determine the Base Zoning District and any applicable Zoning Overlays or any lot in the City.



Determining Zoning Districts

1. Go to [Atlas.phila.gov](https://atlas.phila.gov).
2. Type the address in the search bar and click
3. Click on the Zoning Tab. 
4. Here you will see the Base Zoning District and any Zoning Overlays.
5. You will also see any pending legislation impacting the zoning of the lot.



1234 MARKET ST
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107-3721

Zoning

Base district zoning maps, associated zoning overlays, and Registered Community Organizations applicable to your search address. Source: Department of Planning and Development

There is 1 active parcel at this address.

0015070144

Base District
CMX-5 Center City Core Commercial Mixed-Use

Pending Bills (0)


Bill Type	Current Zoning	Pending Bill

Overlays (11)

Name	Code Section
Market Street East Sign Regulations	14-906; 14-905(8); 14-905(12)(b); 14-905(13)(b) 🔗
Dimensional Standards - Commercial Districts Dimensional Table - Center City/University City Floor Area Ratio Map	14-701(3)(a) 🔗
/CTR Center City Overlay District - City Hall View Corridor Southeast 1	14-502-1 🔗
/CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Commercial District Control Area	14-502-1 🔗
/CTR Center City Overlay District - Market Street Area	14-502-1 🔗
/CTR Center City Overlay District - Minimum Building Height Area	14-502-1 🔗
/CTR Center City Overlay District - Parking Garage Ground Floor Use Control Area	14-502-1 🔗
/CTR Center City Overlay District - Center City Residential District Control Area	14-502-1 🔗
/CTR Center City Overlay District - City Hall View Corridor Southeast 2	14-502-1 🔗
/UED Urban Experiential Display Overlay Control District	14-517 🔗




Understanding the Zoning Code

- Once you know a property's zoning district you will need to review the applicable sections of the Zoning Code to determine if your project complies.
 - Below are some key sections to review:
 - [14-200 – Definitions](#): Also includes rules of measurement and interpretation
 - [14-400 – Base Zoning Districts](#): This chapter will direct you to other applicable sections based on the zoning district. It also indicates if multiple structures or uses are permitted on a lot.
 - [14-500 – Overlay Zoning Districts](#): This chapter outlines the additional requirements associated with any applicable overlay districts.
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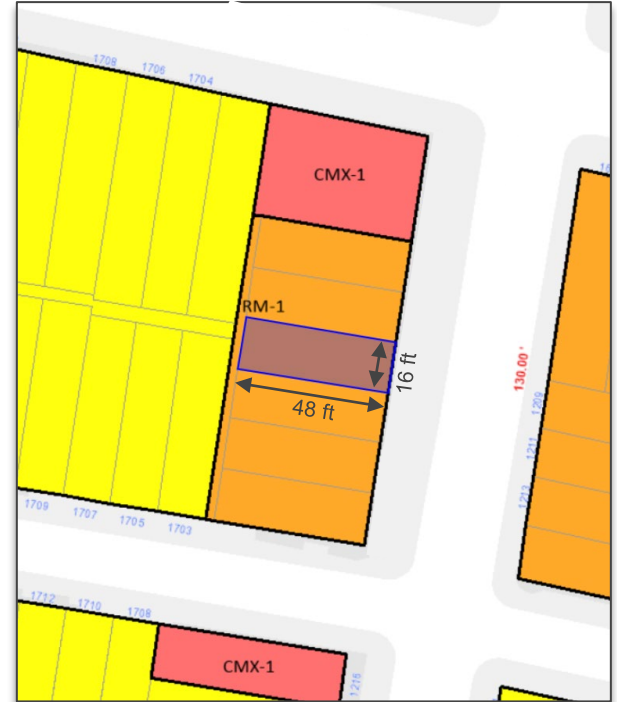


Understanding the Zoning Code (cont'd)

- Key sections (cont'd):
 - **14-600 – Use Regulations**: This chapter will help you determine if a use is permitted by right or if it requires a special exception or a variance.
 - **14-700 – Development Standards**: This chapter will dictate the size, area, and bulk of buildings based on the zoning district. This chapter also includes provisions for zoning bonuses, landscaping, fences/walls, etc.
 - **14-800 – Parking and Loading**: This chapter will dictate how much parking and loading is required based on the use and the zoning district. This chapter also addresses bike parking, accessible parking, EV charges, drive-throughs, and landscaping of parking lots.
 - **14-900 – Signs**: This chapter outlines the requirements for accessory and non-accessory signs based on the zoning district.
- 

