# Table of Contents

1. **City of Denton Development Process** ................................................................................................................. 5  
   Role of the Development Review Committee  
   Pre-development Meetings

2. **Zoning** ................................................................................................................................................................. 7  
   Zoning Districts  
   Zoning Approval Procedure  
   Specific Use Permits

3. **Subdivision Plats and Civil Engineering Plans** ........................................................................................................ 10  
   Civil Engineering Plans  
   Exceptions from Platting  
   Determining the Type of Plat Required  
   Administrative Plat Approval Process  
   Planning and Zoning Commission Plat Approval Process  
   Development Contracts and Fees  
   Park Development and Parkland Dedication Fees  
   Filing Plats with Denton County

4. **Site Plans** ............................................................................................................................................................... 13  
   Development Types that Require Site Plans  
   Minor Site Plans  
   Exemptions to Site Plan  
   Site Plan Requirements  
   Site Development Approval and Construction Process  
   Site Plan Revisions and Corrections

5. **Building Permits** ......................................................................................................................................................... 15  
   Building Permit Approval and Construction Process

6. **Inspections** ............................................................................................................................................................... 16  
   Civil Engineering Plan Inspections  
   Site Permit Inspections  
   Building Permit Inspections

7. **Certificates of Occupancy** .......................................................................................................................................... 17  
   Certificate of Occupancy Process

8. **Glossary** ................................................................................................................................................................. 18
I. City of Denton Development Process

In this section, you will find information about the general development process, including the Development Review Committee and the purpose of pre-development meetings.

Steps in the Development Process

Development in Denton typically requires the completion of several steps to move a project from the initial application to open for business:

Non-Residential & Multi-Family

- **ZONING** of the property must permit the intended use.
- Project must take place on a **PLATTED** lot.
- **SITE PLAN** must be approved for the overall layout of the project.
- **BUILDING PERMITS** must be reviewed and issued prior to construction.
- **CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY** must be issued.

Residential (Single-family & Duplex)

- **ZONING** of the property must permit the intended use and density.
- Project must take place on a **PLATTED** lot.
- **BUILDING PERMITS** must be reviewed and issued prior to construction.

**NOTE:** All projects must pass **INSPECTIONS** of parking and utility infrastructure, tree and landscape, erosion and sedimentation control, ESA protection, and building construction.
Role of the Development Review Committee

The purpose of the City of Denton’s Development Review Committee is to provide an efficient review process for citizens and developers. The Development Review Committee is managed by the City of Denton Development Services Department, and is comprised of staff from the following disciplines: building inspections; Denton Municipal Electric; engineering; fire; parks; planning; real estate; tree and landscape; watershed protection; bicycling and pedestrian facilities; economic development; long range planning; and historic preservation.

Pre-development Meetings

Pre-development meetings offer an opportunity for applicants to learn more about the City development processes and requirements, and to identify potential issues that they may encounter when developing a site. Staff will provide applicable information related to: zoning, platting, site design, building codes, fire code, engineering and environmental review, tree preservation, etc.

Staff recommends that applicants request a pre-development meeting for the following types of projects:

- New, ground-up commercial or multifamily construction
- Expansion of an existing building or structure
- New residential subdivisions
- Proposed uses not permitted in the current zoning districts
- Development requiring public improvements
- Development in the extraterritorial jurisdiction

If you have questions about whether you think a pre-development meeting would be helpful, contact Development Services at (940) 349-7716.

How to Schedule a Pre-development Meeting

An application is required to confirm your spot on the schedule. There is no fee for a pre-development meetings, but an application must be submitted at least one week before the desired meeting date. Meetings are scheduled on a first come, first served basis, and are usually booked one month in advance. You will be notified of your meeting date when your application is accepted.
2. Zoning

Zoning is the classification of areas in the City into districts, within which various land uses are permitted, in order to separate incompatible land uses and promote public health and safety. Zoning is one of the more effective tools to achieving the City’s vision of a sustainable land use pattern, as described in the Denton Plan 2030. A proposed use must be permitted within the zoning district governing the property. Zoning regulations can be found in Subchapter 5 of the Denton Development Code.

We recommend that you contact Development Services staff or submit a request for a pre-development meeting prior to submitting an application for zoning or rezoning. Staff will review the rezoning request in order to determine if the proposed district would be appropriate. When evaluating a rezoning request, staff will consider the compatibility of the proposed district with surrounding properties, the availability of public infrastructure and services to serve the site, and compatibility with the City’s comprehensive plan.

