



Permitting Services

APPROVED FY26 BUDGET

\$48,487,764

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

254.03

 RABBIAH SABBAKHAN, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Permitting Services' (DPS) primary mission is to ensure the health, safety, sustainability, and economic vitality of residents, businesses, communities and the built environment in Montgomery County. This is accomplished by accurate, consistent, and timely review and issuance of submittal documents and permits, and extensive outreach. DPS conducts prompt and thorough inspections for residential, commercial, land development, zoning, and code compliance and responds to service requests and emergencies.

BUDGET OVERVIEW


The total approved FY26 Operating Budget for the Department of Permitting Services is \$48,487,764, an increase of \$2,828,209 or 6.19 percent from the FY25 Approved Budget of \$45,659,555. Personnel Costs comprise 80.49 percent of the budget for 246 full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 254.03 FTEs. Total FTEs may include seasonal or temporary positions and may also reflect workforce charged to or from other departments or funds. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 19.51 percent of the FY26 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

While this program area supports all seven of the County Executive's Priority Outcomes, the following are emphasized:

-  **A Growing Economy**
-  **A Greener County**
-  **Easier Commutes**
-  **Effective, Sustainable Government**

INITIATIVES

-  The Department of Permitting Services (DPS) has initiated the process of partnering with a consultant to create a five-year strategic plan for the department. The plan will focus on continuous improvement of the department over the next several years in the areas of high performance, technology, data, process streamlining, sustainability, organizational alignment, exceptional customer service, communication, and other key focus areas. The goal is to begin plan implementation in early FY26.

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- ★ Two new DPS positions, a Program Manager II and a Senior Permitting Services Specialist in the Commercial Building Construction Division, will enhance the workflow tasks within the plan review process of various permits and improve the turnaround time on plan reviews for small businesses.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- ★ Well and Septic applications can now be submitted, paid, and reviewed electronically reducing the number of visits and/or mail deliveries to DPS. It is mandatory that any legal document that requires recordation be submitted and paid electronically to DPS via Simplifile. Nearly 200 documents have been recorded since Simplifile's inception in late 2023 resulting in faster permit issuance and a reduction in trips to/from DPS and the courthouse. Since DPS executes the submission, the department can be confident the documents in Land Records are accurate.
- ★ The third-party e-solar program is designed to alleviate the workload for the commercial electrical review team who assists the residential plan review team. By FY26, the department aims to have 40% of eligible projects utilize e-solar.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Barbara Suter of the Department of Permitting Services at 240-777-6244 or Anita Aryeetey of the Office of Management and Budget at 240-777-2784 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures for this department are included below (where applicable), with multi-program measures displayed at the front of this section and program-specific measures shown with the relevant program. The FY25 estimates reflect funding based on the FY25 Approved Budget. The FY26 and FY27 figures are performance targets based on the FY26 Approved Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY27.

The department combines department and applicant time components when measuring "total time to issue a permit." These times may be impacted by satisfaction of related preconditions such as sediment control submissions, approvals, and outside agency approvals.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

★ Administration

The Administration program provides policy development and leadership for all programs within the Department.

The administrative staff is responsible for daily operations and a full range of administrative task and programs including Budget, Fiscal Management, Human Resources, Data Management, Contracts, MCTime, and Fleet Management.

DPS' Office of Information Technology (DPS-IT) leverages technology to deliver better services to the department that enable staff and the public to access resources at their convenience. DPS-IT's mission is to provide a robust and secure IT infrastructure to support mission-critical applications, mobile computing, and desktop support employing industry best practices. The IT unit has embarked on an IT modernization project to enhance multimedia improvement by enabling Microsoft Teams telephony and conference rooms. The IT unit will partner with the Department of Technology Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) to incorporate technology enhancements to help DPS achieve its mission. IT services provided by TEBS will include, but will not be

limited to, IT desktop and server support, land use and cloud applications.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Percent of screenings passed with fewer than 2 returns to the customer	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Percent of inspections passed - all divisions	84%	87%	85%	85%	85%
Percent of customers satisfied with DPS services ¹	75%	73%	75%	75%	75%

¹ A new customer survey process was implemented in FY23, resulting in more customers receiving the survey and a much higher response rate.

