

City of Fort Worth

Commercial Development Guide 2009



FORT WORTH



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Forward	5
Development Process Overview	6
Pre-Development – Planning for your development	7
• Pre-development Conferences (PDC)	
• PDC Frequently Asked Questions	
• Annexation Information	
• Extra-territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)	
• Personnel Contact Information	
Platting – Subdividing Land	12
• The Platting Process	
• Personnel Contact Information	
Transportation Impact Fees	16
Planning and Zoning – Determining Land Use	
• Planning Overview – Comprehensive Plan	
• Planning – Historic Districts, Preservation	
• Mixed-use and urban villages	
• Neighborhood Empowerment Zones (NEZ)	
• Zoning Overview	
• Personnel Contact Information	
Urban Forestry	29
• Summary of the new ordinance	
• Urban Design Commission	
• Personnel Contact Information	
Fire Department	30
Transportation and Public Works (TPW)	31
• TPW Community Facilities Agreement (CFA)	
• Traffic Impact Analysis	
• Drainage Study	
• Storm Water Management	
• Personnel Contact Information	
Community Facilities Agreements (CFA)	33
• Definition	
• Requirements	
• Personnel Contact Information	

Infrastructure Design & Approval	35
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summary of Services• Review Process• Personnel Contact Information	
Water Department	36
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extensions and Taps• Water and Sewer Impact Fees• Personnel Contact Information	
Other Development Factors to Consider	38
Building Permits and Inspections	41
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overview• Permits – new construction/remodel• Trade Permits• Other Permits• Inspections• Permit Exceptions	
Development Contacts – People Who Can Help	47
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing• Urban Forestry• County Contacts• State Contacts• Utilities• Schools	

FORT WORTH



To the Development Community:

The City of Fort Worth is a growing community that values the quality of life available to our citizens. The shape of our city is guided by a myriad of public and private investments in homes, businesses and public infrastructure. The City Council has established the following strategic goals:

- Make Fort Worth the nation's safest major city.
- Improve mobility and air quality.
- Create and maintain a clean, attractive city.
- Strengthen the economic base, develop the future workforce, and create quality job opportunities.
- Promote orderly and sustainable development.

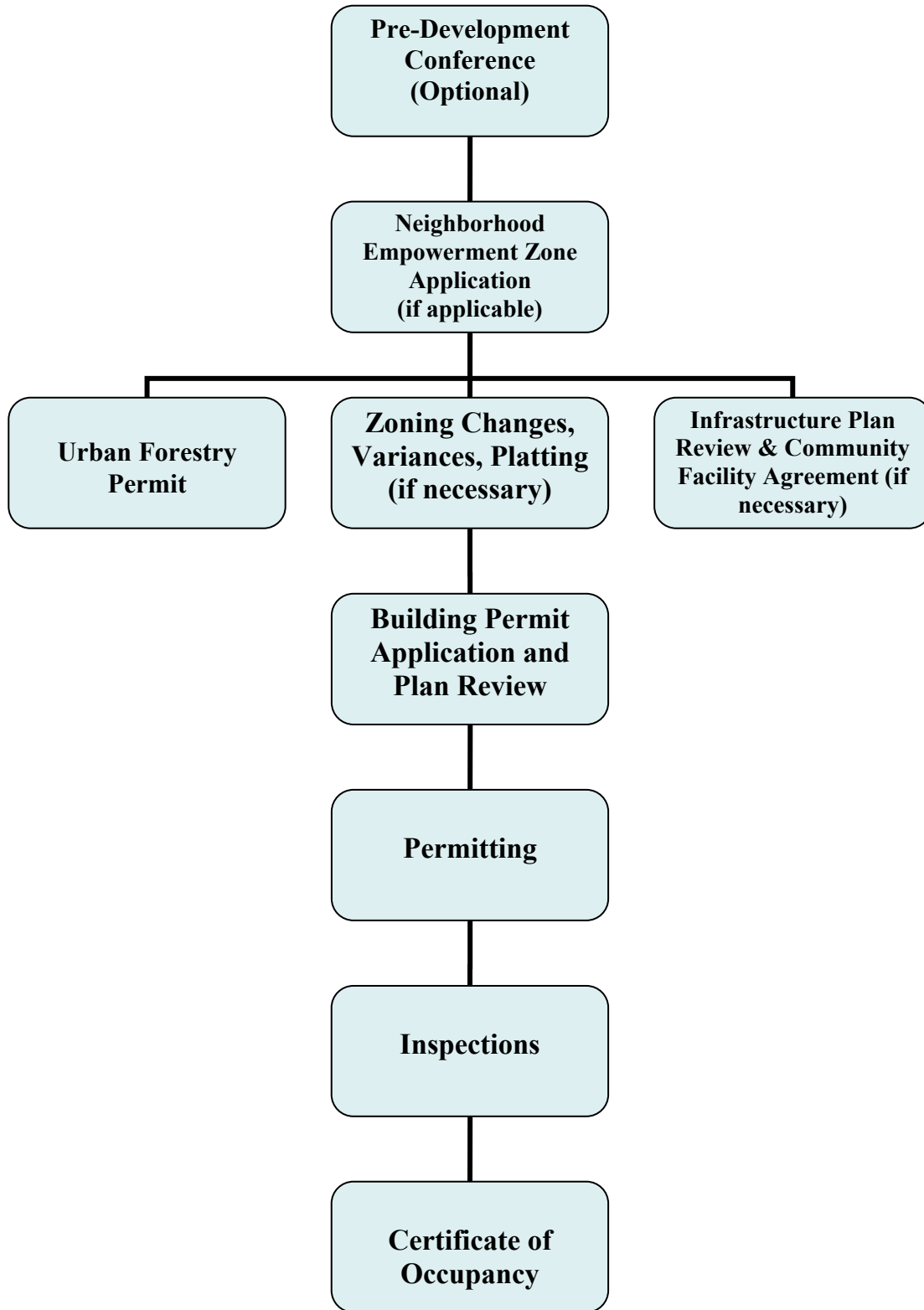
Achievement of each of these goals relies on quality development that continues to make Fort Worth an attractive place to live and do business. This includes safety of buildings, proper planning of streets and land uses, reservation of open space for recreation, retention and planting of trees for air quality among many other critical activities. Success also requires that the development process supports the efforts of private investors to complete projects that meet these goals in a timely and cost-effective way.

In that spirit, the City has developed this guide to facilitate your development activities. It provides a broad overview of the various processes and departments that are important to the successful completion of your projects. We hope you will find this tool useful and look forward to serving as a partner with you as we work toward the common goal of sustainable development for the future of Fort Worth.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Alanis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan Alanis
Director of Planning and Development
City of Fort Worth, TX

Development Process Overview



Pre-Development Conferences

Overview

The Pre-Development Conference (PDC) is designed to bring representatives from various City departments and the Developer and/or their consultants together in order to discuss possible issues and ask questions in regard to a new Development project. The PDC is a discovery meeting designed to discuss with the developer his/her general plans, needs, constraints, and goals.

The goals of a PDC are to:

- create a common understanding between the Developer and City of the expectations and requirements for the proposed development
- minimize code and permitting surprises
- save the Developer time and frustration.

City of Fort Worth PDC's are held (schedule permitting) each Monday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon. A PDC request form must be completed by the Developer/consultants and be received by the Development Coordinator at least one week before the desired conference date. Conferences are scheduled on a first come, first scheduled basis.

The PDC request form can be found on our website:

[www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Development_\(template\)/PDC%20form.pdf](http://www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Development_(template)/PDC%20form.pdf)

The PDC request can be emailed or faxed and must be accompanied by any associated drawings, maps, site plans, etc. The Coordinator will notify the various City departments and the applicant with the PDC date and time.

For more information, please contact the Development Coordinator

Development Project Coordinator
1000 Throckmorton St.
Fort Worth, Texas 76102
Office: 817.392.2239
Fax: 817.392.7985



Pre-Development Conference FAQ's

What City Departments will be represented in the PDC?

Staff attending PDC meetings includes those from Transportation and Public Works, Planning and Development (Zoning, Platting, Building Code and Inspections), Fire, Urban Forestry, Water, and other departments depending upon the proposed development.

What is the cost to schedule a Pre-development conference with the City of Fort Worth?

PDC meetings are free of charge to developers. We just ask that you submit a complete Pre-development conference request form and allow adequate time for scheduling.

How long are the meetings?

Meetings are generally scheduled in 30 or 45 minute blocks. Because this is a discovery meeting to generally discuss proposed project, these time allotments are usually sufficient.

What information should I provide for my PDC meeting?

At the very least, please submit a conceptual site plan or schematic. The more detailed the information you provide the City with, the better staff is able to prepare for your PDC. Many developers also will bring to the meeting large detailed prints for viewing.

Who should attend the meeting?

The PDC meetings are an informal "fact finding" meeting between city staff and developers. Please invite your civil engineer, architect, or other consultants you believe would benefit from the meeting.

May I schedule more than one PDC for my project?

Yes. Developers schedule a PDC in the conceptual planning phase of the project and another prior to construction.

Annexation

Annexation is the process by which Fort Worth adds land into its city limits. On September 7, 2004, the Fort Worth City Council adopted a revised annexation policy that provides the City Council with more specific guidance for making annexation decisions, enables the city to be more proactive in identifying areas to consider for annexation, and promotes more meaningful and timely public participation. In accordance with that policy, the city prepared a five-year annexation program that identifies potential annexation areas

- **Voluntary annexations** most often occur when a developer desires to improve a property that abuts the city limits, and also wishes to have city services and regulations extended to the area being developed. Upon the developer's completion of the annexation application and providing the appropriate documents and fees, city staff will process the annexation according to the Texas Local Government Code, chapter 43. At the conclusion of proper notifications and public hearings, the City Council will make the decision of whether or not to adopt an ordinance granting annexation of the property into the city limits.
- **City initiated Annexations** occur when it's in the best interest of the community and residents of Fort Worth to assure controlled growth and maintain health and public safety to the highest standards. City initiated annexations are planned according to the Annexation Policy which was created and written by a citizen task force appointed by the Mayor and City Council. A copy of the Annexation Policy and Plan can be found at:
- **Full Purpose Annexations** are provided full city services and governed by all city codes and regulations. Likewise, all city taxes are assessed, and eligible residents can vote in all city elections.
- **Limited Purpose Annexations** become part of the City's limits, but only certain codes and regulations apply and services are not provided. Likewise, no city taxes are assessed, and eligible residents can vote in all elections that do not involve city finances such as capital improvement bond packages for answers to frequently asked questions, go to:

Annexation Policy:

www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning/Comprehensive_Planning/24AnnexationPolicy_06.pdf

Annexation FAQ's:

www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Development/annexfaq.pdf

Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ)

DEFINITION:

The Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) of a municipality is the unincorporated area contiguous to the municipality's corporate boundaries and extends to a certain distance based on the municipality's population.