Zoning Districts

Follow the checklist below to ensure your proposed development is permitted:

☐ **Determine the current zoning of the site.**

The zoning of a site can be found by using the zoning map on the City’s online interactive mapping system at:

Each zoning district is represented by an individual color and labeled with the abbreviation of the district. Contact the Development Services - Planning Division at (940) 349-7716 if you need assistance in determining the zoning district for a property.

☐ **Determine if the intended use is permitted in the zoning district.**

The schedule of uses for each zoning district can be found in Subchapter 5 of the Denton Development Code. A use will be labeled as one of the following:

- **P**  
  The use is permitted “by right”

- **N**  
  The use is not permitted

- **SUP**  
  The use may be allowed, but is subject to approval of a Specific Use Permit by the City Council (refer to the Special Use Permits section)

- **L (#)**  
  The use is permitted, but with a limitation. The number in the parenthesis corresponds with the list of limitations at the end of the schedule of uses.

☐ **Determine the general regulations in the zoning district.**

In addition to use, zoning also regulates lot size and dimensions, setbacks, height and bulk, density and lot coverage. Variances to the general regulations may be approved by the Zoning Board of Adjustments.
Determine if there are environmentally sensitive areas on the site.

The City limits or prohibits development in environmentally sensitive areas. Any activity within these areas may require City Council approval of an alternative ESA plan, which follows the same procedure and notification requirements of a rezoning. The ESA map can be found on the City’s online interactive mapping system.

Zoning Approval Procedure

After a zoning application has been reviewed and approved by the Development Review Committee, the public hearing process below will begin:

APPLICATION & REVIEW
1. After review by the Development Review Committee, your case manager will begin preparing the backup documents and notification for the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting according to the public hearing schedule.

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING & PUBLIC NOTIFICATION
2. Although not required, a neighborhood meeting is recommended for zoning cases.
3. Staff is required to follow public notification requirements of the Texas Local Government Code (TxLGC) and the Denton Development Code (DDC). This includes a notice in the newspaper, mailed notices to surrounding residents and property owners, and signs posted on the property. These public notification requirements must be completed several weeks prior to the Planning and Zoning Commission meeting.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
4. The Planning and Zoning Commission will make a recommendation to City Council on the proposed rezoning.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
5. If the Planning and Zoning Commission approves the rezoning request, staff will prepare the ordinance. If the Planning & Zoning Commission recommended denial of the rezoning request, a supermajority of City Council is required to approve a rezoning.
6. The City Council will meet and make a final decision on the proposed rezoning.

ORDINANCE PUBLISHED
7. If approved, the ordinance will be published and take effect in 14 days. If the ordinance is denied, the owner may not bring another request to rezone the property for 12 months, unless significant changes to the request have been made.
Specific Use Permits

Certain uses are only permitted in some zoning districts through approval of a specific use permit (SUP) by the City Council. The SUP helps to ensure that the proposed use is compatible with surrounding properties. The City Council has the authority to apply additional restrictions or conditions to the use which would help eliminate or mitigate any concerns the proposed development might create. Examples of conditions that may be applied include increased setbacks, restrictions in height, number of trips generated, or hours of operation.

A full list of possible conditions and the criteria for approval of SUP’s can be found in Subchapter 6 of the Denton Development Code. The SUP process follows the same procedures, timelines, and notifications of a rezoning.
3. Subdivision Plats & Civil Engineering Plans

Subdivision or “platting” is the process of subdividing land into smaller pieces of property. The city regulates platting through its subdivision regulations in Subchapter 16 of the Denton Development Code. As part of the platting process, the city may require certain public improvements to ensure that the site has access to a public street and adequate infrastructure such as sewer, water, streets, and electricity to serve the site. During review, staff will also make sure that the site complies with zoning requirements for lot size and dimensions. A filed plat certifies that the property meets all these requirements and is ready for development. After a plat is approved, it is filed with Denton County and becomes the official legal description of the property.

Civil Engineering Plans (CEP)

If public improvements (water, sewer, streets, etc.) are required in order to plat the property, a separate submittal of Civil Engineering Plans (CEP) will be required. CEP’s are reviewed concurrently with the plat review.