FY26 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	11,591,756	26.13
Increase Cost: Laptops and Electronic Tablets	743,112	0.00
Increase Cost: Lapse Adjustment	390,109	0.00
Increase Cost: IT Equipment, Maintenance and Support	332,440	0.00
Increase Cost: Microsoft License Chargeback	150,458	0.00
Increase Cost: IT Maintenance and Support	4,171	0.00
Decrease Cost: Eliminate Expenditures Associated with Terminated Contract	(756,951)	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(581,740)	0.00
FY26 Approved	11,873,355	26.13

Commercial Building Construction

The Commercial Construction program is responsible for ensuring public safety through the effective application of commercial building, structural, electrical, mechanical, fire-safety, accessibility, and sustainability construction codes and standards. As the "First Preventers," this is accomplished through plan review and construction site inspections to facilitate compliance with approved plans and regulations. This program processes applications for and issues Building, Mechanical, Fire Protection, and Electrical permits. The program also handles construction complaints during natural and other disasters, and assists in disaster recovery.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of permits receiving final approvals	6,747	6,554	6,600	6,600	6,600
Commercial Permits - Percent of inspections completed on the scheduled day	98.3%	99.0%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
Percent of plans receiving a complete first review within 22 business days	86%	86%	86%	86%	86%

FY26 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	8,695,076	54.00
Enhance: Senior Permitting Services Specialist	108,482	1.00
Enhance: New Program Manager Position	107,319	1.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	567,838	0.00
FY26 Approved	9,478,715	56.00

Customer Support & Outreach

The Customer Support and Outreach Division is responsible for all administration and issuance of building, land development, and zoning-related permits, applications and licenses, information requests, pre-design consultations, and other specialty services.

This division was formed to provide a multipronged approach to enhance methods for service delivery and communication for our clients. This heightened focus on service will include empowerment of staff to act as facilitators rather than regulators.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of applications processed (at intake) by permit technicians	50,247	49,637	50,000	50,000	50,000
Percent of screenings completed (plans ready for review) within 2 business days	83%	76%	75%	75%	75%
Percent of customers satisfied with DPS Customer Service Division	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
FY26 Approved Changes			Expenditures		FTEs
FY25 Approved			4,963,864		41.90
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.			312,103		0.00
FY26 Approved			5,275,967		41.90

Land Development

The Land Development Division is responsible for ensuring the protection of the County's land and water resources, the protection of the environment, and the safety of residents and businesses through its engineering and inspection functions related to storm water management; sediment control; floodplain management; special protection areas; storm drain design and construction; roadside tree protection; tree canopy enhancement; well and septic system reviews and approvals; record plat approval; and work in the public right-of-way.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Total number of public right of way permits issued (roadside trees, driveways, plats, et al.)	3,790	2,748	3,500	3,500	3,500
Number of Sediment Control inspections completed	20,646	20,428	20,500	20,500	20,500
Number of roadside tree plan reviews	1,615	1,866	1,700	1,700	1,700
Percent of Sediment Control inspections that pass inspection indicating a compliant site	96.4%	97.0%	96.0%	96.0%	96.0%
Successful Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Delegation of Review of Sediment Control and Storm-Water Management ¹	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A

¹ Sediment Control Delegation reviews are performed biennially.

FY26 Approved Changes			Expenditures		FTEs
FY25 Approved			8,597,613		54.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.			493,235		0.00
FY26 Approved			9,090,848		54.00

Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance

The Residential Construction staff is responsible for ensuring public safety through the effective application of residential building, structural, electrical, mechanical, and energy conservation codes. This is accomplished through technical plan review and inspection processes.

The Fire Code Compliance staff is responsible for ensuring compliance with adopted National Fire Codes and Standards, the Montgomery County Fire Code, and the Maryland State Fire Prevention Codes in existing buildings. This is accomplished through reviews and preventive inspection processes for businesses, schools, multi-family buildings, healthcare facilities, places of

worship, and all other commercial buildings or occupancies.

The Division staff respond to and investigate code violations and aid in recovery during disasters and other incidents.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Percent of service requests completed within 3 business days	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Percent of commercial establishments in compliance with the Fire Code	86.3%	82.0%	80.0%	80.0%	80.0%
Number of inspections performed by Residential and Fire Code Compliance FCC inspectors	66,171	81,673	80,000	80,000	80,000
Number of residential plan reviews performed	9,761	9,268	9,500	9,500	9,500
Residential Permits - Percent of inspections completed on the scheduled day	99.1%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%

FY26 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	7,224,873	47.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	689,369	0.00
FY26 Approved	7,914,242	47.00