The City of Fort Worth's population exceeds 100,000 therefore its ETJ extends five miles along all borders of the corporate boundary.

When a municipality annexes an area for full-purposes, the ETJ of the municipality expands with the annexation to comprise the area around the new municipal boundary.

When a municipality annexes an area for limited-purposes (meaning, residents must comply with city development and construction standards and certain ordinances but do not pay city taxes), the ETJ of the municipality does not expand with the annexation.

(Chapter 42 of the Texas Local Government Code)

EXTENSION OF REGULATIONS:

A municipality by ordinance may extend to the ETJ the application of municipal ordinances and other ordinances relating to platting, access to public roads, or the pumping, extraction, and use of groundwater by persons other than retail public utilities. A municipality may not enforce its Zoning Rules and Regulations within the ETJ; however, subdivision rules and regulations apply to the ETJ areas.

DEVELOPING IN THE ETJ – SUBDIVISION REQUIREMENTS

If you are seeking development information for a property that is within the City of Fort Worth's Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), you are strongly encouraged to visit with the Comprehensive Planning Division of the Planning and Development Department to discuss the proposed use for this property and how it relates to what the City has identified for the area in the city's Master Comprehensive Plan, and Pat Flusche in Transportation and Public Works for identifying proposed roads and street improvements as these relate to what the City has identified for this area in its Master Thoroughfare Plan.

State statutes extend municipalities the power to exercise certain controls in their ETJ:

- No land may be expanded or subdivided within the ETJ without City of Fort Worth's approval through the platting process.
- Platting is based upon the property location and at the discretion of the City, all community facilities development (streets, storm drains, water and sewer lines, parks, street lights, etc) within Fort Worth's ETJ must be constructed to the same standards required for development within the City limits.
- No on-site sewage disposal system permit may be obtained or system installed without City of Fort Worth's approval.
- No municipal utility district may be created within the ETJ without City of Fort Worth's consent.
- City of Fort Worth has the power to annex any land in its ETJ.

Subdivision Ordinance

The City of Fort Worth Subdivision Ordinance applies to the subdivision of land within the city limits and the Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), which consists of the unincorporated land within five miles of the

city limits. The ordinance guides the land development process and protects the public from inferior and undesirable development practices. The ordinance governs streets, alleys, driveways, easements, drainage facilities, street lighting, lots and blocks, and park dedication.

www.fortworthgov.org/PlanningandDevelopment/info/default.aspx?id=12654&ekmense1=5582_submenu_0_link_4

City Staff Contact Information

Pre-Development and Annexation

- **Pre-Development**
Development Project Coordinator
Desk: 817.392.2239 Fax: 817.392.7985

- **Annexation**
Planning Manager
Desk: 817.392.8030 Fax: 817.392.7985

- Planner, Annexation
Desk: 817.392.8190 Fax: 817.392.7985



Platting – Subdividing Land

Before land in the City of Fort Worth can, be developed, must be properly platted. Land outside the city limits but within the City’s Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction (ETJ) is also subject to platting in certain situations such as expanding or dividing a piece of property for development.

What is a Plat?

A plat is a map of a piece of land identifying the location and boundaries of street rights of way, individual lots or parcels, and other site information. The plat shows features such as lot lines, utility easements, setback lines, land dedicated for public use (e.g. streets and parks), ownership, and metes and bounds (boundary dimensions).

A plat is always required in order to get a building permit for land within the City. Lots which are five acres or less and located in the ETJ also are subject to platting requirements. Subdivision regulations apply to vacant land that is being divided into two or more parts for development.

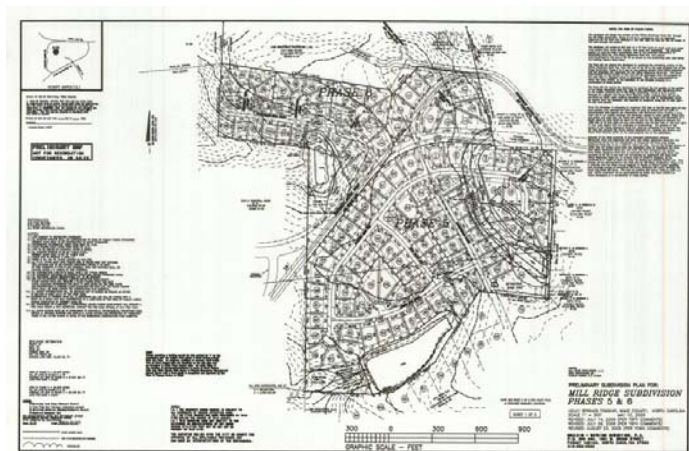
If streets, sewers, and water lines need to be constructed, the final plat is not approved until the Community Facilities Agreement (CFA) is executed. Also, a tax certificate showing that all property taxes have been paid must be submitted before a final plat can be filed. Once the final plat is approved, the plat is recorded in the county courthouse. A recorded plat establishes a legal building site and is required before obtaining a building permit or certificate of occupancy.

Can I locate plats online?

Accessing plats through Tarrant County website:

www.tarrantcounty.com

1. In pull down menu (middle of screen), highlight **Real Property Search**, ‘go’
 2. The **Official Public Record** – Search screen comes up
 3. In the **Grantor** field, enter a name or subdivision
 4. In the **Document Type** field, highlight **Plat** and click “**search**”
 5. The Official Public Record – Results screen comes up
- Note: Any records prior to approximately 1988 will not have plat images.
6. On the left of the results table, image column, click on the associated pdf.
- Note: The next page (Official Public Record – Image) will be blank.
7. On the top left, hover over the **Actions** tab and click on **Download Image(s)**
 8. The **Document Retrieval** page comes up
 9. Click on the associated pdf.



PLATTING IS REQUIRED WHEN:

- **Concept Plan (*Not Recorded*)**
 - a project is in excess of 640 acres
 - the plan must show the initial proposal for the development as well as proposed major land uses, access/circulation and other pertinent facilities.
- **Preliminary Plat**
 - there are more than 4 proposed lots
 - an option for Phased developments exists
 - Plan Commission approval is required.
- **Final Plat**
 - the Final Plat shall conform to the approved Preliminary Plat and meet all of the requirements of the Plan Commission.
 - the Final Plat may include all or any portion of the area included in the approved Preliminary Plat.
- **Short Form Final Plat (Minor Plat)**
 - a minor plat is permitted for four (4) or fewer lots that have not been previously platted and recorded.
 - all lots on the minor plat must have direct access to and front or abut an existing public street.
 - all lots must meet the lot size requirements of the zoning district in which they are located.
 - a minor plat does not require a public hearing and is administratively approved by the Plan Commission's Executive Secretary preceding the filing of the plat for record.
- **Re-plat**
 - a replat does not vacate the previous plat of record governing the remainder of the subdivision. A replat shall contain a note on the plat face attesting that the replat does not amend or remove any covenants or restrictions.
 - a public hearing is required if additional single-family or two-family zoned lots are created or if the location or width of interior streets and pedestrian circulation routes are significantly altered.
- **Amending Plat**
 - a plat of record may be amended without public notice, a public hearing, or approval of other lot owners and is controlling over the preceding plat without vacation for one or more of the following purposes:
 1. Correct errors in course or distance;
 2. Add any course or distance that was omitted;
 3. Correct an error in the description of the real property;
 4. Indicate monuments set after death, disability, or retirement from practice of the engineer or surveyor charged with responsibility for setting monuments;
 5. Show the location or character of any monument that has been changed or was incorrectly shown;
 6. Correct any other type of scrivener or clerical error or omission including lot numbers, acreage, street names, and identification of adjacent recorded plats;
 7. Correct an error in courses and distances of lot lines between two adjacent

lots if both lot owners join in the application for amending the plat; neither lot is abolished; the amendment does not attempt to remove recorded covenants or restrictions; and the amendment does not have a material adverse affect on the property rights of the other owners in the plat;

8. Relocate a lot line to eliminate an inadvertent encroachment of a building or other improvement on a lot line or easement;

9. Relocate one or more lot lines between one or more adjacent lots if the owners of all those lots join in the application for amending the plat; the amendment does not attempt to remove recorded covenants and restrictions; and the amendment does not increase the number of lots;

10. Make necessary changes to the preceding plat to create six(6) or fewer lots in the subdivision or a part of the subdivision covered by the preceding plat if the changes do not affect applicable zoning and other regulations of the City; the changes do not attempt to amend or remove any covenants or restrictions; and the area covered by the changes is located in an area that the city has approved, after a public hearing, as a residential improvement area;

11. Replat one or more lots fronting on an existing street if the owners of all those lots join in the application for amending the plat; the amendment does not remove any covenants or restrictions; the amendment does not increase the number of lots; and the amendment does not create or require the creation of a new streets or make necessary the extension of municipal facilities.

■ **Correction Plat**

- a plat may be corrected without public notice, a public hearing, or approval of other lot owners and is controlling over the preceding plat without vacation for one or more of the purposes listed in 1 through 7 in Subsection F, "Amending Plats" above.

A correction plat is filed for record in the county of jurisdiction upon administrative approval by the Plan Commission's Executive Secretary.