Zoning Code – Example #1

- You own a property that is zoned RM-1 (no applicable overlays).
- Currently, the property is used as Single-Family Household Living but you want to convert it to a duplex (Two-Family Household Living).
- No change to the exterior dimensions or GFA of the building is proposed.
- The lot is 16 ft wide and 48 ft deep (768 ft²).



Zoning Code – Example #1

- Per [14-401\(2\)](#), [Table 14-602-1](#) should be used to determine allowable uses in RM-1.
- [Table 14-602-1](#) is shown on the right along with the referenced note.
- A minimum of 360 ft² of lot area is required per dwelling unit for the first 1,440 ft² of lot area.
- The lot area is 768 ft².
- **Conclusion** – A minimum lot area of 720 ft² is required for two dwellings. The lot area is 768 ft². This application would be approved by right.

Table 14-602-1: Uses Allowed in Residential Districts⁴⁹³

Previous District Name	RI	RIA	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6/7	RA/10A/R20	New	RA	RB/9/10B/18/19	RI/11A/12/13	R14	RI5/16	RC-6	WRD/ITD	RC-4	Use-Specific Standards	
District Name	RSD-1	RSD-2	RSD-3	RSA-1	RSA-2	RSA-3	RSA-4	RSA-5	RSA-6	RTA-1	RM-1	RM-2	RM-3	RM-4	RMX-1	RMX-2	RMX-3		
Y = Yes permitted as of right S = Special exception approval required N = Not allowed (expressly prohibited) Uses not listed in this table are prohibited See § 14-602(3)(a) (Notes for Table 14-602-1) for information pertaining to bracketed numbers (e.g., “[2]”) in table cells.																			
Residential Use Category																			
Household Living (as noted below)																			
Single-Family	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Two-Family	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y[1]	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
Multi-Family	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y[1]	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		


Note 1: In the RM-1 district, the minimum lot area required per dwelling unit is as follows, provided that, whenever the calculation of permitted number of dwelling units results in a fraction of a dwelling unit, then the number of permitted dwelling units shall be rounded down to the nearest whole number:

(a) A minimum 360 sq. ft. of lot area is required per dwelling unit for the first 1,440 sq. ft. of lot area.

(b) A minimum of 480 sq. ft. of lot area is required per dwelling unit for the lot area in excess of 1,440 sq. ft.



Zoning Code – Example #2

- You own a property that is zoned CMX-2 (no applicable overlays).
 - The property is on an intermediate lot and the existing structure is attached (it is built from one side lot line to the other; there are no side yards).
 - You want to build an addition at the 1st floor rear of the existing structure and want to know how large the addition can be without requiring a variance.
 - The use is permitted and is not changing.
- 

Zoning Code – Example #2


- Per [14-402\(3\)](#), [Table 14-701-3](#) should be used to determine the dimensional requirements in CMX-2.
- A portion of [Table 14-701-3](#) is shown to the right.
- Three factors in this table must be considered to answer the question:
 - Maximum Allowable Occupied Area is permitted to be 75% of the lot if the lot is intermediate.
 - Minimum Required Rear Yard Depth is the greater of 9 ft or 10% of the lot depth.
 - Maximum Allowable Height is permitted to be 38 ft.

Table 14-701-3: Dimensional Standards for Commercial Districts⁵⁸¹

Previous District Name	C1	C2/RC2	Commercial Corridor Overlays
District Name	CMX-1	CMX-2	CMX-2.5
See § 14-701(3)(a) (Notes for Table 14-701-3) for information pertaining to this table. Denotes zoning requirements not shown.			
District and Lot Dimensions			
Min. District Area (sq. ft.)			
Min. Street Frontage as taken from the front lot line (ft.)	[1]		
Min. Lot Width (ft.)	[1]		
Min. Lot Area (sq. ft.)	[1]		
Max. Occupied Area (% of lot)	[1]	Intermediate: 75 Corner: 80	Intermediate: Corner: 80
Yards			
Min. Front Yard Depth (ft.)	[1][3]		[4]
Min. Side Yard Width, Each (ft.)	[1]	5 if used	5 if used
Min. Rear Yard Depth (ft.)	[1]	The greater of 9 ft. or 10% of lot depth	The greater of 9 ft. or 10% of lot depth
Height			
Max. Height (ft.)	[1]	38	55
Min. Cornice Height (ft.)	[1]		25
Floor Area Ratio			



