

Pittsburgh Department of City Planning
2023 FEE RESTRUCTURING FAQ

WHY A NEW FEE STRUCTURE?

Throughout 2022, the Department of City Planning conducted an internal study its current fees, the cost of staff time, and the number of staff hours dedicated to each development review activity. The Department is restructuring fees for 2023 to continue its goal of ensuring that fee amounts align with the cost of the services involved in the fee activity. The new fee structure will simplify the calculation of fees while reflecting the cost of extra staff time which larger development projects require. The impact of the new fees on smaller residential projects should be largely unchanged from the previous fee schedule.

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS SCHEDULE?

Base zoning review fees are now set on a sliding scale tied to the construction value of the proposed development. This fee structure is similar to the one used by the Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections for construction permit fees. Because the base zoning fee will increase for larger development projects, the following fees have been adjusted or removed:

- Site Plan Review and Planning Commission Zoning Review fees are removed.
- Sign and Communication Tower fees are removed.
- Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Commission Hearing fees are reduced.
- Historic Review fees are removed.
- Temporary Occupancy Zoning Application fees are removed and base review fees will apply instead.
- Zone Change Petition Review fees are reduced.

Some fees have increased to reflect the additional time demands these functions require of DCP staff, including:

- Pre-application Meetings;
- Staff Posted Notice;
- Plan of Lots Applications; and
- Zoning Research.

Finally, Stormwater Management and Floodplain Review fees have been removed because these functions are no longer being performed by DCP. These fees have moved to PLI's fee schedule.

WHEN DO THE NEW FEES GO INTO EFFECT?

Any complete application or request submitted before January 1, 2023, will be assessed fees according to the fee schedule in effect for 2022. Any application or request submitted starting January 1, 2023, will be assessed fees according to the 2023 fee schedule.

ARE THE FEES CUMULATIVE?

Yes, the fees are cumulative and all applicable fees will be assessed. Fees are nonrefundable.

DO I HAVE TO PAY ALL OF MY FEES UPFRONT?

For large projects where the total assessed Zoning Review fees exceed \$15,000.00, fees will be split into two payments. The applicant is required to pay 40% of the total fees upon submitting the application. Once the review is complete and the zoning approval is ready to be issued, the zoning reviewer will assess the remaining 60% balance and contact the applicant to pay the remaining fees. No zoning approval will be issued prior to the payment of all applicable fees.

HOW DO I CALCULATE THE VALUE OF CONSTRUCTION?

Value of construction is determined by adding the cost of labor and materials for the scope of work covered by the Zoning application. Do not include the cost of any sub-permit work (electrical, mechanical, fire suppression, fire alarm, etc.) in the project value until it is being reviewed in a related construction permit. Do not include costs for professional fees or surveys, or any work completed that does not require a permit, such as finish work, like painting, new flooring, cabinets, and countertops, etc.

HOW ARE AMENDMENT FEES CALCULATED FOR A PREVIOUSLY APPROVED PROJECT?

Amending a Record of Zoning Approval to change the scope of the project will require the applicant to submit a new zoning application. The applicant will determine the change in value of the project by calculating the new value of construction with the amendment and subtracting the construction value provided in the previous application. If the value of construction is unchanged with the amendment, the applicant should put \$0.00 for the construction value. Please note that even if the applicant provides \$0.00 as the value of construction, the minimum permit fee will still be assessed upon submitting the application (\$50.00 for residential or \$100.00 for commercial).

WILL THE FEE SCHEDULE CHANGE AGAIN?

Yes. The Department of City Planning plans to re-evaluate the fees regularly to make sure they continue to align with the cost of staff effort involved in the review activities.