Exceptions from Platting

Before proceeding, check the list below to see if your development is exempt from platting:

- Development occurring on an unplatted tract of land that has been in the same configuration since January 1, 1960, and which does not require the extension of streets or public improvements (excluding sidewalks) to support the development.
- Division of property into two or more lots where the smallest lot is 40 acres or larger.
- Additions or alterations to existing buildings where no drainage, street, utility extension or improvement, additional parking, or street access change are required to support the development.
- Dedication of easements or rights-of-way through separate instrument, if approved by the City.
- Cemeteries complying with all state and local laws and regulations.
- Divisions of land created by a court of competent jurisdiction.
- A change in property ownership through inheritance or the probate of an estate.
Determining the Type of Plat Required

The table below is a general guide to help determine the type of plat that is appropriate for different projects.

WHAT TYPE OF PLAT DO I NEED?

QUESTION 1: Is the sole purpose of your project to correct an error in an existing plat? If yes, an **Amending Plat** is required (see Section XXX). If not, proceed to Question 2.

QUESTION 2: Is the sole purpose of your project not to develop, but rather to sell or acquire all or a portion of an unplatted tract of land? If yes, a **Conveyance Plat** may be required (see Section XXX). Contact staff to determine if a Conveyance Plat would be appropriate for your situation. If not, proceed to Question 3.

QUESTION 3: Is the property already platted?

YES

QUESTION 4: What type is the existing plat?

**FINAL PLAT/REPLAT/AMENDING PLAT**

This was an interim plat that did not permit development. A new plat will be required.

QUESTION 5: Do you intend to subdivide, combine, or relocate existing lots? Or remove any easements dedicated on the plat?

YES

A replat is not required. You can proceed to Site Plan (pg. 87)

NO

A Minor Replats is required. See Project Types (pg. 65)

NO

A Final Replats is required. See Project Types (pg. 63)

NO

A Preliminary Plat and Final Plat are required. See Project Types (pg. 63, 65)

QUESTION 6: Will public Improvements be required?

YES

A Preliminary Plat and Final Plat are required. See Project Types (pg. 63, 65)

NO

A Minor Plat is required. See Project Types (pg. 64)

NO

5 OR MORE

A Preliminary Plat and Final Plat are required. See Project Types (pg. 63, 65)

NO

QUESTION 4: How many lots are proposed?

4 OR LESS

A Preliminary Plat and Final Plat are required. See Project Types (pg. 63, 65)

YES

A Preliminary Plat and Final Plat are required. See Project Types (pg. 63, 65)

NO

A Preliminary Plat and Final Plat are required. See Project Types (pg. 63, 65)

*For properties in the ETJ, only a Final Plat is required.
Administrative Plat Approval Process

APPLICATION & STAFF REVIEW
1. The plat application will follow the standard Development Review Committee review process.

DRC APPROVAL
2. After the staff review is complete and the plat has been approved, the case manager will provide with an approval letter outlining the steps for submitting an execution package and filing the plat.

EXECUTION PACKAGES
3. You will need to provide staff with all the necessary items in the approval letter including signed copies of the plat, tax certificates, and a check made payable to Denton County.

PLAT FILING
4. When the execution package is complete, staff will file the plat with Denton County on your behalf.

P&Z Plat Approval Process

APPLICATION & STAFF REVIEW
1. The plat and civil plans will be reviewed separately.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE RELEASE
2. When the plat and civil plan reviews are completed, your case manager will schedule the plat for the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting.
3. DRC Engineering will provide you with a letter outlining how to proceed with development contracts for civil plans.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
4. The plat will be scheduled for the Planning & Zoning Commission meeting. If a replat, notice of the public hearing will be required prior to the meeting.

EXECUTION PACKAGES & FILING
5. If approved, staff will provide you with a letter outlining the requirements for filing the plat. However, staff will file the plat for you.
4. Site Plans

A site plan is a set of engineering and architectural plans that establishes the key components of a development’s layout and design, including the property boundaries, landscaping, building locations and elevations, access and fire lanes, and civil engineering plans. The site plan does not include construction drawings and documents for buildings and other structures.

The site plan process ensures that the proposed layout of the development complies with the City’s development requirements, which include, but are not limited to, building locations, parking lots, driveways, fire lanes, landscaping areas, etc.

After it has been approved, applicants will need to provide a final copy of the site plan to Development Services-Planning Division. The case manager will obtain all the necessary signatures and provide you a copy to include in the building permit set. A site permit will be issued that will allow certain improvements on the site to begin.