Zoning Code – Example #3

- You own a property that is zoned RSD-3 (no applicable overlays).
 - The property is used as Single-Family Household Living.
 - There is one existing parking space on the lot within a garage.
 - You want to convert the garage to living space and eliminate the parking space, would a variance be required?
- 

Zoning Code – Example #3

- [Table 14-802-1](#) should be used to determine the parking requirements in RSD-3.
- **Conclusion** – Based on the portion of [Table 14-802-1](#) that is shown below, a minimum of one accessory parking space is required for Single-Family Household Living in RSD-3.

If one space exists and it is Removed, a variance would be required.

Table 14-802-1: Required Parking in Residential Districts⁶⁶⁹

	Minimum Required Parking Spaces (spaces per unit/sq. ft. of gross floor area/beds/seats)		
	RSD-1/2/3 RSA-1/2/3 RTA-1 RMX-1	RSA-4/5/6 RM-1	RM-2/3/4 RMX-2/3
Residential Use Category (as noted below)			
Household Living (as noted below)			
Single-Family	1/unit	0	0
Two-Family	1/unit	0	1/2 units
Multi-Family	1/unit	0	3/10 units
Group Living (except as noted below)	1/10 permanent beds	1/10 permanent beds	1/10 permanent beds

Helpful Zoning Code Resources

- In addition to the Zoning Code, L&I and the Philadelphia City Planning Commission have a number of resources available to assist in understanding zoning requirements:

- [Zoning Summary Generator](#)
- [Zoning Code Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Zoning Permit Web Services](#)
- [Zoning FAQs](#)
- [Zoning Code Bulletins](#)
- [Permit Navigator Pilot](#)





Need More Help?

