
Permitting Services

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) is to provide the highest quality of public service while ensuring compliance with Montgomery County's development and construction standards.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total approved FY12 Operating Budget for the Department of Permitting Services is \$25,028,630, an increase of \$877,210 or 3.6 percent from the FY11 Approved Budget of \$24,151,420. Personnel Costs comprise 76.4 percent of the budget for 182 full-time positions and one part-time position for 177.8 workyears. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 23.6 percent of the FY12 budget.

LINKAGE TO COUNTY RESULT AREAS

While this program area supports all eight of the County Result Areas, the following are emphasized:

- ❖ ***A Responsive, Accountable County Government***
- ❖ ***An Effective and Efficient Transportation Network***
- ❖ ***Safe Streets and Secure Neighborhoods***
- ❖ ***Vital Living for All of Our Residents***

DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below, with multi-program measures displayed at the front of this section and program-specific measures shown with the relevant program. The FY11 estimates incorporate the effect of the FY11 savings plan. FY12 and FY13 targets assume the approved FY12 budget and FY13 funding for comparable service levels.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INITIATIVES

- ❖ ***DPS developed a solvency plan to address fund balance issues. Two strategies, recommended by the workgroup, are reflected in the recommended budget: changes to the portion of the permit fee collected at time of application, and the adjustment to the fee calculation and "cap" for commercial building permits resulting in fees which are more reasonable and equitable to all parties.***
- ❖ ***In conjunction with the Department of Economic Development and the Fire Marshal, DPS is implementing several changes to streamline the permitting process.***
- ❖ ***In accordance with State law, adopted and implemented all applicable 2009 International Code Council updates.***
- ❖ ***Adopted and implemented the 2009 International Energy Code. To enforce these codes, DPS added a new insulation inspection and modified the framing inspection without adding new inspectors.***
- ❖ ***All projects covered under the Green Building Law have been registered with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), and will be monitored for compliance.***
- ❖ ***DPS has partnered with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and Canaan Valley Institute (CVI) to provide County homeowners access to the MDE Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund which provides funding to homeowners to upgrade existing septic systems in order to reduce nitrogen inputs into the Bay.***
- ❖ ***Developed and adopted new County stormwater management legislation, requiring the use of environmentally sensitive design and low impact development practices, in accordance with Maryland Department of the Environment requirements.***
- ❖ ***Productivity Improvements***

- **To increase customer access to information, DPS enhanced its website to provide more information and improved search capabilities.**
- **In 2011, DPS is combining commercial building and mechanical inspections allowing one inspector to conduct both inspections. This reduces Inspector's travel time and expenses, and saves the customer inspection time.**
- **Created and completed the requirements for an intermediate plan review process for commercial building construction projects resulting in reduced review time for small commercial building projects.**
- **Participated in the inter-agency Conflict Resolution Work Group to develop methods to improve the development review and approval process and establish Lead Agency protocols for decision making.**

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Alicia Thomas of the Department of Permitting Services at 240.777.6392 or Amy Wilson of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2775 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Land Development

The Land Development program is responsible for ensuring the protection of the County's water resources and the safety of residents through its engineering and inspection functions related to stormwater management, sediment control, floodplain management, well-and-septic systems approval, storm drain design, and work in the public right-of-way.

| FY12 Approved Changes | Expenditures | WYs |
|--|---------------------|-------------|
| FY11 Approved | 6,848,500 | 55.0 |
| Miscellaneous adjustments, including restoration of employee furloughs, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program | -37,550 | 2.3 |
| FY12 Approved | 6,810,950 | 57.3 |

Customer Service

The Customer Service program is responsible for ensuring that customer service and satisfaction is measured and successfully achieved through communication and outreach to the public. This program is responsible for the intake of complaints, processing information requests, and responding to departmental correspondence. This division proactively educates residents and the development community about the permitting process by maintaining and improving the DPS web site, publishing the DPS newsletter, coordinating outreach events, organizing educational seminars for residents, civic organizations and professionals, and providing information to applicants via telephone regarding the intake and issuance of permits. This division is also responsible for facilitating "green tape" projects such as affordable housing projects and those in the Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Long Branch enterprise zones by working with other DPS team members to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, an expedited, seamless permitting and inspection process. This division is responsible for developing customer service surveys for the department, analyzing the results, reporting findings, and recommending a course of action for improvement.

| Program Performance Measures | Actual FY09 | Actual FY10 | Estimated FY11 | Target FY12 | Target FY13 |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Response time on complaint investigations - Average number of days from the complaint being filed to first contact between a Permitting Inspector and the customer | 4.8 | 3.4 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| Response time on complaint investigations - Average number of days from the complaint being filed to final resolution of the complaint | 9.4 | 6.3 | 14.0 | 13.0 | 13.0 |
| Percent of complaints that are resolved on the first inspection | 68.0 | 83.6 | 80.0 | 80.0 | 80.0 |

| FY12 Approved Changes | Expenditures | WYs |
|--|---------------------|-------------|
| FY11 Approved | 1,118,900 | 11.7 |
| Miscellaneous adjustments, including restoration of employee furloughs, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program | -173,890 | 0.4 |
| FY12 Approved | 945,010 | 12.1 |