■ **Conveyance Plat**

- a conveyance plat may be used to transfer ownership of a parcel or portion of a parcel of land in order to record the transfer of ownership without requiring construction or design of public improvements or collection of development fees.
- the property must have access to private or Public Street.
- utility easements may be recorded on the conveyance plat.
- the conveyance plat shall contain a certification note on the plat face, as follows:
"This Conveyance Plat shall not convey any rights to development or guarantee of public utilities, public or private access, or issuance of addressing and permits, without compliance with all subdivision rules and regulations and the approval and recording of a Final Plat"

A conveyance plat is filed for record in the county of jurisdiction upon administrative approval by the Plan Commission's executive secretary.

■ **Vacated Plat**

A recorded plat may only be vacated per the provisions of Section 212.013 of the Texas Local Government Code. A vacated plat must meet the following requirements:

- a lot has been sold to an individual property owner, the vacation application shall include the signatures of 100% of all property owners within the recorded subdivision.

- no partial plat may be vacated without the consent of all property owners encompassed by the prevailing recorded plat.
- no plat may be vacated unless access is provided to individual platted lots and public street and alley rights of way, parks, public sites and facilities, and utility and drainage easements and improvements are provided in the accompanying replat.
- no vacated plat may be recorded in the county of jurisdiction without a public hearing and approval of the City Plan Commission.

City Plan Commission

The commission has the authority of final approval of subdivision plats. It is an advisory body to the City Council on all matters relating to public improvements and has such other duties and powers as specified in Ordinance No. 5755.

MEETING TIME AND PLACE: Meets in the Council Chamber every fourth Wednesday of the month at 1:30 p.m.

City Staff Contact Information

Platting

- Platting Manager
Desk: 817.392.8030 Fax: 817.392.7985
- Planner, Platting Division
Desk: 817.392.2412 Fax: 817.392.7985
- Planner, Platting Division
Desk: 817.392.2561 Fax: 817.392.7985

Transportation Impact Fees

<http://www.fortworthgov.org/impactfees/>

On May 13, 2008, the Fort Worth City Council adopted a transportation impact fee ordinance. This ordinance became effective July 1, 2008.

As the City finalizes plans to integrate the transportation impact fee into the development process, additional documentation will be developed to assist the community in becoming more knowledgeable about the ordinance.

Transportation impact fees are charges assessed by local governments on new development projects and will help fund transportation improvements that will be needed as development occurs in Fort Worth.

[Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance](#)

Fee Estimator

[Transportation Impact Fee Estimator](#)

City Staff Contact Information

Transportation Impact Fees

- Transportation Impact Fee Manager
Desk: 817.392.7918



Planning

www.fortworthgov.org/planninganddevelopment

What is the Comprehensive Plan?

The Comprehensive Plan is the City of Fort Worth's official guide for making decisions about growth and development. The plan contains a summary of the goals, objectives, policies, strategies, programs, and projects that will enable the City to achieve its mission of *focusing on the future, working together to build strong neighborhoods, developing a sound economy, and providing a safe community.*

The Texas Local Government Code establishes the legal basis for the comprehensive plan. The Code states that a municipality may adopt a comprehensive plan for long-range development. If a city adopts a comprehensive plan, it must be used as the basis of subsequent zoning amendments. The comprehensive plan is described as a plan for the orderly growth and development of the city and its environs. The plan should "facilitate the movement of people and goods, and the health, safety, and general welfare for the citizens of the city."

What does the City use the Comprehensive Plan for?

- Functional plans such as the Citywide Historic Preservation Plan, the Gateway Park Master Plan, and the Public Art Master Plan are incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan
- Departmental business plans
- Budget priorities
- Capital improvement program
- Annexation program
- Development standards
- Zoning and subdivision cases

Fort Worth Citywide Preservation Plan, 2003

Fort Worth has a tremendous wealth of historic resources that give the community a unique identity and strong community character. The city's historic resources contribute in a variety of ways, but many of these resources are not protected from development pressures and other threats. Public awareness levels and opinions vary widely with respect to historic preservation in Fort Worth, and only a small number of citizens are actively involved in the issue. Several preservation controversies in recent years have illuminated the varied opinions. It is the goal of this plan to build a consensus on a wide range of historic preservation issues in Fort Worth.

www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning/Historic_Preservation/2003%20Citywide%20Historic%20Preservation%20web.pdf

Historic Districts Frequently Asked Questions

What is a historic district?

A historic district in Fort Worth is typically a defined area or neighborhood with a common theme based on architectural style, historical development patterns, cultural identity, or social and economic historical patterns. At least two structures within the district's boundary must be individually eligible for historic designation by meeting three of the ten designation criteria. A district is created through overlay zoning when the owners of more than 50% of the individual parcels and lots and the owners of more than 50% of the total land area sign a petition in favor of the district nomination and the district's design guidelines. The nomination and design guidelines are first reviewed and recommended for approval by the Historic and Cultural Landmarks Commission (HCLC), then the Zoning Commission, and finally by the City Council. The basic idea behind the creation of a historic district is to preserve the character and identity of an area for the future.



What is a conservation district?

A conservation district in Fort Worth is typically a defined area or neighborhood with a common pattern of spacing, a common development pattern, an area of significant natural vegetation or visual appearance, or an area that could potentially be a historic district, but does not have the age or integrity to be designated as such. The process for approval is the same as for a historic district, however, instead of the HCLC, the Scenic Preservation and Design Review Commission makes the recommendation and instead of design guidelines there is a conceptual plan approved with the designation to guide future development and alterations. It also is created through overlay zoning. The basic idea behind the creation of a conservation district is to conserve the basic patterns and special areas of significance from inappropriate new development.

What are design guidelines?

Design guidelines are regulations specific to a historic district. They are created and approved by the property owners of the historic district and then adopted by the City Council for use by the HCLC to review applications for a certificate of appropriateness. Once adopted, amendments may be approved only with the majority vote of the historic district and the City Council. Guidelines typically address new construction and alterations to the materials and design of existing structures. The guidelines are not intended to stifle creativity or to prevent alterations to property and, because the individual districts create them, guidelines can be drafted to address any issues of concern in the district and can be as specific or as general as the district chooses. In the absence of approved guidelines for a district, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Review are used.

What is the Historic and Cultural Landmarks Commission (HCLC)?

The HCLC is a nine-member volunteer commission appointed by the Mayor and the City Council to review projects for Certificates of Appropriateness (COA) in historic districts and for individually designated properties, to nominate property for historic designation, and to assist in the implementation of the Citywide Historic Preservation Plan. Each member of the commission has demonstrated professional and/or personal expertise in planning, historic preservation, law, real estate, architecture, or landscape architecture as required by the City Code and by the federal Certified Local Government Program. Currently, the HCLC consists of two architects, one planner, three real estate/development professionals, one landscape architect, one historic preservation professional, and one lawyer. Most of the members also have some experience with personal historic rehabilitation projects of their own. The HCLC meets each month to review applications for certificates of appropriateness based on the guidelines for the property or district. Some historic districts have created neighborhood boards to assist property owners in making application to the HCLC, however this is voluntary and these boards are not part of the HCLC.

What is a certificate of appropriateness?

A certificate of appropriateness, also called a COA, is an approval from the HCLC to obtain a building or other type of city permit to do construction, demolition, or other modifications to the exterior of a designated property. A COA is not needed for painting, planting landscape, ordinary maintenance or for repairs that are 'in-kind' and do not change the material or design. When an emergency arises, and there is no time to wait for the next meeting, the HPO can facilitate the COA process for the immediate work. Typically, an application requires photographs or scaled drawings of the project. Professional drawings and plans are not required for a certificate of appropriateness and you are not required to have an architect or consultant for your project. In fact, an overwhelming majority of the certificates of appropriateness approved are for work to be done by property owners and 'weekend warriors.'

What is the benefit of having a historic district?

Historic designation can be a burden to a property owner - there is extra time involved in planning major changes to a property; new construction should not look like something built in a new subdivision; and sometimes materials are more expensive and harder to find. Because the City realizes this, the Preservation Office provides extra help. Historic properties where a 30% reinvestment is made in a renovation are eligible for a 10-year tax freeze on the city portion of the property tax. And because the burden doesn't stop, a property can receive it every 20 years. The HPO also can provide information on salvaged and reclaimed materials, which not only are structurally more compatible with a historic structure, they are friendlier to the environment. Another bonus is value. Studies done nationwide show that property within a designated historic district appreciates resale value more steadily and more quickly than non-designated property. In Texas, the average resale appreciation is about 19% based on a study from Rutgers University.

Urban Design Districts and Overlays

Throughout the City of Fort Worth, there are various design districts in which design is regulated through standards and guidelines. Urban design districts and overlays that are either in effect or will be coming into effect soon include:

- [Downtown](#)
- [Trinity Uptown](#)
- [Fort Worth South](#)
- [Cultural District/West Seventh](#)
- [1-35W/Alliance](#)
- [Camp Bowie](#)



Urban Villages

The Fort Worth City Council works with private developers, business groups, and neighborhood associations to transform many of the central city's older commercial districts into vibrant "urban villages." Urban villages are designed to help promote the central city as an appealing alternative to the generic and often congested office parks and subdivisions of the suburbs.

Vision and Benefits

Urban villages are urbanized places that have a concentration of jobs, housing, commercial uses, public spaces, public transportation and pedestrian activity. They are frequently centered around significant intersections. Although the vision for each of Fort Worth's villages is unique, they all share certain characteristics. Within these relatively compact geographical areas, different land uses are found side-by-side or within the same structures. This mix of uses in the village, including a variety of owner-and renter-occupied multifamily residential products, is located in taller buildings with minimal setbacks from the street and reduced parking requirements, achieving the densities necessary to support transit and pedestrian activity, attract private investment, and create a sense of place. Pedestrian activity and access to alternate modes of transportation have the added advantage of helping to improve air quality by reducing reliance on autos.



Urban villages serve as catalysts for public and private investment and support renewed economic activity in the central city, effectively building on the strengths of the area and connecting to adjacent neighborhoods.