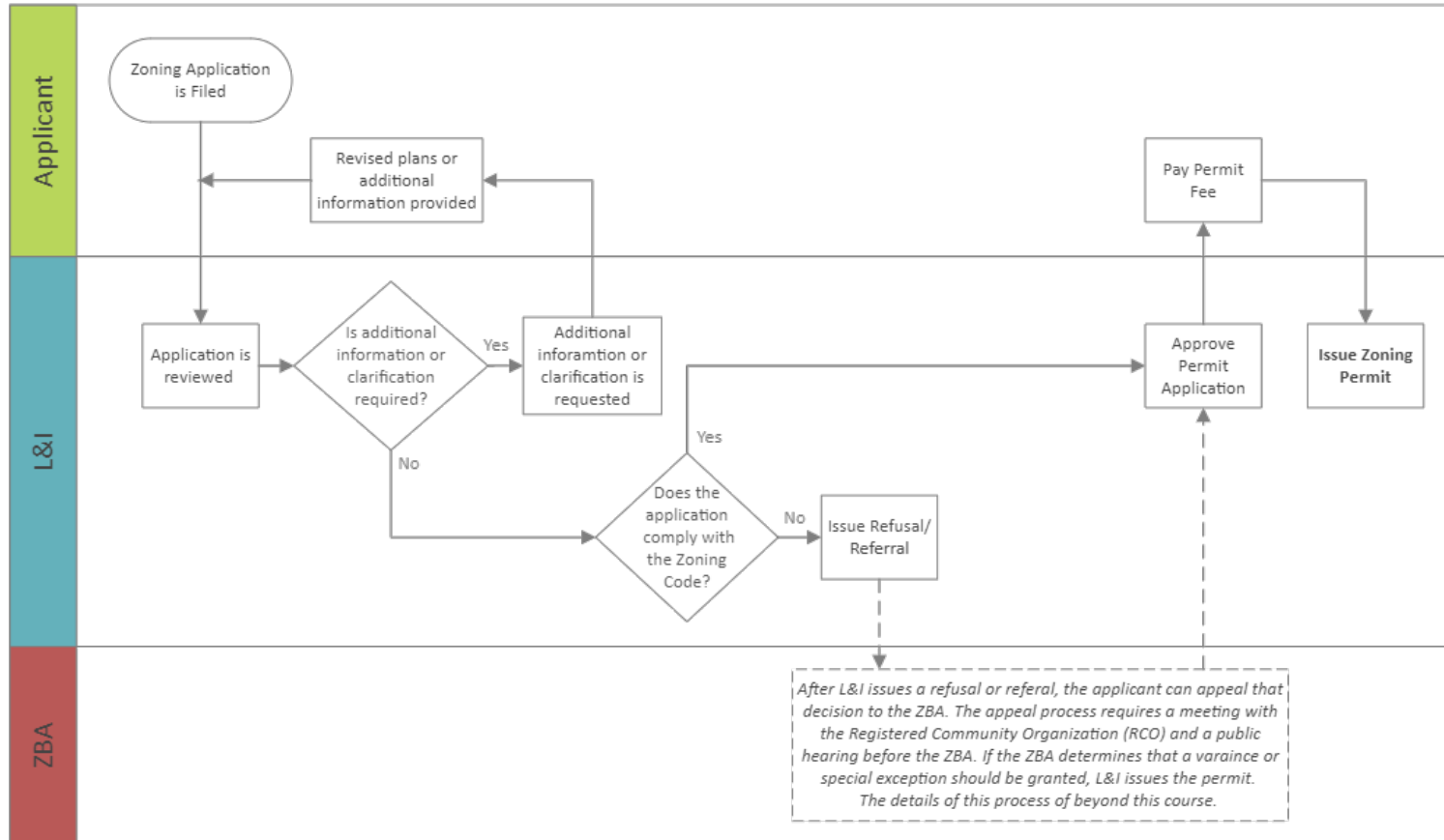
- If you require assistance interpreting the code, preparing plans, or submitting an application, you are encouraged to consult a design professional or attorney.
- General questions can be submitted to L&I through the [Help Form](#).
 - If you do not see an option that matches your inquiry, reach out to [311](#) for support.
- L&I can also perform a [preliminary plan review](#) for more complex applications.






Filing a Zoning Permit

Zoning Permit Process Overview





Filing a Zoning Permit

- A property owner or the following authorized agent can apply:
 - Tenants, Design professionals, Attorneys, Contractors, Licensed expeditors.
 - If the property is NOT owned by a natural person or a publicly traded company, the name and mailing address of one of the following must be provided:
 - Each individual with more than 49% interest in ownership of the property
 - The two individuals with the largest interest
 - If the property was recently sold, a copy of the settlement sheet or deed must be submitted.
 - You must apply for all permits under the legal address established by the Office of Property Assessment (OPA).
 - If you are a tenant making an application, provide your executed lease agreement.
- 

Zoning Permits without Plans

- Although most zoning permit applications require the submission of plans the following are exceptions:
 - Change of Use permits (no change in GFA, signs, or parking)
 - Permits for Signs that comply with the [EZ Standard for Zoning Sign Installation](#).
- Note: in some cases, plans may be requested to confirm the lot area if needed for a use permit application.

EZ PERMIT STANDARD ZONING SIGN INSTALLATION
For installation of signs on existing buildings

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES & INSPECTIONS
Construction Services Division
Municipal Services Building, Concourse Level
1401 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102

EZ Permit Standard: Zoning Sign Installation
Obtain zoning permits for sign installation to an existing building without submitting plans by meeting requirements below. Deviations will require submission of plans to the Department of Licenses and Inspections with your permit application. EZ zoning sign permits are only valid for the zoning classifications listed below:

DISTRICT	ALLOWABLE SIGN AREA
CMX-1	*1 square foot per linear foot of building frontage
CMX-2 / CMX-2.5	**3 square feet per linear foot of building frontage or one 25 sq.ft. sign per building frontage
CA-1 / CA-2	10 square feet of linear foot of ground floor frontage of the business / tenant with which the sign is associated

*For corner properties, the allowable sign area along the longer building frontage = 0.5 SF / LF
**For corner properties, the allowable sign area along the longer building frontage = 2.0 SF / LF

To be eligible for an EZ zoning permit:

- A photograph of the store front must be included with application.
- An approval letter from the Department of Parks and Recreation is required for any signage proposed within the Cobbs Creek / Roosevelt Blvd / Parkway Buffer area and otherwise mandated by the Zoning Code.
- Properties located within Center City overlay districts, NCA Ridge Avenue control or CAO City Avenue control are not eligible for EZ permit.