Development Types that Require Site Plans

Site plans are required for the following development types:

- New non-residential development
- New multi-family development
- Multi-family expansion over 10 units or 10 percent of the number of existing units, whichever is less
- Non-residential expansion over 1,000 square feet or 20 percent of the total square footage of the building as of February 20, 2002
- Reconstruction after the voluntary demolition of a non-residential or multi-family development
- New parking lots
- New parking lot expansion
- Parking lot restriping of six spaces or greater
- Redevelopment or reconstruction due to right-of-way acquisition for roadway projects

Minor Site Plans

Minor site plans are required for any site work that does not involve the construction of a new building. The types of projects that require a minor site plan are:

- Clearing & Grading
- Parking Lot Expansion, Reconstruction, or Reconfiguration

Exemptions to Site Plan

- Single-family and duplexes
- Interior remodels or finish-outs.
- Expansion of non-residential or multi-family development that do not meet the criteria above.
Site Plan Requirements

All information required for the site plan review can be found in the Site Plan checklist online.

Site Development Approval and Construction Process

After a site plan application has been reviewed and approved by the Development Review Committee, the construction process may begin as depicted below:

APPLICATION & STAFF REVIEW
1. The site plan will be reviewed according to the Development Review Committee review schedule.

SITE PERMIT APPROVAL
2. After the Development Review Committee review is complete, your case manager will stamp all sheets with the City’s approval stamp and upload a site permit into ProjectDox. You will need to deliver two full-size sets of plans with the approval stamp to the Development Services Center.

PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING
3. The applicant will contact city staff to schedule a pre-construction meeting prior to any construction on the site. Tree fencing and water quality controls should be in place prior to the meeting.

CONSTRUCTION & INSPECTIONS
4. After a site permit has been issued, construction of lateral improvements may begin on the site.
5. After construction reaches the appropriate stage, the applicant may schedule inspections. City of Denton approval at the final inspection is the last step of the site plan process unless corrections to the site plan are required.

Site Plan Revisions and Corrections

If any changes to the site plan are requested after the Development Review Committee review is complete, a site plan revision will be required. This requires that the site plans be resubmitted through the Development Review Committee application and review process, and reviewed for code compliance.
5. Building Permits

The purpose of a building permit is to ensure that vertical structures are properly designed in accordance with health and safety codes, including the International Building Code, the International Energy Code, and the International Fire Code. A building permit is required prior to the construction, alteration, remodel, repair or expansion of new and existing structures in the City of Denton. After issuance of a building permit, construction may begin.

Please note that information in this guide regarding permits is primarily directed towards large-scale developments, including new single-family subdivisions, multi-family projects, and non-residential construction/expansion.

Building Permit Approval and Construction Process

After a site plan application has been reviewed and approved by the Development Review Committee, the construction and inspection process may begin as depicted below:

APPLICATION & STAFF REVIEW
1. After the Development Review Committee review is complete, your Plans Examiner will stamp all sheets with the City’s approval stamp. You will then need to deliver two full-size sets of plans with the approval stamp to the Development Services Center.

PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING
2. At the pre-construction meeting, staff will review the plans and advise you of the steps required to complete inspections.
3. At the end of the pre-construction meeting, your case manager will issue a Building Permit that will permit the construction of vertical improvements to begin on the site.

CONSTRUCTION & INSPECTIONS
4. After a site permit has been issued, the construction of lateral improvements may begin on the site.
5. When construction reaches the appropriate stage, you may schedule any rough inspections that are required.
6. When construction is complete, you may schedule the final inspections.

CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY (*Non-Residential/Multi-Family)
7. For non-residential and multi-family developments, the final step is the Certificate of Occupancy (CO). After the final inspection is passed, a CO will be automatically issued by the Building Inspections Division (a separate CO application is not required).
6. Inspections

After construction is underway, periodic inspections will be made by the City of Denton in order to ensure compliance with approved plans. Various inspection types may be required depending upon the scope of the project, including inspections relating to civil engineering plans, site permits and building permits.

Civil Engineering Plan Inspections

The Public Works Inspections Division will inspect all public improvements associated with plats or site plans. A pre-construction meeting is required before any construction of public improvements may begin. Upon approval of a civil engineering plan (CEP), the Development Review Committee - Engineering Division will provide instructions on scheduling a pre-construction meeting with Public Works Inspections.

Site Development Inspections

The site permit will require a number of inspections prior to site permit issuance and again after construction has commenced. Before any construction may begin, the site will need to be inspected in order to ensure that tree fencing has been installed according to the Tree Preservation Plan and that erosion and sedimentation controls are in place.