Building Construction

The Building Construction program is responsible for ensuring public safety through the effective enforcement of construction and zoning codes and standards. This is accomplished through engineering plan review and construction inspection related to the administration and enforcement of building, structural, electrical, mechanical, fire-safety, energy conservation, and accessibility codes and standards. In addition, the program is charged with the plan review and inspection of Maryland-National Capital Park and

Planning Commission site plans and enforcement of the County's Zoning Ordinance. Zoning enforcement is carried out by reviewing building applications for zoning compliance and investigating zoning complaints. The program is also responsible for conducting damage assessments during natural and other disasters and incidents and provides assistance in disaster recovery efforts.

| Program Performance Measures | Actual FY09 | Actual FY10 | Estimated FY11 | Target FY12 | Target FY13 |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Average number of days to issue a permit - New construction: Commercial permits | 295.8 | 177.0 | 160.0 | 163.0 | 163.0 |
| Average number of days to issue a permit - New construction: Residential permits | 223.4 | 138.3 | 110.0 | 90.0 | 90.0 |
| Average number of days to issue a permit - Additions: Commercial permits | 67.6 | 117.8 | 78.0 | 73.0 | 73.0 |
| Average number of days to issue a permit - Additions: Residential permits | 18.6 | 22.0 | 21.0 | 16.0 | 16.0 |
| Median number of minutes to issue a permit - Permits for commercial alterations obtained using the Department of Permitting Services' Fast Track process | 84.0 | 137.0 | 140.0 | 160.0 | 160.0 |
| Median number of minutes to issue a permit - Residential permits using the Department of Permitting Services' Fast Track process | 48.0 | 53 | 60.0 | 58.0 | 58.0 |
| Percent of building permits issued that received a final inspection: Commercial permits | 48.5 | 34.8 | 38.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| Percent of building permits issued that received a final inspection: Commercial permits through the Department of Permitting Services' Fast Track process | 71.3 | 57.2 | 77.0 | 74.0 | 74.0 |
| Percent of building permits issued that received a final inspection: Residential new construction | n/a | 42.9 | 85.0 | 83.0 | 83.0 |
| Percent of building permits issued that received a final inspection: Residential all construction | n/a | 47.5 | 70.0 | 63 | 63 |

| FY12 Approved Changes | Expenditures | WYs |
|--|---------------------|-------------|
| FY11 Approved | 10,641,110 | 92.3 |
| Miscellaneous adjustments, including restoration of employee furloughs, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program | 219,950 | 1.6 |
| FY12 Approved | 10,861,060 | 93.9 |

Administration

The Administration program provides policy development and leadership for all programs within the department. Staff specialists are responsible for a full range of administrative, financial, and budgetary tasks, including daily operations, automation, human resources management, training, safety, quality assurance, legislative coordination, space management, historic files management, and management services.

| FY12 Approved Changes | Expenditures | WYs |
|--|---------------------|-------------|
| FY11 Approved | 5,542,910 | 14.0 |
| Increase Cost: Retiree Health Insurance Pre-Funding | 522,360 | 0.0 |
| Increase Cost: Office Rent Adjustment | 304,880 | 0.0 |
| Increase Cost: Bi-annual server maintenance | 78,720 | 0.0 |
| Decrease Cost: Completed Master Lease Payments for financed hardware | -12,260 | 0.0 |
| Miscellaneous adjustments, including restoration of employee furloughs, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting more than one program | -25,000 | 0.5 |
| FY12 Approved | 6,411,610 | 14.5 |