Conditions and Limitations:

Signage must be:

- Limited to a single space and a single street frontage.
- Limited to three (3) signs total (existing and proposed).
- Accessory to the approved use of the space.
- Installed on the first floor and shall not extend above the roof line or the second-floor window sill (whichever is lower).
- Flat wall and / or awning type (with copy only on the front face).
- Non-illuminated and statically illuminated (i.e. digital or mechanically rotated).

Signage cannot be:

- Cabinet, freestanding, projecting, roof mounted, directional, marquee, portable, window or non-accessory.
- Flashing, intermittent, or animated.

Page 1 of 2


PZ_001_F

Applicants Signature: _____

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Zoning Plans

- Most zoning permits will require the submission of plans.
- Carefully review L&I's plan standards before submission to ensure that all required information is submitted:
 - [Zoning permit for new construction and additions plan requirements](#)
 - [Zoning lot line adjustment plan requirements](#)
 - [Zoning permit for fencing plan requirements](#)
 - [Zoning permit for parking plan requirements](#)
 - [Zoning permit for signs plan requirements](#)

 Department of
Licenses and Inspections
CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Plan Requirements: Zoning permit applications for new construction or additions

Overview

The Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) reviews plans submitted with permit applications for new construction, additions, partial demolition, gross floor area increases, or other changes. Review the information below before submitting plans for review.

Plan sheet size and material

- Minimum Sheet Size: 11 in. x 17 in.
- Maximum Sheet Size: 36 in. x 48 in.
- Print plans on white, standard-weight, bond type paper.
 - For plans that will be submitted in eCLIPSE, refer to the [ePlan Submission Standard information sheet](#) for rules and limitations of creating drawing files that will be uploaded for review.

Acceptable drawing scales

- Architectural Scale: 1/16 in.; 3/32 in.; 1/8 in.; 3/16 in.; 1/4 in. = 1 ft. 0 in.
- Engineering Scale: 1 in. = 10 ft.; 20 ft.; 30 ft.; 40ft.; 50 ft.; 60 ft.; 100 ft.

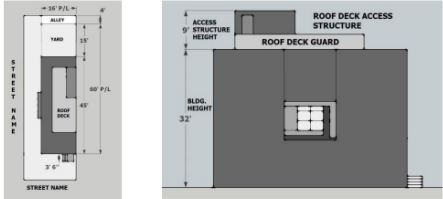
Minimum requirements

- Must be of professional quality and drawn to scale. Free-hand sketches will not be accepted.
- Printed plans must be in ink and in grayscale. Pencil drawings will not be accepted.
- Project address, zoning classifications, and summary table with calculated areas and other compliance values.
- Property lines as found in the deed's legal description with any alleyways, driveways, or easements.
- Building dimensions at all exterior walls, projections, and recesses.
- Decks, roof decks, roof deck access structures, balconies, fencing, accessory structures, and other features.
- Setbacks from all property lines, dimensions of yards, and other open areas.
- Height of building, roof lines, average ground level and appurtenances, parapets, or similar architectural features.
- Streets with legal breakdown, right-of-way encroachments, and curb cuts.
- Off-street parking/loading spaces, associated driveways, aisles, landscaping, screening, and bicycle parking.

Prerequisite approvals

Plans included with your zoning permit application package may require approvals from other departments or agencies.