Planning Process

In 2005, the City Council directed the City Plan Commission to evaluate existing and potential new urban villages. As a result, several villages have been added or combined, and two have been eliminated from the original thirteen. Currently, the City is implementing strategies from the original report for sixteen urban villages. Three strategies--capital improvements, mixed-use zoning, and economic incentives--are central to the revitalization effort.



Mixed-Use Zoning Guide

Why does the City encourage mixed-use development in appropriate locations?

The City of Fort Worth Comprehensive Plan designates mixed-use growth centers as areas where compact, pedestrian-scaled, mixed-use neighborhoods and commercial centers should be developed. Within these growth centers, and in other appropriate areas, such as designated urban villages, mixed-use zoning helps provide a desirable combination of compatible residential, office, retail, and selected light industrial uses. Vibrant, compact, mixed-use districts can:

- help reduce the frequency and distance of car trips
- foster safe, active pedestrian environments
- provide residential and employment density to support transit, neighborhood businesses, and public transportation
- attract new residents and employers looking for urban amenities.

What is the purpose of this guide to the mixed-use zoning standards?

The mixed-use zoning standards are significantly different than the conventional development standards of other commercial districts. Because the classifications are intended to encourage a compatible mix of residential and non-residential uses, the mixed-use standards place more emphasis on the form, or design, of new development. An illustrated guide is the most effective way to present these form-based standards.

To download the City of Fort Worth Mixed-Use Zoning Guide, visit:

www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning/Zoning_Review/MU_ZoningGuide2006.pdf



Neighborhood Empowerment Zones

Economic incentives greatly increase the success of the urban villages by promoting desirable residential and commercial development and density. Household growth in and around the villages strengthens the market for area businesses. These businesses in turn provide goods, services and jobs for area residents. Central city economic redevelopment expands the City of Fort Worth's tax base.

The city's principal incentive for urban village revitalization is the Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ) program. In 2002, the City Council endorsed the designation of NEZs for twelve eligible urban villages and surrounding lower-income neighborhoods along seven central city commercial corridors, with a prerequisite that villages be rezoned to mixed-use before NEZ designation. Citizens are leading the rezoning petition drives. With NEZ designation come incentives to qualified mixed-use, residential, commercial and industrial projects. Incentives include but are not necessarily limited to municipal property tax abatement, development fee waivers and release of city liens.

What is a Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ)?

The Neighborhood Empowerment Zone is a segment of a neighborhood, designated as such by the City of Fort Worth eligibility criteria, which can receive incentives to promote affordable housing and economic development, and improve the quality of social services, education, or public safety to residents of the NEZ.

What is the Neighborhood Empowerment Zone (NEZ) Program?

The NEZ program is the vehicle by which incentives like building permit fee waivers, release of city liens, and municipal property tax abatements can be granted to homeowners, investor-owners and developers proposing new construction projects or rehabilitation projects that are located within the NEZ area.

How can I apply for NEZ incentives?

Apply at the Permitting Center Check-In located in City Hall at the south-end lower level. When you apply for a building permit-and if required, a zoning change-staff will assess your project at that time to determine if it is eligible for NEZ incentives. If it meets all criteria, you will receive notice that your project has been certified to receive NEZ incentives.

How long will it take before I know if I am certified to receive NEZ incentives?

Five to seven days.

What are some of the criteria for becoming certified to receive NEZ incentives?

- the property must be located in a NEZ area
- the proposed rehab must be 30% or more than the TAD improvement value of the property
- the property must be zoned properly
- the property is a permanent structure, and not a mobile structure
- the owner/developer is not delinquent in paying taxes and does not have any City liens against any property they own
- the owner/developer has not been subject to a Building Standards Commissions' order of Demolition where their property was demolished within the last five (5) years
- the property has received City Council support if it is a liquor store or package store.

Are there any fees associated with participating in this program?

Yes. There is an application fee of \$25 for all basic incentives excluding tax abatements. The application for residential tax abatements is \$100. The application fee for multi-family, commercial, industrial, community facilities and mixed-use development projects is one-half of one percent (0.5%) of the proposed project's capital investment, with a \$200 minimum not to exceed \$2,000. If you are approved for tax abatements, city staff will work with you to finalize the tax abatement agreement with the city.

Which city departments are involved in this program?

- **Planning and Development** – NEZ intake and certification; release of development fee waivers; and release of City liens.
- **Housing and Economic Development** – facilitates designation of new NEZs; recommend changes in NEZ policy; process five and ten year residential property tax abatements; and release of City liens for tax abatement properties. Also, offers ten year tax abatements for non-residential properties or projects.
- **Code Compliance** – release of trash, demolition, weed, and board-up/open structure, liens.
- **Transportation and Public Works:** Community Facility Agreement application fee waivers; paving liens
- **Water** – release of impact fee waivers for water and wastewater.

A NEZ brochure for developers can be found at:

www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Serving_You/NEZ_Program/NEZ%20Brochure%20for%20Developers.pdf

A NEZ brochure for owners can be found at:

[http://www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Serving_You/NEZ_Program/NEZ%20Brochure%20for%20Investor%20Owners\(1\).pdf](http://www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Planning_and_Development/Serving_You/NEZ_Program/NEZ%20Brochure%20for%20Investor%20Owners(1).pdf)

Zoning

Determining Land Use

www.fortworthgov.org/planninganddevelopment/



What is Zoning?

Zoning is a tool used by the City of Fort Worth to regulate land use, promote orderly growth, and protect existing property owners by ensuring a convenient, attractive and functional community. The City Council along with several city boards and commissions make decisions on how to zone property and other zoning matters.

Why is Zoning Needed?

A city must have a blueprint to locate streets, parks and business and residential areas. Zoning allows the city to determine various land uses, promote orderly growth and protect existing property owners by ensuring a convenient, attractive community. City Council along with several city boards and commissions composed of citizen volunteers, make all zoning decisions.

The complete zoning ordinance can be found: www.fortworthgov.org/zoning

A City of Fort Worth interactive zoning map can be found at:
www.maps.fortworthgov.org/Zoning

Information on Trinity Uptown District can be found at:
www.fortworthgov.org/PlanningandDevelopment/info/default.aspx?id=12426

Near South Zoning District

The Near Southside is located just south of downtown Fort Worth. New form-based zoning standards and guidelines were adopted in 2007 for the Near Southside to help promote the area's revitalization in a way that builds on its history and capitalizes on the district's eclectic, mixed-use, human-scale character to create a competitive advantage in attracting new residents and businesses.

For more information, visit:

www.fortworthgov.org/zoning/chapter_29.html (section 4.909)
www.fortworthsouth.org/NSStds10.12App.pdf

How Do I Change a Property's Zoning?

Every proposal to change the regulations of the zoning ordinance or the boundaries of a zoning district must be presented to the Zoning Commission. To initiate this process an application is filed with the

Planning and Development Department and payment is made of the appropriate filing fee. The application is made by the owner of the property or an authorized agent, or may be initiated by the City of Fort Worth.

Before land in the City of Fort Worth can be developed, it must be properly zoned and platted. Land outside the city limits but within the city's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ) is subject to platting, but not to zoning. Two separate commissions review zoning and platting requests:

- > Zoning - Zoning Commission
- > Platting - City Plan Commission

The Zoning Commission, an advisory board to the City Council on all zoning matters, conducts public hearings on zoning requests and makes recommendations to the City Council. The City Council is the final approval authority for zoning. Plats are submitted to the City Plan Commission, which is the City's final approval authority for platting.

Who Can Apply for the Zoning Change?

An application for a change in zoning may be requested by the owner of the property involved, his attorney or by a person with written authority to act on the owner's behalf. An application also may be filed by the city's Planning and Development Department upon recommendation of the Zoning Commission, Plan Commission, or Board of Adjustments or the City Council.



Owner Initiated Zoning Changes

Property owners may initiate a rezoning request at any time by filing an application with the Planning and Development Department.

To receive consultation concerning the future land use designation of your property or on the appropriate zoning district for which to apply that is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan future land use please contact the Planning and Development Department's Zoning and Subdivision Review Team at 817-392-8000.

City Initiated Zoning Changes

The City Council adopted a policy, which established certain procedures whereby the city – at the request of affected property owners – might initiate zoning changes in accordance with the city's Comprehensive Plan. Under these procedures, the city will initiate a zoning change in response to a valid petition signed by property owners representing 50 percent or more of the parcels to be rezoned and 50 percent or more of the land area to be rezoned.

What is the process for petition based zoning changes?

Planning and Development staff meets with the interested neighborhood in an informational meeting to 1) review the existing zoning in the proposed petition area, 2) verify that the requested zoning is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and 3) review the requirements for the petition to be valid.

After receipt of the petition, staff verifies that the petition signatures represent 50 percent of the parcels and 50 percent of the land area within the petition boundaries according to the most recent TAD records. Staff notifies the neighborhood representatives that the petition is valid and that a second neighborhood meeting to announce the results of the petition is required. After holding the meeting, staff initiates the rezoning application and submits it to the Planning and Development Department for the next available Zoning Commission Hearing.



Council Initiated Zoning Changes

Any interested councilmember may request that the City Manager prepare a Mayor and Council communication (M&C) authorizing the City Manager to initiate one or more specific zoning changes. Planning staff verifies that the proposed changes are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, accompanies the city councilmember at an informational meeting held in or near the area to be considered for rezoning, and briefs the City Council on the proposed zoning changes at an appropriate pre-Council meeting. If the city council indicates that it wishes to initiate the proposed zoning changes, then the City Manager places an appropriate M&C on the next regular City Council agenda. After the City Council

approves the M&C, city staff prepares an appropriate rezoning application and schedules the case for the next available Zoning Commission public hearing.

Zoning Commission

The city Zoning Commission acts as an advisory board to the City Council in regard to zoning matters within the City of Fort Worth and has such other duties and powers as specified in Ordinance 5754.

MEETING TIME AND PLACE: It meets in the Council Chamber every second Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m. A work session is held immediately prior to the meeting and begins at 9 a.m. in the Pre-Council Chamber.