- Tree Fencing Inspection – To schedule a tree fencing inspection, contact the Urban Forester at (940) 349-8541.
- Erosion and Sedimentation Control Inspection – To schedule the erosion control inspection, contact the Water Administration Division at (940) 349-7162.

After the tree fencing and erosion control inspections are complete, your case manager will schedule a pre-construction meeting. When construction is complete, you’ll need to schedule the following inspections:

- Landscaping Inspection – To schedule a landscaping inspection, contact the Landscape Administrator at (940) 349-8541.
- Parking Lot Inspection – To schedule a parking lot inspection, contact Public Works Inspections at (940) 349-8904.

Building Permit Inspections

Inspections will be required at various stages of construction depending on the scope of work involved. Building Permit inspections can be scheduled online by using E-Trakit.
7. Certificate of Occupancy

The Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is a document which certifies a multi-family or non-residential building is safe for human occupation. Obtaining a CO is the final step in the development process. Without a CO, a project may not open for business. After construction is complete and all inspections have been passed, the Building Official will issue a Certificate of Occupancy that allows the building to open for business. A CO is not required for the occupation of a single-family or duplex structure.

Certificate of Occupancy Process

For new construction, additions, remodels, and tenant finish-outs, a CO will be automatically issued after receiving a green tag at final inspection. A separate CO application is not required.

A CO application is required for the following:

- Change in tenant
- Change in ownership of an existing structure
- Change in ownership of an existing business
- Change in name of an existing business
- Temporary power to show a shell building

For more information on the CO application, contact the Building Inspections Division at (940) 349-8360.
Glossary

Terms

Annexation: land area that is incorporated into an existing district or municipality; the incorporation changes the boundaries of the annexing jurisdiction

Building Permit: a document signed by the Building Official or their authorized representative as a condition precedent to the use, erection, construction, reconstruction, restoration, repair, remodeling, rehabilitation, alteration, conversion, demolition, moving, installment, or portion of a structure or building, which acknowledges that such use or building complies with the provisions of the Denton Development Code, an authorized variance, or a special use permit

Certificate of Occupancy: certificate issued by the Building Official for the use of a building, structure, or land when it is determined by the Building Official that the property complies with the provisions of all applicable city codes

Comprehensive Plan: Denton Plan 2030, the city-wide comprehensive plan of the City of Denton, Texas adopted by the City Council in 2015

Conveyance Plat: an interim plat recording the subdivision of property or defining a remainder of property created by the approval of a final plat for the purpose of conveying land

Development Plat: a plat reflecting new construction or the enlargement of any exterior dimension of any building, structure, or improvement on property previously final platted or not required to be platted

Easement: a nonpossessary interest in another’s land that entitles the holder only to the right to use the land in the specified manner

Extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ): unincorporated area contiguous to the city’s corporate boundaries

Minor Plat: A subdivision resulting in four (4) or fewer lots, which does not require the creation of new streets or the extension of municipal facilities, and does not generate an average daily vehicular traffic count of a thousand or more vehicles

Permitted Use: a lot use that is allowed as a matter of right, and is subject to the restrictions of the zoning district

Plat or Final Plat: a map of a subdivision, addition, or development to be recorded in the County Clerk Plat Records after approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission or the Development Review Committee

Preliminary Plat: a map showing the features of a proposed development for the purpose of preliminary consideration prior to the submission of a final plat

Project: a specific development on an identifiable parcel of land

Public Improvements: the necessary infrastructure facilities that are constructed as part of a development, including streets, water, sewer and sidewalks

Replat: a change in a map of an approved or recorded subdivision plat if such change affects any street layout on such map, lot lines, or area reserved thereon for public use

Site Plan Review: the evaluation of a development and its impact on neighboring properties and the community; development impacts are evaluated to the following: land use; site
design; landscape design; environmentally sensitive areas; architecture; lighting; signs; clearing and grading; engineering design; health and safety; and other adopted standards and criteria of the City of Denton Development Code

Site Plan: a document which details the layout of the site, including utilities, fire access, parking and driveways, sidewalks, building footprint, etc.

Subdivision: the division of a tract of land into lots, either improved or unimproved, which can be separately conveyed by sale or lease, and which can be altered or developed

Subdivision: the division of land into two (2) or more lots, tracts, sites, or parcels