BUDGET SUMMARY

| | Actual FY10 | Budget FY11 | Estimated FY11 | Approved FY12 | % Chg Bud/App |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| PERMITTING SERVICES | | | | | |
| EXPENDITURES | | | | | |
| Salaries and Wages | 16,202,173 | 13,929,870 | 14,375,780 | 14,271,570 | 2.5% |
| Employee Benefits | 5,632,874 | 5,376,320 | 5,279,500 | 4,847,140 | -9.8% |
| Permitting Services Personnel Costs | 21,835,047 | 19,306,190 | 19,655,280 | 19,118,710 | -1.0% |
| Operating Expenses | 4,184,093 | 4,845,230 | 4,839,740 | 5,909,920 | 22.0% |
| Debt Service Other | 64,165 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — |
| Capital Outlay | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — |
| Permitting Services Expenditures | 26,083,305 | 24,151,420 | 24,495,020 | 25,028,630 | 3.6% |
| PERSONNEL | | | | | |
| Full-Time | 226 | 182 | 182 | 182 | — |
| Part-Time | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | — |
| Workyears | 197.1 | 173.0 | 173.0 | 177.8 | 2.8% |
| REVENUES | | | | | |
| Building Permits | 11,210,129 | 13,896,890 | 13,413,650 | 15,950,310 | 14.8% |
| Commercial Use & Occupancy Permits | 405,888 | 637,980 | 337,170 | 345,260 | -45.9% |
| Electrical Contractors Licenses | 162,008 | 169,620 | 221,060 | 226,370 | 33.5% |
| Electrical Individual Licenses | 265,889 | 258,380 | 325,590 | 333,400 | 29.0% |
| Electrical Permits | 1,669,990 | 1,803,910 | 2,089,280 | 2,139,420 | 18.6% |
| Fire Code Enforcement Fees | 444,496 | 451,760 | 605,800 | 620,340 | 37.3% |
| Residential Fire Sprinkler Systems | 135,355 | 131,270 | 159,760 | 163,590 | 24.6% |
| Mechanical Inspection Fees | 545,608 | 610,090 | 726,790 | 744,230 | 22.0% |
| Grading/SD/Paving/Driveway Permits | 2,292,344 | 2,638,930 | 4,398,390 | 4,732,410 | 79.3% |
| Sediment Control Permits | 5,347,425 | 3,298,380 | 2,485,160 | 3,071,580 | -6.9% |
| Stormwater Management Concept Fees | 191,505 | 203,080 | 324,110 | 331,890 | 63.4% |
| Flood Plain Permits | 25,040 | 31,580 | 21,840 | 22,360 | -29.2% |
| Flood Plain Verification and Study Fees | 22,880 | 8,560 | 35,010 | 35,850 | 318.8% |
| Preliminary Water Quality Review | 27,630 | 123,500 | 120,150 | 123,030 | -0.4% |
| Final Water Quality Fee | 24,525 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — |
| Well and Septic | 257,826 | 265,860 | 284,140 | 290,960 | 9.4% |
| Scavenger (W&S) | 18,880 | 3,000 | 17,480 | 17,900 | 496.7% |
| Vendor Operations & Licensing Fee | 61,243 | 37,020 | 36,430 | 37,300 | 0.8% |
| Sign Permits | 182,559 | 243,290 | 190,000 | 194,560 | -20.0% |
| Benefit Performances | 3,079 | 2,120 | 5,430 | 5,560 | 162.3% |
| Overtime Offset Fee | 629,740 | 677,440 | 558,310 | 571,710 | -15.6% |
| Special Exception Fee | 228,777 | 803,000 | 224,330 | 229,710 | -71.4% |
| Miscellaneous Licenses & Permits | 31,640 | 160 | 220 | 230 | 43.8% |
| Automation Surcharge | 2,385,151 | 2,603,060 | 2,678,530 | 2,742,810 | 5.4% |
| Information Requests | 40,713 | 43,210 | 68,730 | 70,380 | 62.9% |
| Civil Penalties/Fines | 93,805 | 92,720 | 84,380 | 86,410 | -6.8% |
| Investment Income | 7,552 | 90,000 | 4,420 | 4,530 | -95.0% |
| Miscellaneous | 4,940 | 0 | 1,120 | 0 | — |
| Homeowner Electrical Exam | 3,215 | 0 | 0 | 0 | — |
| Non-Conforming Use Certification | 370 | 2,050 | 990 | 1,010 | -50.7% |
| Permitting Services Revenues | 26,720,202 | 29,126,860 | 29,418,270 | 33,093,110 | 13.6% |

FY12 APPROVED CHANGES

| | Expenditures | WYs |
|---|-------------------|--------------|
| PERMITTING SERVICES | | |
| FY11 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION | 24,151,420 | 173.0 |
| <u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u> | | |
| Increase Cost: Retiree Health Insurance Pre-Funding [Administration] | 522,360 | 0.0 |
| Increase Cost: Restore Personnel Costs - Furloughs | 334,830 | 6.8 |
| Increase Cost: Office Rent Adjustment [Administration] | 304,880 | 0.0 |
| Increase Cost: Motor Pool Rate Adjustment | 172,970 | 0.0 |
| Increase Cost: Bi-annual server maintenance [Administration] | 78,720 | 0.0 |
| Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment | 11,370 | 0.0 |
| Increase Cost: Help Desk - Desk Side Support | 6,670 | 0.0 |
| Technical Adj: To Align Lapsed WYs with Dollars | 0 | -2.0 |
| Decrease Cost: Occupational Medical Services Adjustment | -1,110 | 0.0 |
| Decrease Cost: Verizon Point to Point T1 Replacement | -2,180 | 0.0 |
| Decrease Cost: Completed Master Lease Payments for financed hardware [Administration] | -12,260 | 0.0 |
| Decrease Cost: Risk Management Adjustment | -16,730 | 0.0 |
| Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment | -150,030 | 0.0 |
| Decrease Cost: Group Insurance Adjustment | -372,280 | 0.0 |
| FY12 APPROVED: | 25,028,630 | 177.8 |

PROGRAM SUMMARY

| Program Name | FY11 Approved | | FY12 Approved | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|
| | Expenditures | WYs | Expenditures | WYs |
| Land Development | 6,848,500 | 55.0 | 6,810,950 | 57.3 |
| Customer Service | 1,118,900 | 11.7 | 945,010 | 12.1 |
| Building Construction | 10,641,110 | 92.3 | 10,861,060 | 93.9 |
| Administration | 5,542,910 | 14.0 | 6,411,610 | 14.5 |
| Total | 24,151,420 | 173.0 | 25,028,630 | 177.8 |