Requesting Variances from the Zoning Ordinance - Board of Adjustments

The Board hears and decides cases where it is alleged there is error in any requirement, decision, or determination made by the Building Official in the enforcement of the ordinances, and has the power to establish public notice and hearing to alter previous action in such matters. They have such powers as are specified in Ordinance No. 5756.

Members are considered to be officers of the City of Fort Worth. All decisions are final, subject only to review by the courts.

MEETING TIME AND PLACE: Meets in the Council Chamber on the first Wednesday of the month at 10 a.m.

City Staff Contact Information

Planning

Zoning/Zoning Commission

Planner Desk: 817-392-2495 or 817-392-8043

Board of Adjustment

Planner Desk: 817-392-2561

Mixed-Use/Unified Residential Developments (URD)

Planner Desk: 817-392-2397

Downtown Design and Review Board

Planner Desk: 817.392.8045

NEZ Program

817-392-7353

Comprehensive Plan

817-392-8011

Mixed-Use Zoning

817-393-2397

Historic Preservation

817-392-8037

Additional information regarding zoning can be found at:

www.fortworthgov.org/zoning/

www.maps.fortworthgov.org/Zoning/

www.trinityrivervision.org/

www.historiccampbowie.com/

www.fortworthsouthinc.com

www.35Wcoalition.com

www.cr.nps.gov/nr/index.htm (National Register of Historic Places)

www.thc.state.tx.us (Texas Historic Commission)

Urban Forestry

www.fortworthgov.org/pacs/info/urbanforestry

A new tree ordinance, enacted January 31, 2007, limits the removal of tree canopy and protected trees. It promotes multi-aged forest, orderly development of the City of Fort Worth and protects the public health, safety and general welfare of the citizens.

The new tree ordinance was developed to establish regulations addressing the protection of healthy and significant trees and to provide for the replacement and replanting of trees that are necessarily removed during construction, development or redevelopment. The new tree ordinance is separate from the landscaping requirements of the zoning ordinance.

The City of Fort Worth shall not approve an Urban Forestry Plan/Permit until 21 calendar days have passed on the Website posting. Please note, there will **not** be a 21-day public notification if no trees are being removed.

Appeals will be heard by the Urban Design Commission

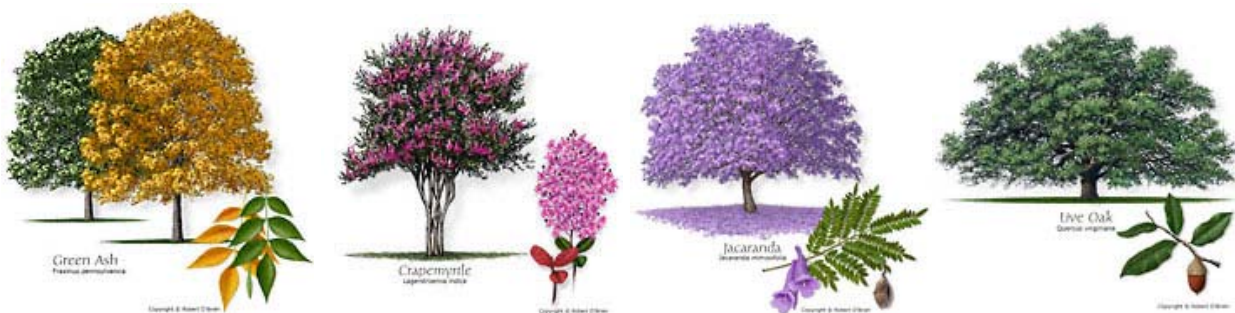
To view new ordinance, visit:

www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Parks_and_Community_Services/Park_Planning/ordinance.pdf

City Staff Contact Information

Urban Forestry

Urban Forestry Compliance Specialist
Desk: 817-392-7931 or 817-392-7939



Fire Department

www.fortworthgov.org/fire



Submit the following to the Development Department's Plans Review:

- a set of site plans for locations of fire hydrants and fire lanes
- the appropriate electrical and mechanical plans that include fire protection, as well as, plans designating fire protection that are part of the building construction plans submittal to the Development Department.

Submit the following to the Fire Department:

- Fire protection system plans (shop drawings) prepared by the licensed Fire Protection System Contractor, including fire sprinkler system plans, fire alarm plans, standpipe system plans, underground water mains supplying fire protection systems, etc.

Note: The plan submittals listed above are made at different times and by different contractors. The Fire Department receives the first two plans listed from the Development Department and those plans are required to be approved prior to issuance of building and fire permits. The fire protection system plans are submitted to the Fire Department directly from the fire protection system contractor later in the project schedule.

Fire Protection System Permits

- Issued only to a Fire Protection System contractor that is registered with the Bureau of Fire Prevention and licensed by State of Texas in accordance with Fort Worth Fire Code Appendix VII-B (Ordinance Amendment 13636).
- Building permits cannot be released from the Development Department without appropriate Fire Protection Systems permits obtained.
- Fire Protection System Permit must be obtained prior to plan submittal. These plans may be submitted later.
- Note: Fire protection system plans required for all commercial permits.

Fire Sprinklers and Fire Alarm Systems

- New Buildings – Developers are strongly encouraged to install fire sprinklers and fire alarm systems in all new buildings. For Worth Codes have construction tradeoffs that are favorable for the installation of fire sprinklers.
- Building Additions or Renovations – The Fire Department reviews the need for fire sprinkler and/or fire alarm systems with the Development Department on a case-by-case basis.

Fire Department Access

- Fire Department reviews the fire hose lay requirements and locations of fire hydrants and fire lanes for new buildings, as well as, renovations and additions.

Variances

- The Construction and Fire Prevention Board of Appeals consider variance requests of the City's Fire Code.

Transportation and Public Works

www.fortworthgov.org/tpw/



The mission of the Transportation and Public Works Department is to protect and preserve the health, safety, and well being of the residents of Fort Worth through effective and efficient maintenance and operation of the City's transportation infrastructure. As such, it is an integral part of the development process. Transportation and Public Work issues that often impact that process are detailed in the following pages.

Community Facilities Agreement (CFA)

- Required when community facilities are needed including streets and street improvements, traffic signals, street lights, street name signs, storm drains, water lines, sewer lines and park facilities.
- CFAs are contracts between the property owner and the city and are usually executed following preliminary plat approval. CFAs require City Council approval.

Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) for Site Circulation – Include the Following:

- Off-site access
- On-site circulation
- Existing and projected traffic volumes
- Traffic control devices

Parkway Permits

- Parkway permits are required for any work done in the City's right-of-way.
- Parkway includes the driveway approach, sidewalk, curb and handicap ramp.
- A contractor that is licensed and bonded with the City must obtain the permit.
- Individual property owners are not allowed to do the work themselves. They must hire a contractor to do the work.
- Call the TPW Permit Desk at (817) 392-6594 to obtain the following:
 - List of licensed and bonded contractors
 - Application forms to get licensed and bonded
 - Additional information.

Street Use Permits

The TPW Street Permit Center issues several types of street use permits. There is a \$50 fee for each permit. There also is a separate \$25 fee for re-inspections of parkway construction such as driveways and sidewalks.

City Staff Contact Information

Transportation and Public Works

Master Thoroughfare Plan
Desk: 817.392.2446

Senior Engineer
Desk: 817-392-8701

Transportation and Public Works Street Permit Center: 817.392.6594



Storm Water Management

When rain hits any hard surface, such as a roof or driveway, it can't soak into the ground so it runs off the property. Uncontrolled runoff can lead to flooding, erosion and pollution problems. It is the city's job to help control this runoff.

A City of Fort Worth Storm Water Management Design Manual provides guidance so that new development does not contribute to flooding, erosion and water pollution problems. Use the links below to access the manual and related documents (PDF format):

- [City of Fort Worth Storm Water Management Design Manual](#) (PDF)
- [Runoff Coefficients Table 2.1.4-2](#)(PDF)
- [Preliminary SWM Checklist](#) (PDF)
- [Conceptual SWM Checklist](#) (PDF)
- [Dam Safety Checklist](#) (PDF)
- [Final SWM Checklist](#) (PDF)
- [Errata Sheet](#) (PDF)

Floodplains

Under the city's Floodplain Ordinance, TPW's Storm Water Management Division manages the floodplains and appropriate FEMA regulations. Learn more at [Floodplain Management](#).

Erosion and Pollution Control

- An EPA Storm Water Permit is required when a construction site is five acres or larger or is part of a common development of five acres or more.
- If the site qualifies for an EPA Storm Water Permit, then a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) must be developed for the construction site prior to the commencement of earth disturbing activities. Contact the Environmental Management Department / New Construction Inspection at (817) 3921-5451 or visit the EPA Web site at www.epa.gov/earth1r6/6en/w/sw/home.htm for SWPPP details.
- A Notice of Intent (NOI) form must be sent to the EPA prior to the commencement of earth disturbing activities. A copy of the NOI must be forwarded to the Environmental Management Department at 5000 MLK Freeway, Fort Worth, Texas, 76119 or fax the form to (817) 392-5464.
- The Environmental Management Department will perform periodic inspections of the construction site for compliance with the SWPPP, per EPA and City ordinance requirements.

City Staff Contact Information

Transportation and Public Works

Engineer Desk: 817-392-2289

Storm Water Management Engineering Desk: 817-392-7901

Community Facilities Agreements (CFA)

New Community Facilities Agreement Process

Effective September 1, 2008, Community Facilities Agreements (CFAs) will be administered by designated staff in the Planning and Development Department. A single, combined CFA is utilized for both TPW and Water departments infrastructure. A CFA Web page with program and process overview, documents, and frequently asked questions are available by visiting:

www.fortworthgov.org/planninganddevelopment.