Sample site plan and elevation



P_008_INF (Rev 9.2022)




Use Location and Key Plans

- Uses are issued to a parcel. Exceptions:
 - Specific location requirements identified in the Zoning Code
 - Uses granted by variance or special exception
 - Extension of a non-conforming use granted under the pre-2012 Code
 - Key Plans
 - Uses should generally not be described by space number, floor, or location on permits or applications.
 - Key plans are generally not required for the zoning permit unless there are space or area requirements in the Zoning Code.
 - The zoning stage can be a good time to submit a key plan for reference.
- 



Zoning Application

- Whether you apply online or in person, your application should provide an adequate level of detail for L&I's to understand the scope.
 - Clearly identify the scope of work – Is there construction? Is there a change of use? Are there changes to parking? Etc.
 - Clearly identify the proposed uses and any existing uses that are to remain. If you know which use category your use fits into, you can list that on the application. There is no need to be overly specific.
 - Make sure the information on the application and plans are consistent.
 - If you are expecting a refusal/referral, state that in the application and/or plans.
- 

Processing Times and Filing Fees

- The type of application will dictate the processing time associated with reviewing the application as well as the filing fee that is due when the application is submitted.
- To minimize delays, make sure you are selecting the correct type of application and describing the full scope of your application.
- Review the processing times and filing fees on [L&I's website](#) before applying to manage expectations.
- If additional information or clarification is requested, the application will need to be reviewed more than once. Each review is given the same priority.

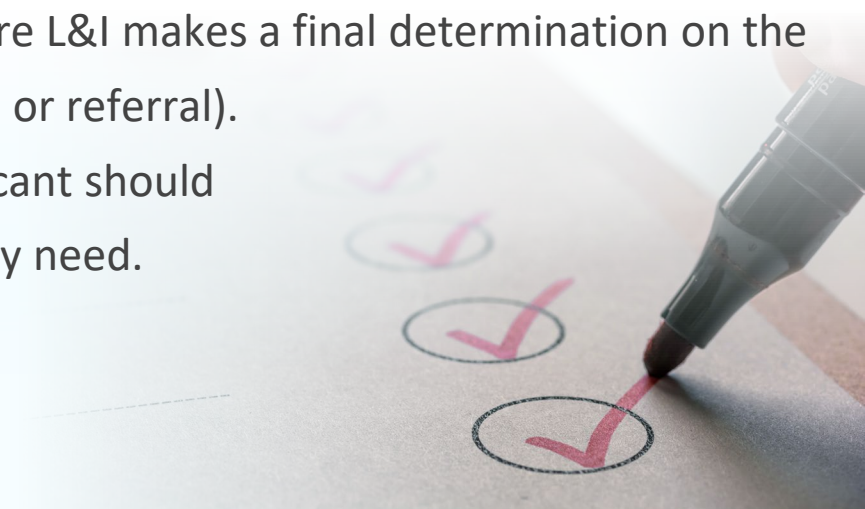




Prerequisite Approvals

Prerequisite Approvals

- The zoning code requires the approval of other departments in many cases. See [14-301](#).
- Typically, these approvals are required before L&I makes a final determination on the application (i.e. issuance of a permit, refusal or referral).
- Prior to submitting an application, the applicant should understand what prerequisite approvals they need.



Prerequisite Approvals

- L&I's website outlines the various scenarios where prerequisite approvals are required based for zoning permit applications.
- After each type of approval, you can click the “More” button to display additional information about this approval. Including how to obtain it for in-person submission and online submissions.

Required pre-approvals

You need approval from
The Department of Streets

What's needed
You'll need to complete a Streets plan review. See Streets' [plan review requirements and applicable forms](#) for more information.

In-person submission
You will need to apply for your Department of Streets permit approval before applying for your L&I permit. You will need to have the Streets Review Job Application Number when you apply for your L&I permit at the Permit and License Center in the MSB.

Online submission
Start your Department of Streets application using eCLIPSE before you apply for your L&I permit. You will be prompted to enter the Streets Review Job Application Number in the L&I application.

Application Submission – In-Person

- The second page of the [Application for Zoning / Use Registration Permit](#), required for in-person submissions, requires that the applicant acknowledge which prerequisite approvals are needed based on the proposed scope of work.
- Submitting the application without the approvals will cause delays during the review.

(c) Pre-Requisite Approvals

City Planning Commission (One Parkway Building, 1515 Arch St., 13th Floor)

Streets Department (Municipal Services Building, 1401 JFK Blvd., 9th Floor)

*Provide the associated **Streets Review** number for this project, if applicable: **SR- 2|0** | | | | - | | | | | | | | | |

Art Commission (One Parkway Building, 1515 Arch St., 13th Floor)

Water Department (1101 Market St., 2nd Floor)

Application Submission – Online

- When submitting an application online, most prerequisite reviews are done simultaneously with L&I's review.
- These reviews can be triggered either based on an application attribute or the applicant's selection on the "Other Departments Review" section.

