

City of McPherson

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Development Timeline and Workflow in the City of McPherson

Before a new project can be granted a zoning / building permit, certain items need to be in place. These items will vary depending upon whether or not the subject property is already within the city boundary and whether or not a proper zoning classification is in place. New developments may also involve subdivision of the land in order to provide required easements and rights-of-way as well as facilitating proper title to the parcel being developed. Most developments of a commercial or multiple-family residential nature will then require a “site plan” approval from the City Planning Commission. Finally, construction drawings will be submitted to the building inspection department for code review. Various items from this list may sometimes be accomplished concurrently so the required timeline is not necessarily sequential. However many of the time frames required are a product of state statute and, therefore, are not subject to streamlining.

The attached flowchart shows the development process along with a generic time requirement analysis. The following information may help you to further refine the time required for your project to obtain a permit:

1. Annexation done voluntarily at the request of the landowner can happen very quickly, in many cases as soon as the next City Commission meeting. These meetings normally occur every Monday morning.
2. A zoning change requires legal publication and a public hearing before the City Planning Commission. The time required is dependent upon state statute as the legal notice minimum time frame is 20 clear days between the date of notice and the date of the public hearing. A 25-day lead time is normally required in order to produce the paperwork needed for legal publication and to meet the schedule of the local newspaper. The length of time required to get the submittal together may be extended significantly depending on the method used to gather the required list of real property owners within the legal notification boundary surrounding the property described in the case. You may wish to include a clause in any purchase contract that makes purchase contingent on proper zoning being accomplished. NOTE: If an intended use is listed in the zoning district as either a Special or Conditional Use, an additional public hearing is required. A Special Use may be heard concurrent with a zoning change by the Planning Commission at the same hearing. A Conditional Use is heard before the Board of Zoning Appeals and must be applied for and advertised separately. Legal notice requirements for each are the same as for a zoning case.

3. If a subdivision of the land is required, as is frequently the case, the engineering and surveying involved is usually the determining factor for length of time required. This process may be going on at the same time as the zoning request, but many applicants will choose not to commit the substantial funding required for this step until assured that proper zoning has been obtained. Virtually all subdivisions will require the submittal of a drainage plan for the entire subdivision. Some will also require submittal of a traffic analysis. Each of these items should be included in your contract with the engineering / surveying firm. A subdivision is submitted to the Planning Commission for review and approval in two stages: Preliminary Plat and Final Plat. The Preliminary Plat contains all of the engineering related items such as sanitary and storm sewer locations and grades, drainage over the entire property including elevation contours, existing and proposed utilities, surrounding uses including rights-of-way or easements, and existing roadways and their classifications. The Final Plat is pared down to the lots and blocks that are being created, rights-of-way and easements that will be dedicated, and various certificates and certifications that are to be signed by the various parties and governmental entities granting or accepting the items in the plat. The Final Plat is the version that is eventually filed with the County Register of Deeds. Once the Preliminary Plat has been approved by the Planning Commission, the Final Plat is prepared and submitted. Approval of the Final Plat is swift so long as it does not deviate from the approved Preliminary Plat. It is the applicant's job to circulate the Final Plat to all required signers and then to file the plat when all of the signatures have been garnered.
4. The site plan is then submitted to the Planning Commission for review and approval. This plan is specific to each individual project so a new subdivision may involve multiple site plans. The only types of development not required to produce a site plan are single family or two-family homes. The site plan will detail the footprint of any proposed structures as well as areas of impervious surfacing, area lighting, site drainage, landscaping, on-site traffic, etc. No public hearing is required and the Planning Commission is the only approving body. Pre-submittal meeting(s) with city staff and utility providers frequently serve to speed up this process. If the site plan is complete at the Planning Commission meeting, only one meeting is required to obtain approval. Note that a drainage plan for the development is required at this stage unless it was already completed as part of the overall subdivision drainage plan at an earlier stage. An erosion control plan may also be produced at this stage in order to speed up the building permit approval.
5. Code review is frequently done concurrent with the site planning process. This review is done by the Building Inspection department and will be coordinated with the Fire Department, Public Works Department, and any other city departments that may be involved. Normally, two copies of the architectural design drawings are required.
6. If the site plan, code review, and erosion control plans are already accomplished, the final zoning/building permit can frequently be completed on the same day as it is submitted. The final permit fees are due at this time.

In order to plan your project time line you need to be aware of the meeting schedules of the various agencies you may be dealing with. At the present time these meeting times are as follows:

City Commission – 8:30 A.M. each Monday in the Municipal Center Commission Room, 400 East Kansas Avenue. This meeting time and day may be modified from time to time to avoid conflicts. Such modifications will be advertised prior to the change.

City Planning Commission – Meets the First Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the Municipal Center Commission Room, 400 East Kansas Avenue.

Planning Commission Development Committee: Meets as needed on the last Tuesday of each month at 5:00 P.M. in the Municipal Center Commission Room, 400 East Kansas Avenue. This body is for review purposes only and does not conduct any official business.

Board of Zoning Appeals – Meets the 4th Thursday of each month at 7:00 P.M. in the Municipal Center Commission Room, 400 East Kansas Avenue.

City Staff – Will be happy to schedule called meetings as requested. We will also endeavor to have other interested parties present for these meetings as needed.

Virtually all of the required forms, applications, checklists, meeting calendars, and supporting information, along with the Zoning Regulations and Subdivision Regulations are available on the McPherson City website at the following link:

<http://www.mcpcity.com/pubs/?deptid=10>.

Meeting dates and times for the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and Development Committee are posted on the city calendar at the following link:

<http://www.mcpcity.com/events/?deptid=10>.

The non-planning related calendar is located here:

<http://www.mcpcity.com/events/?deptid=1>.

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City of McPherson Typical Permitting Process