The CFA office is located in the southeast corner on the lower level of City hall. For questions about CFA's, contact Catherine Davidson at catherine.davidson@fortworthgov.org.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPER PROJECTS:

CFA requirements for plat release and building permits:

For projects over \$25,000 with NO city participation

Civil Engineer Requirements:

- Comprehensive water and/or sewer studies must be submitted before plans
- 13 sets of half-size and one full-size set of civil utility construction plans and documents must be submitted to the Plans Review section- locally on the ground level of the southeast corner of the City Hall Building
- Please advise the architect to coordinate with the backflow prevention staff and/or grease trap staff (Jerry Pressley: 817-871-8281) for additional requirements on the proposed development to eliminate delay on approval of the building permit
- A cost estimate and exhibit prepared by an engineer must be attached to the three CFA copies and must be signed by the developer at the time of submission to the Water Department (Stephanie Francis: 817-392-7585).

Developer Requirements:

- Three signed copies of the Informal CFA from Developer (A copy is available from the Water Department's website.)
- Attach a cost estimate and 8 ½" x 11" exhibit prepared by an engineer.
- Please include any plat numbers or building permit numbers that will be needed.
- A developer's deposit based on the estimates of the scope of water and sewer work. The deposit may be either:
 1. 125 percent check that can be handled as escrow or revenue
 2. 100 percent developer's bond
 3. 125 percent escrow / pledge
 4. Completion Agreements and Letters of Credit will be accepted only after approval from the Legal Department.
- When making a developer's deposit, submit your vender ID information online so any escrow, extra inspection fees or revenue may be returned to you.
- A development bond copy and other forms are available on the website: www.fortworthgov.org/water click "Customer Center" (screen button on the left). Choose "Information For Developer's Projects" (one of the choices on the right side) where you will find all forms and design criteria

- The person signing financial guarantees and the informal CFA must be the president or hold a position of authority to bind the company to the conditions of the CFA.
- Otherwise, the City of Fort Worth will require a written statement acknowledging the person (Comptroller, Secretary of Co., Regional Mgr., etc.) has the authority to bind the company to a signed agreement
- If combining with a Transportation and Public Works (TPW) deposit, inform the Water Department staff of your intentions.
- Provide a 2 percent inspection fee to the Water Department, and a 4 percent inspection fee to TPW.

Pre-Qualified General or Utility Contractor Requirements:

- Certificate of Insurance
- Contract between the City and the Contractor
- Maintenance Bond
- Payment Bond
- Performance Bond
- The pre-qualification process takes approximately two weeks so the selected contractor must start early on this process unless you are using a contractor who is already pre-qualified with the Water Department.

For projects under \$25,000 with NO city participation

Project Requirements:

- Small jobs may be submitted to the In-House Design Section through Water Applications Section thereby eliminating the need for the above requirements
- Make application and wait for the design estimate to be complete
- After payment and approval of the design by the Developer 's agents, the City contractor will do the utility work

For projects WITH city participation

Project Requirements:

- The CFA must be generated through the Transportation and Public Works Department.
- A filing fee must be paid to start the formal CFA process.
- After each department submits their part of the document, the formal CFA will be submitted to the City Council for approval.

NOTE: Please pay any water meter deposits, water and sewer impact fees or ordinance tap fees in the Water Applications Section located next to the Development Permits. Failure to pay these deposits and fees may place a hold on your building permit even though the CFA, financial guarantee and inspection fee are in place.

Please download the guide at:

www.fortworthgov.org/uploadedFiles/Water/Serving_You/Developers_and_New_Businesses/cfaintro.pdf

Infrastructure Plan Review

The division also provides a utility coordination function allowing a single point of contact between franchise utility companies and the City to minimize and coordinate conflicts during construction.

The Development Section of the Infrastructure Plan Review Center is responsible for the project management of all new public infrastructure improvements associated with residential, commercial and industrial developments. This role includes: preliminary and final plan review, contract specification review, easement document review, plan approval and coordination with the developer's engineer during the construction phase of the project.

- Review of the plans and specifications for compliance with City standards
- Negotiation of the consultant services contract
- Award recommendations
- Execution of the contract
- Monitoring the work
- Management of the project through construction
- Payment authorization.

All forms, procedures, and more are located on the City's Web site at www.fortworthgov.org/engineering/info/default.aspx?id=11672&ekmense1=77931891_992_5496_11672_1, or call the **New Development Coordinator at 817-392-6250**



Water Department

The basic procedures for requesting water and sewer service are listed below. Usually the developer will have an engineer or architect prepare a site plan and evaluate existing utility availability. The evaluation will determine whether extensions will be required from the existing system.

If an extension is required, the following steps should be followed:

- Select an engineer to design the water/sewer extension to be bid or request the Water Department to design and construct the extension if the extension is less than 600 feet.
- Meet with the development engineer in Water Engineering Service to review main extensions and tap locations.
- Meet with the Fire Department for fire protection coverage.
- Developer's engineer prepares Community Facilities Agreement Exhibit/Cost Estimates, which define the City's and the developer's cost participation in the project (if applicable). Developer's engineer is responsible for coordinating with Developer on submitting required executed Informal Community Facilities Agreement and financial guarantee.
- Submit two sets of Water and Sewer Public Improvement Construction Plans to Water Engineering Services for review or allow a minimum of four weeks for design and preparation of cost estimates for extension to be installed under City project if the extension is less than 600 feet.
- Include water and sewer taps in the extension project.
- Pay impact fees to the Applications Section of the Water Department located on the Lower Level of City Hall within the Planning and Development Department.
- Provide financial guarantee for the public water and sewer improvements, or pay the Water Department for construction and design by the miscellaneous contract. A 2 percent inspection fee will be required prior to construction if the contractor is to install this work.
- The utility contractor will install taps and meters at the location in the size required by the architect (or developer's mechanical/plumbing experts).
- The utility contractor must be pre-qualified by the Water Department.

If utilities are available to the site, the following steps should be followed:

- Bring a site plan to the Water Engineering Section and review water and sewer locations and tap sizes.
- Review fire protection and coverage with the Fire Department. Additional fire hydrants and fire lanes may be required for a new building, and this will require a main extension (refer to above).
- Pay for City crew to install the required service connections at the Applications Section of Water Engineering. Tap fees and impact fees will be assessed for any new connections.
- Allow at least two to three weeks for taps to be installed.

Water Department "Utility Site Plan" checklist:

- Utility site plan should be a certified plat or re-plat
- Include a property legal description showing block, lot and addition or, abstract, tract and survey
- Show all utility easements
- Show all streets with street names
- Show boundary streets to scale with street names
- Specify tap sizes and locations on property for each water tap including domestic, irrigation, fire lines and hydrants

- Specify tap sizes and locations on property for each sewer tap, including sanitary taps and grease traps, showing capacities
- Specify who will install the water and sewer taps, either the City or the customer
- Include a 'north' arrow on every page, including insert diagrams
- Include the name of the business
- Addresses must be shown. To obtain addresses, contact the Fort Worth Fire Department.

Tap and Service Fees

Tap fees are associated with connections to existing public water or sewer lines that do not exceed 54' from the property line. All **new** connections incur both a tap *and* [impact fee](#). Water taps also require a meter deposit for billing purposes. A licensed plumber must connect the tap at the property line to the homeowner's or business' private service lines.

Any connection in excess of 54' is considered an extension project. These are more expensive with charges incurred per linear foot. There is an 8" diameter minimum. If taps are done under an extension project by a pre-qualified private contractor, visit the Water Engineering Development Section on the second floor of City Hall for assistance. The Water Engineering Development Section can be reached at 817.392.7585 or 817.392.8428.

The following fees cover all water or sewer tap construction by City personnel:

Impact Fees

Impact fees are charged to new development to offset its impact on existing water and wastewater facilities. Impact fees help pay the cost of building or expanding facilities in order to provide the adequate service that a new development requires. These fees are updated every five years.

New residential, commercial or industrial development can increase water consumption and wastewater volume significantly. The increased demand may require the creation of greater storage capacity, additional pumping capability or expanded treatment facilities.

Impact Fee Schedule

The chart on the following page lists the most commonly used meter sizes. Water and wastewater impact fees are determined by the size of the water meter installed. The size of the water tap and service line supplying the meter does not affect the amount of the impact fee charged. Fees for other meter sizes are available on request.

Water impact fees must be paid on irrigation meters, but the wastewater impact fee does not apply. There are no impact fee charges on fire lines.

Impact Fees

Effective January 1, 2007-December 31, 2009

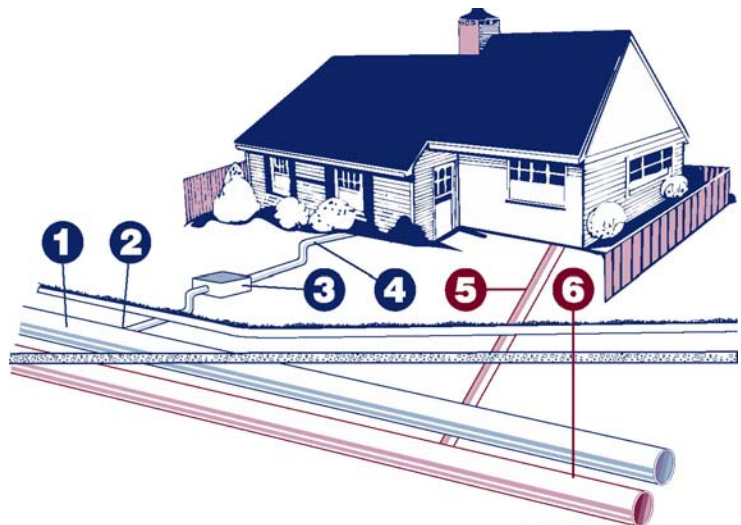
Meter Size	Water Impact Fee* 2007-2009	Wastewater Impact Fee* 2007	Wastewater Impact Fee* 2008-2009
5/8"	\$ 616	\$ 224	\$ 264
3/4"	\$ 920	\$ 335	\$ 394
1"	\$1,536	\$ 559	\$ 658
1 1/2"	\$ 3,063	\$ 1,115	\$ 1,312
2"	\$ 4,903	\$ 1,785	\$ 2,100
3"	\$10,736	\$ 3,908	\$ 4,598
4"	\$ 19,320	\$ 7,033	\$ 8,274
6"	\$ 42,936	\$ 15,630	\$ 18,388
8"	\$ 73,600	\$ 26,792	\$ 31,520
10"	\$116,536	\$ 42,422	\$ 49,908

*Impact fees for water are collected at 42.5% and for wastewater are collected at 35% of the total maximum assessable amount.