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
<i>The items below indicate the potential impacts to this Permit based on the geographic location on the blue help icon to the right.</i>	
<i>Any checked boxes are read-only. You do not need to provide any information on this page."</i>	
Planning Commission Interest:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Art Commission Interest:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic Resource:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Located in 100-year Floodplain:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjacent to Green Infrastructure:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Located in Steep Slope Area:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corner Property:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
L&I Inspection District:	CENTRAL EAST

REVIEW QUESTIONS



Use the boxes below to provide as much information about the work included with this Application

Note: Incomplete or incorrect information provided may result in the additional reviews by L&I (or other City Departments). "

OTHER DEPARTMENT REVIEWS:

The following conditions outline all situations where this Application may require review by other City of Philadelphia Departments. Please review all conditions carefully and use to the checkboxes below where applicable.

Philadelphia Art Commission

1515 Arch St, 13th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102, Tel: (215) 686-2095 or Email: ArtCommission@phila.gov

Does your zoning permit application involve **any one** of the following items?

- Public art submitted to meet a Floor Area Bonuses,
- Public art submitted to meet development requirements of SP-ENT Zoning District,
- Projecting signs over any public right-of-way, or
- Building Identification Signs

If 'yes' to any of the above, check the box below."

Philadelphia Art Commission Review Required?

Philadelphia City Planning Commission

1515 Arch St, 13th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19102, Tel: (215) 683-2615 or Email: planning@phila.gov

Does your zoning permit application involve **any one** of the following items?

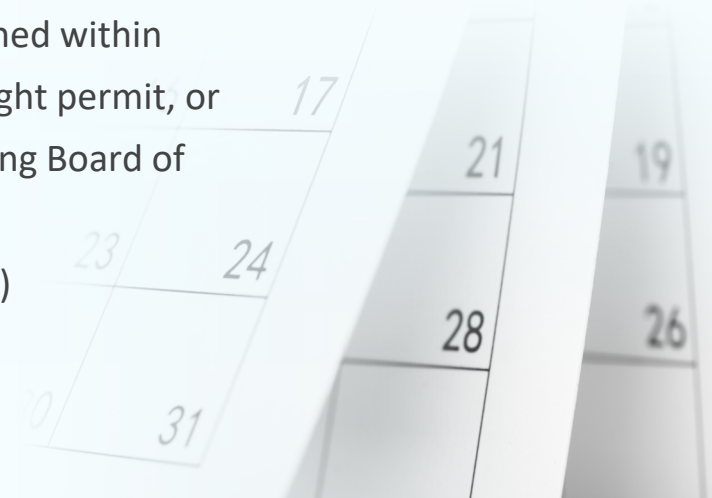
- Parcels with more than one street frontage where a primary frontage needs to be determined per Section 14-701(1)(d),
- Landscaping and screening for parking lots,
- Screening for Wireless Service Facilities (Freestanding Towers) that does **not** conform to the list of trees recommended by the City Planning Commission,



Zoning Expiration & Extension


Zoning Permit Expiration

- Per Philadelphia Zoning Code, Section [14-303\(10\)](#):
 - **If construction is required**, the construction must begin within **three (3) years** of the date of permit issuance for a by- right permit or **three (3) years** of the date of the decision from the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA).
 - **If no construction is required**, the use must be established within **six (6) months** of the date of permit issuance for a by-right permit, or **six (6) months** of the date of the decision from the Zoning Board of Adjustments (ZBA).
 - A **conditional zoning** approval (see Section 14-303(6)(c)) shall be valid for a period of **one year** after the date the conditional zoning approval was granted.






