

City Review Times for Construction Permits

Contact a Permit Technician at 360-778-8300 or permits@cob.org for additional information

Same Day Review “Over the Counter - OTC”

7 Day Review “Quick Response”

28 Day Review “Standard”

Varying Review “Major Project”

All land use enablements such as Critical Areas Permits and Design Review must be completed prior to a building permit application to fall into these bins. If not, see “Major Project” bin.

What Qualifies*?

Residential

- Uncovered Decks over 30” above grade that qualify for STFI*
- Demolitions
- Dormer Additions when plans are prepared by a design professional
- Electrical
- Mechanical
- Interior alterations*
- Structural alterations*
- Window replacements in same sized openings

Commercial

- Electrical that do not require plan review
- Tenant Improvements*, non-structural, with specific limitations

Both Residential & Commercial

- Foundation repairs/replacements with limitations
- Plumbing fixture change outs with minor modifications to piping
- Repairs with no changes
- Roof or wall coverings where no structural changes are occurring

**Certain permits are being tested as Subject to Field Inspection permits as part of a pilot program and may have limitations. Permits that qualify for this review bin are subject to change.*

Please see the STFI Pilot Program brochure for additional details.

What Qualifies?

Residential

- All other interior alterations not listed in the OTC bin
- Additions up to 500 sq ft
- All decks not listed in the OTC bin
- Detached accessory buildings

Residential Exceptions

- Impervious surface increased by more than 2000 sq ft
- Land disturbance greater than 5000 sq ft
- Property is located in Lake Whatcom watershed

Commercial

- All other interior tenant improvements not listed in the OTC bin
- Electrical that require plan review
- Signs; wall coverings; displays and fixtures
- Stand alone mechanical
- Stand alone plumbing

Commercial Exceptions

- Work increases size of building or tenant space
- Changes to structural components or the exterior of the building or space
- Alter existing exits or fire-rated building elements
- Uses with hazardous or combustible materials, food service or medical gas on site

What Qualifies?

Residential

- New single family residence or duplex*
- All other permits not listed in the OTC or quick response bins

Commercial

- New building when land use enablements are complete
- Alterations and/or tenant improvements affecting multiple spaces
- Changes in use of the building or space
- Site improvements

Both Residential & Commercial

- All fire construction permits

Res. & Comm. Exceptions

- Work creates more than 5000 sq ft of new and/or replaced impervious surface
- Work requires disturbance of more than one acre of land
- Project requires utility improvements
- Value of work exceeds 50% of value of existing improvements

**Certain permits that are considered “green” projects may qualify as a Quick Response permit under the pilot Bin Bump-up program. See the Bin Bump-up program brochure for additional details.*

What Qualifies?

Building permit applications for any construction project when the nature, size, scale, complexity, or occupancy does not qualify for any of the previous bins will be processed, managed, reviewed, and issued as “Major Project” permits.

- As determined by the Building Official, Planning Director, or Assistant Planning Director, or authorized designee
- When requested by the permit applicant.

Pre-application conferences will typically be required for a Major Project Permit (see Permit Technician for details). Project processing, review, management and approval will be determined by a team assigned to each project. Team assignment will occur prior to the pre-application conference. The assigned Major Project Team will be responsible for all phases of permit application submittal, reviews, communication, correction and approval of plans and permit issuance.

Permit processing for Major Project Permits will be managed by a Project Manager assigned to each Major Project Team.