What is the difference between an impact fee and a tap fee?

An impact fee is charged to new development to offset new or increased demands on existing water and wastewater systems. Impact fees are used to fund expansion on the water and wastewater systems. (See diagram below)

1. Water Main
2. Water Tap
3. Water Meter
4. Private Plumbing (water line)
5. Private Plumbing (wastewater line)
6. Wastewater Main



A tap fee is a service fee that is charged for connecting the public water or sewer main to the private plumbing.

City Staff Contact Information

Water Department

Wendy Chi-Babulal, Senior Professional Engineer

Desk: 817-392-8242

Wendy.chi-babulal@fortworthgov.org

Stephanie Francis, Graduate Engineer

Desk: 817-392-7585

Stephanie.francis@fortworthgov.org

Esteban Perez, Sr. Account Technician – Water Development

Desk: 817-392-2785

Esteban.perez@fortworthgov.org



Other Development Factors

Parks and Community Services

New residential projects may need to dedicate park land or pay fees in-lieu of dedication. Please contact the Parks and Community Services (PACS) Department to discuss your project.

City Staff Contact Information

PACS

Senior Planner - 817 871-5706

PACS Project Manager - 817 871-5744



Housing and Economic Development

Loans for Builders and Developers-

Loans to housing sponsors for the preservation and development of housing, particularly in the Central City and target areas.

The Fort Worth Housing Trust Fund **Housing Developer Fund** encourages the private sector to develop housing, especially in the Central City, for households earning up to 120% of the area median income, established annually by the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD).

The fund provides short term financing for pre-development, single-family lot acquisition, single-family development, land acquisition, and multi-family and mixed-use construction.

City Staff Contact Information

Housing

Karen Meunier, Housing Program Man.
Desk: 817-392-8091 Fax: 817-392-732
Karen.Meunier@fortworthgov.org

Charlie Price, Housing Program Manag
Neighborhood Planning Division
Desk: 817-392-7381 Fax: 817-392-732
Barbara.Asbury@fortworthgov.org



Building Pe

If the site is zoned to allow the desired land-use and the land has been platted, a four-step process is involved to comply with the legal requirements to build a new structure, add an addition or undertake a major remodeling project:

1. Plans Review
2. Building Permits
3. Inspections
4. Certificate of Occupancy.

Land use, building requirements and site layout are subject to all requirements of the existing zoning designation. Platting must be completed before building permits are issued.

PLANS REVIEW:

To begin the process, submit the following:

- Building construction plans with an engineer and/or architect's seal (when required by state law)
- Two complete sets are required or three sets if using a "third-party" firm
- With these plans, include one additional set of electrical and/or mechanical plans that contain fire protection information, as well as any plans designating fire protection
- Ten copies of the site plans
- One copy of the property's certified, recorded plat
- If required, a landscape plan review (requires a submittal of eight copies of the landscape plan; the minimum size is 11"x17")
- Building permits are issued after all non-compliant issues are addressed and any fee due, including water and sewer fees, are paid.

If working with a "Third-Party" firm:

- Confirm the company is on the City-approved list of third-party firms
- Permit is put on hold with the plans stored separately until third-party firm completes its review
- Site plan is circulated for review
- When a third-party firm returns its comments, the comments are put on the building permit and attached to the City's set of plans
- Building permits are issued after all non-compliant issues are addressed and any fee due, including water and sewer fees, are paid

BUILDING PERMITS:



Before building permits are issued, site plans must be approved and the applicable trade permits, including fire protection system permits, must be obtained, if applicable.

- The site plan must show the proposed work and its location in relation to property lines and existing buildings. The site plan is circulated among a number of City departments, such as Fire and Transportation and Public Works (TPW) that must review and approve the site plan before a building permit can be issued. Site plans must include the following:
 - Specified scale, north arrow and legal description
 - Existing and/or proposed structure(s) with exact dimensions
 - Parking areas and required number of parking spaces shown with stripes on the plan
 - Driveway locations and traffic circulation system
 - Lot and building line dimensions, as well as dimensions from property line to the project
 - Alley with dimensions, if applicable
 - All easements, if applicable
 - Street names
 - Sidewalks
 - Location of nearest fire hydrant(s)
 - Fire lanes
 - Utility or civil engineering site plan, showing water and sanitary sewer

**Other items may be required prior to a building permit being issued, such as a drainage study or traffic impact analysis.*

When building construction plans are approved, permits are issued. The types of permits are:

Building Permits

All projects except one- and two-family structures are referred to as commercial permits.

- **New Construction** - A new building or adding square footage to an existing building footprint. Square footage is defined as anything one constructs that casts a shadow. Adding interior square footage, i.e. adding a mezzanine or inserting another floor, will be considered new construction.
- **Remodel/Finish Out** – Improvements to an existing building without adding square footage.
- **Trade Permits** - Requested by the trade contractors by phone, fax or in person.

Electrical Permit

Required for installing new wiring, adding or making changes to existing wiring, for new main service or electrical work that increases the power to an existing facility. Electrical Permits may be issued only to a master electrician.

Mechanical Permit

All heating and air conditioning work, from replacing existing units to installing a new system, requires a permit.

Plumbing Permit

Water, gas and sewer plumbing systems must be properly installed to safeguard residents' health. All new or replacement water, gas or sewer service, as well as additions, require a permit. (This also includes water heater replacement.) Permits can only be issued to a licensed Master Plumber.

Fire Protection System Permits

These permits are required for all new installations, renovations or additions to a fire protection system. A permit can be issued only to a fire protection system contractor that is registered with the City's Bureau of Fire Prevention and licensed by the State of Texas in accordance with Fort Worth Fire Code Appendix VII-B (Ordinance Amendment 13636).

○ **Other Permits**

▪ **Change of Occupancy Permit**

Required when there is a change in the use of the building, even if there is no construction. Also known as the ordinance permit list below.

▪ **Demolition Permit**

Required before work begins to demolish all or a portion of a structure from the property. (Final inspection also serves as notification to remove the structure from the tax rolls.)

▪ **Moving Permit**

Required when moving a structure into the City, from one City lot to another, or from one location to another on the same lot. Moving permits will not be issued until a building permit is approved at the new location. In most cases, unless too far to drive, a pre-inspection is required.

▪ **Assembly Permit**

If a building is classified as an assembly occupancy, then one or more of the following permits is needed: 1) to operate places of assembly, 2) to have candles and open flames in assembly areas, and/or 3) to conduct a carnival or fair.

▪ **Tent Permit**

There are three types of permits that commonly may be called tent permits: 1) to erect or operate an air-supported temporary membrane structure, 2) a tent in excess 200 square feet, and 3) a canopy in excess of 400 square feet. The exception to this is for structures used exclusively for camping.

• **Ordinance Permit**

The purpose of an Ordinance Permit is to determine that a structure is safe to occupy. It is required when moving a building or moving into an existing building, even if there is no construction work.

The process is as follows:

- ✓ Request an ordinance inspection
- ✓ Building, mechanical, electrical and plumbing inspectors will go to the location and conduct an inspection
- ✓ Inspectors will list any deficiencies on their reports
- ✓ Appropriate trade permits can then be requested to make the required correction(s) if applicable
- ✓ Applicant must provide roof access when roof equipment is present.

- **Health Permit**

Required for operational facilities of food, daycare centers, public swimming pools, spas, hotels and motels, and bed and breakfast facilities. Contact the Health Department, Consumer Health Division.

- **Storm Water Discharge Permit**

Federal EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) permit required for construction projects that are five acres or larger. This also applies to a project that is part of a common plan of development of five acres or larger. Contact the Environmental Management Department, Construction Inspections.

INSPECTIONS:

Once site plans have been approved and permits have been issued, construction can begin. The construction work must be inspected throughout the course of a project.

- The approved set of plans with comments must remain available to inspectors at all times.
- A contractor must request an inspection from the City inspector at the proper stages of work.
- For fire protection systems, inspections cannot be scheduled prior to approval of fire protection system plans. The fire protection system Contractor must schedule inspections.
- A final inspection is required.

Certificate of Occupancy

When all inspections have been made and a final inspection has been completed, then a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) can be issued and the structure may be occupied.

- Certificates of Occupancy are issued to a party/business at a particular location
- A new C/O must be obtained when the use of the building changes
- A new ordinance inspection must be obtained whenever the name of the responsible party changes on the electric, water or gas bills
- After the inspection is completed, a new C.O will be issued
- Apartments are required to obtain a new C.O. with each new owner.

Permit Exemptions

WORK EXEMPT FROM PERMITS:

- **Per Fort Worth Building Code, Section 106.2 (Ordinance Amendment 13625)**
 - Demolition of a structure by the State of Texas for highway widening purposes.
 - Fences not over six feet high and open-wire fences without slates up to eight feet high. In addition, both heights may have barbed wire, when installed in accordance with City code, added above the six-and eight-foot dimensions.
 - Flammable liquid tanks when a Fire Department permit has been issued, except that foundations for said tanks shall require a building permit.
 - Freestanding satellite dishes not exceeding one meter in diameter that does not exceed 12 feet in height.
 - Moveable cases, counters and partitions not over five feet nine inches high.
 - Painting, papering and similar finish work.
 - Platforms, walks and decks not more than six inches above grade and not over any basement or story below.
 - Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to a Group R, Division 3 Occupancy in which the pool walls are entirely above the adjacent grade and if the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons.
 - Retaining walls, which are not over four feet in height, measured from the bottom of the footing to the top of the wall, unless supporting a surcharge or impounding Class I, II or III-A liquids. (Retaining walls placed in succession shall be considered one wall if, upon drawing a line from the bottom of the footing of the lower wall at a 45 degree angle up and toward the higher wall, the line intersects the higher wall or any material retained by the wall at any point.)
 - Roof repairs on Group R, Division 3, and their accessory structures. For the purpose of this section, roof repairs shall include the repair and replacement of the material above, but not including the decking material, lathing boards or sheathing boards.
 - Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
 - Window awnings supported by an exterior wall of Group R, Division 3, and Group U occupancies when projecting not more than 54 inches.