Zoning Permit Expiration (cont'd)

- For more details regarding the expiration of zoning permits, review [Code Bulletin Z-1901](#). This code bulletin further explains the expiration of permits in the following scenarios:
 - Zoning Permits for Construction
 - Zoning Permits Involving Phased Construction
 - Use Permits Without Construction
 - Zoning Permits for Lot Adjustments
- 



Zoning Permit Extensions


- Per Philadelphia Zoning Code, Section [14-303\(10\)\(d\)](#), L&I and the ZBA have the authority to extend a Zoning Permit or approval. Approvals granted under the same application (variance, special exception, conditional approval, permit) are eligible for a single extension.
 - Once an extension is issued, the permit is valid for one (1) year from the original expiration date of the permit or ZBA approval.
 - See the department's [information sheet](#) on zoning permit extensions for more information.
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Resources

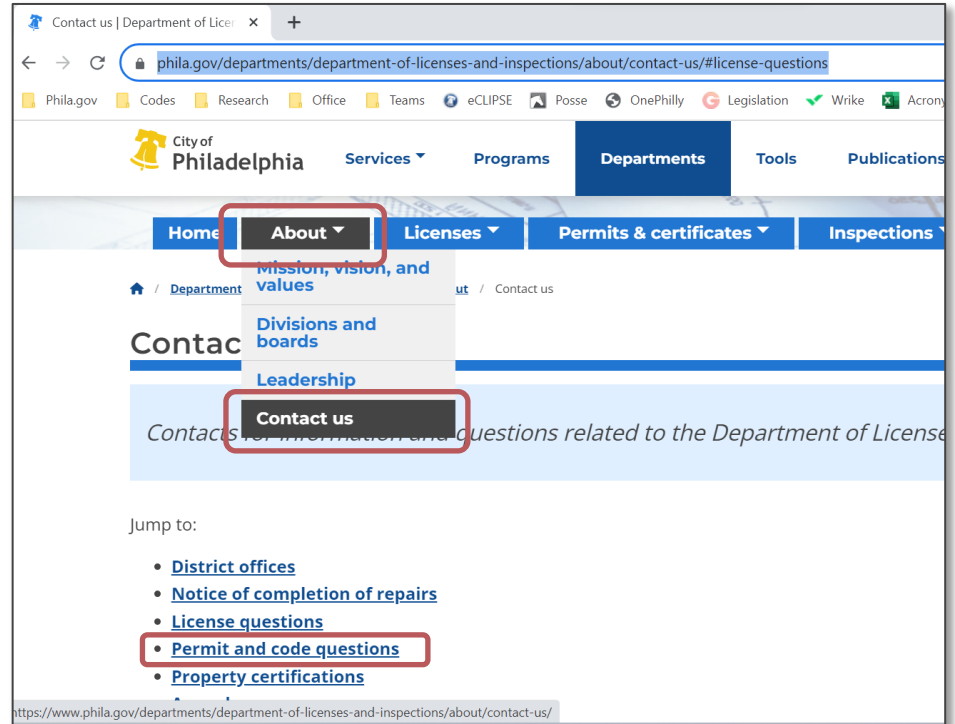


Zoning Resources

- [Zoning Code](#)
 - [Zoning Summary Generator](#)
 - [Zoning Code Quick Reference Guide](#)
 - [Atlas](#)
 - [Zoning Permit Web Services](#)
 - [Zoning FAQs](#)
 - [Zoning Code Bulletins](#)
 - [L&I's YouTube Page](#)
 - [Summary of Zoning Permit Fees](#)
 - [Summary of Filing Fees and Processing Times](#)
 - [Permit Navigator](#)
 - [L&I Plan Requirements](#)
 - [Commercial Leasing Notice Guide](#)
 - [Planning and Development's YouTube Page](#)
- 

Contacting L&I

- L&I's website has multiple resources for contacting the department.
- Hover over "About" then click "Contact Us"
- You can submit questions regarding permits and codes.





L&I Newsletter

- Stay up to date with L&I related updates by signing up for our newsletter.
- Go to [L&I's website](#) and scroll down to “Sign up for our newsletter”

Sign up for our newsletter

L&I's newsletter helps you stay up-to-date about permits, licenses, and more.



SIGN UP TODAY!



Continuing Education Credits

- Poll must be completed to receive CEU's.
- CEU's will be sent via e-mail 48-72 hours.





Thank You! Questions?

To build and sustain a safer Philadelphia, L&I embraces best practices in technology and customer service. We enable the public to access information, secure required approvals, and comply with building safety requirements in a convenient, reliable, and transparent manner.

L&I achieves code compliance through collaboration, education, and effective enforcement measures that hold businesses, contractors, and property owners accountable.