NOTE: *Unless otherwise exempted, separate plumbing, electrical and mechanical permits will be required for the above-exempted items.*

- **Exempted Electrical Work Per Fort Worth Electrical Code, Chapter C:**
 - Portable motors or other portable appliances energized by means of a cord or cable having an attachment plug end to be connected to an approved receptacle when that cord or cable is permitted by city code.
 - Reinstallations of attachment plug receptacles, but not the outlets thereof.
 - Repair or replacement of any over current device of the required capacity in the same location, or electrodes or transformers of the same size and capacity for signs or gas tube systems.
 - Taping joints.
 - Removal of electrical wiring.
 - Temporary wiring for experimental purposes in suitable experimental laboratories.
 - Electrical wiring, devices, appliances, apparatus or equipment operating at less than 25 volts and not capable of supplying more than 50 watts of energy.
 - Low-energy power, control and signal circuits of Classes II and III as defined in the city's code.
 - Electrical maintenance work, as defined in the code that is performed by an individual properly authorized to do such work under Section C05.
- **Exempted Mechanical Work Per Fort Worth Mechanical Code, Section C02:**

- Any portable heating appliance, portable ventilating equipment, portable cooling unit or portable evaporative cooler.
 - A closed system of steam, hot or chilled water piping within heating or cooling equipment regulated by city code.
 - Replacement of any component part or assembly of an appliance, which does not alter its original approval and complies with other applicable code requirements.
 - Refrigerating equipment that is part of the equipment for which a permit has been issued pursuant to code requirements.
 - A unit refrigerating system.
- **Exempted Fire Protection System Work Per Fort Worth Fire Code, Appendix VII-B (Ordinance Amendment 13636)**
 - Fire sprinkler systems installation with less than 11 sprinklers.
 - **Exempted Plumbing Work Per Fort Worth Plumbing Code, Section 106.2 (Ordinance Amendment 13520)**
 - The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe, provided, however, that if any concealed trap, drainpipe, water, soil, waste or vent pipe becomes defective and it becomes necessary to remove and replace the same with new material, such work shall be considered as new work and a permit shall be obtained and inspection made as provided in this code.
 - The clearing of stoppages or the repairing of leaks in pipes, valves or fixtures, and the removal and reinstallation of water closets, provided such repairs do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves, pipes or fixtures.

NOTE: *Exemption from the permit requirements shall not be deemed to grant authorization for any work to be done in violation of the provisions of City code or any other laws or ordinances of the City of Fort Worth.*

People Who Can Help

City of Fort Worth Departments

Planning and Development Department

Annexations and Platting

Planning Manager

Desk: 817-392-8030, Fax: 817-392-7985

Pre-Development Conferences/Right-of-Way Encroachments

Development Project Coordinator

Desk: 817-392-2239, Fax: 817-392-7985

Board of Adjustment

Planner

Desk: 817-392-2414, Fax: 817-392-7526

Downtown Review Board, and Scenic Preservation

Desk: 817-392-8481, Fax: 817-392-7526

Zoning

Desk: 817-392-2495

Fire Construction Board of Appeals

Customer Service Specialist

Desk: 817-392-7842, Fax: 817-392-8116

Permitting

Customer Service Representatives

Main Telephone: 817-392-2222, Fax: 817-392-8116; IVR: 817-392-6370

Plans Exam

Assistant Building Official

Desk: 817-392-2590, Fax: 817-392-8116

Inspections

Gary Caldwell, Assistant Building Official

Desk: 817-392-8093; Fax: 817-392-8116

Electrical Inspections

Desk: 817-392-7830

Mechanical Inspections

Desk: 817-392-7886

Plumbing Inspections

Desk: 817-392-7980

Residential Inspections

Desk: 817-392-8793

Signage

Desk: 817-392-7830

Third Party Review and Inspection, Building Official

Desk: 817-392-7825

Comprehensive Plan Land Use

Desk: 817-392-8013

Historic Preservation

Desk: 817-392-8001

Desk: 817-392-5985

Urban Village Development Program

Desk: 817-392-8068

Desk: 817-392-7373

Transportation and Public Works Department

Floodplain Maps

Desk: 817-392-8426, Fax: 817-871-7854

City Infrastructure/Civil Plans – Review & Approval

Desk: 817-392-7959, Fax: 817-871-7854

Desk: 817-392-7818, Fax: 817-871-7854

Desk: 817-392-6250, Fax: 817-871-7854

Environmental Management Department

EPA Permit Requirements for Construction Sites 1-acre or greater

Desk: 817-561-3700, Fax: 817-871-5464

Desk: 817-561-3700/3701, Fax: 817-871-5464

Fire Department

Addressing

Desk: 817-871-6797, Fax: 817-871-6867

Inspections

Desk: 817-871-6835, Fax: 817-871-6867

Plat Review

Desk: 817-871-6845, Fax: 817-871-6867

Parks and Community Services Department

Design, Construction, Plan Review and Project Management- Park Development, City Construction Projects, and Utility Construction Review

Desk: 817-871-5746

Design and Construction Plan and Site Review for Tree Permitting, Planting, and Removal in the Right-of-Way and on City Property

Desk: 817-871-5705

Neighborhood Park Dedication Policy, Community Facility Agreements, Easements, Use Agreements, Staff Reports, and Plat Review

Desk: 817-871-5745

Park Policy and Management, Land Development, Park Development and Acquisition

Desk: 817-871-5745

Zoning/BOA

Desk: 817-871-5706

Transportation and Public Works Department Real Property Management

Street/Easement Vacation & Land Valuation

Desk: 817-871-8366

Transportation and Public Works Department

Banners, Special Events

Desk: 817-871-7894, Fax: 817-871-8941

Drainage

Desk: 817-392-7901, Fax: 817-392-8092

Driveway Approaches / Parkway Permits

Desk: 817-392-6646, Fax: 817-870-4815

Master Thoroughfare Plan Amendments

Desk: 817-392-8701, Fax: 817-392-8092

Median Openings

Desk: 817-392-8701, Fax: 817-392-8092

Platting

Desk: 817-392-8701, Fax: 817-392-8092

Sidewalks

Desk: 817-392-8701

Signals, Signs and Markings

Desk: 817-392-6748, Fax 817-871-8941

Street Design

Desk: 817-392-7802, Fax: 817-392-8092

Street Design/Traffic Issues

Desk: 817-392-8055, Fax: 817-392-8092

Street Lights

Desk: 817-871-6596, Fax: 817-392-8092

Street Vacations

Desk: 817-392-8701, Fax: 817-392-8092

Traffic Impact Studies

Desk: 817-392-8005, Fax: 817-392-8092

Transportation Impact Fees

Desk: 817-392-7918

Water Department

Backflow Prevention and Grease Traps

Desk: 817-871-8495 & 817-871-8566

Desk: 817-871-8375 & 817-871-8305

Water and Sewer Mains and Taps

Desk: 817-392-8292, Fax: 817-392-8703

Development Issues

Desk: 817-392-8252, Fax: 817-392-8195

Development Issues with Water/Sewer Availability

Desk: 817-392-8480, Fax: 817-392-8195

Housing and Economic Development

Desk: 817-392-8187, Fax: 817-392-2437

Desk: 817-392-8003, Fax: 817-392-2437

Neighborhood Empowerment Zone

Desk: 817-392-7316, Fax: 817-392-7328

Housing Development Fund

Desk: 817-392-8091, Fax: 817-392-7328

Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Fund

Desk: 817-392-7331, Fax: 817-392-7328

Conveyance of Tax Foreclosure Properties to Eligible Non-Profit Organizations

Desk: 817-392-7319, Fax: 817-392-7328

People Who Can Help *The Counties*

Denton County

County Planning Department

Desk: 940-565-8624, Fax: 940-565-5657

Environmental Health Department

Desk: 940-565-8685, Office Hours: 8-9 am & 1-2 pm

Johnson County

Health Department

Desk: 817-556-6380, Fax: 817-556-6391

Parker County

Health Department

Desk: 817-598-6175, Fax: 817-598-6177

Tarrant County

Health Department

Desk: 817-871-7511, Fax: 817-871-7283

Recorded Deeds and Plats

Desk: 817-884-1195

Transportation Services Department

Desk: 817-844-1250, Fax: 817-884-1178

People Who Can Help *The State*

Alcoholic Beverage Commission - Applications for Sale of Alcohol

Desk: 817-451-9466

Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Fort Worth District (Tarrant & Other Adjacent Counties)

Desk: 817-370-6532

Department of Transportation (TxDOT)

Desk: 817-370-6551

People Who Can Help *The Utilities*

Electricity & Natural Gas

CoServ Electric (Formerly Denton County Electrical Co-Op)

Desk: 940-321-6644, Fax: 940-321-6640

Johnson County Electric Co-Op (JCEC)

Desk: 817-558-0010, Fax: 817-556-4039

TXU (Texas Utilities Electric Co. / Lone Star Gas)

Desk: 817-215-6688, Fax: 817-215-6184

Desk: 817-215-6254, Fax: 817-215-6316

Desk: 817-215-6218, Fax: 817-215-6660

Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Desk: 817-431-1541, Metro: 817-379-4703, Fax: 817-431-9680

Telephone Service

AT&T

Desk: 404-810-4556, Fax: 404-810-4404

GTE

Desk: 972-717-5828, Fax: 972-717-5834

Millennium Telecom

Desk: 817-379-3007

Desk: 817-379-3007

Southwestern Bell Telephone, Inc.

Desk: 817-267-5752, Fax: 817-338-5106

Water Providers

Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN)

For areas not served by the City of Fort Worth, please contact the Utility Section of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC). To learn of the specific water provider (CCN) for the subject area, Call: 512-239-6960

Certificate of Convenience and Necessity (CCN)

For preliminary guidance, contact City of Fort Worth Water Department Development Division, Call: 817-392-8428