Zoning and Code Compliance

The Zoning and Code Compliance Division protects the quality of life, public health, safety, and welfare of Montgomery County. This is accomplished through the effective application and enforcement of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance development and use standards; Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) certified site plan requirements; and ensuring compliance of M-NCPPC certified site plan projects. Division Permit Specialists perform zoning reviews of plan applications prior to permit issuance, monitor applicant adherence to M-NCPPC certified site plans, and provide direct staff support to the Sign Review Board, M-NCPPC Development Review Committee, Predesign Consultation Services, and the Tower Committee - Transmission Facilities Coordination Group. Division Field Staff inspect for compliance with M-NCPPC certified site plan projects and Conditional Uses/Special Exceptions. Moreover, ensure zoning ordinance compliance through scheduled inspections, investigations of constituent complaints, and when necessary, issue civil citations, and enforce the orders issued by the Hearing Examiner, Board of Appeals, District Court, Circuit Court, and Maryland Court of Special Appeals.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY23	Actual FY24	Estimated FY25	Target FY26	Target FY27
Number of zoning and fire department access reviews	29,614	29,581	29,600	29,600	29,600
Percent of MNCPPC active site plans in compliance every 10 business days	96%	98%	96%	96%	96%
Percent of Zoning service requests started and responded to the customer within 2 business days	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%

FY26 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY25 Approved	4,586,373	29.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	268,264	0.00
FY26 Approved	4,854,637	29.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY24	Budget FY25	Estimate FY25	Approved FY26	%Chg Bud/App
PERMITTING SERVICES					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	26,387,608	28,996,079	28,327,068	30,374,276	4.8 %
Employee Benefits	7,087,506	7,823,025	7,691,345	8,653,295	10.6 %
Permitting Services Personnel Costs	33,475,114	36,819,104	36,018,413	39,027,571	6.0 %
Operating Expenses	6,512,320	8,722,851	8,322,417	9,460,193	8.5 %
Capital Outlay	0	117,600	117,600	0	-100.0 %
Permitting Services Expenditures	39,987,434	45,659,555	44,458,430	48,487,764	6.2 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	243	244	244	246	0.8 %
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	249.03	252.03	252.03	254.03	0.8 %
REVENUES					
Building Permits	26,293,231	26,757,490	22,400,413	24,649,598	-7.9 %
Electrical Permits and Licenses	4,602,577	4,500,000	4,135,249	4,571,658	1.6 %
Fire Code Enforcement Permits	2,329,844	2,354,099	2,207,934	2,012,462	-14.5 %
Grading/Storm Drains/Paving/Driveway Permits	3,444,965	4,400,000	3,561,619	4,446,125	1.0 %
Occupancy Permits	597,491	578,272	509,842	581,763	0.6 %
Other Licenses/Permits	495,613	578,009	250,945	493,140	-14.7 %
Sediment Control Permits	2,943,789	3,437,873	2,827,144	3,145,299	-8.5 %
Sign Permits	179,199	205,983	198,350	201,696	-2.1 %
Special Exception Fee	187,784	203,782	203,782	197,207	-3.2 %
Stormwater Mgmt and Water Quality Plan Fee	302,636	209,117	211,332	197,207	-5.7 %
Well and Septic	398,160	498,893	422,181	437,930	-12.2 %
Automation Enhancement Fee	59	0	0	0	—
Other Charges/Fees	1,891,389	1,690,858	1,961,568	1,890,045	11.8 %
Other Fines/Forfeitures	115,591	86,275	118,320	84,663	-1.9 %
Miscellaneous Revenues	5,282	0	0	0	—
Investment Income	3,502,739	2,580,520	2,580,520	2,676,510	3.7 %
Mechanical Construction Permit	1,976,191	2,146,150	2,279,271	2,173,243	1.3 %
Information Requests	0	116,634	115,677	139,756	19.8 %
Permitting Services Revenues	49,266,540	50,343,955	43,984,147	47,898,302	-4.9 %
GRANT FUND - MCG					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	0	0	0	0	—
Employee Benefits	0	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Personnel Costs	0	0	0	0	—
Operating Expenses	385	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Expenditures	385	0	0	0	—

PERSONNEL

Full-Time	0	0	0	0	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—

REVENUES

State Grants	385	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Revenues	385	0	0	0	—

DEPARTMENT TOTALS

Total Expenditures	39,987,819	45,659,555	44,458,430	48,487,764	6.2 %
Total Full-Time Positions	243	244	244	246	0.8 %
Total Part-Time Positions	0	0	0	0	—
Total FTEs	249.03	252.03	252.03	254.03	0.8 %
Total Revenues	49,266,925	50,343,955	43,984,147	47,898,302	-4.9 %

FY26 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
PERMITTING SERVICES		
FY25 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	45,659,555	252.03
<u>Changes (with service impacts)</u>		
Enhance: Senior Permitting Services Specialist [Commercial Building Construction]	108,482	1.00
Enhance: New Program Manager Position [Commercial Building Construction]	107,319	1.00
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: FY26 Compensation Adjustment	1,607,758	0.00
Increase Cost: Laptops and Electronic Tablets [Administration]	743,112	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY25 Compensation Increases	742,968	0.00
Increase Cost: Lapse Adjustment [Administration]	390,109	0.00
Increase Cost: IT Equipment, Maintenance and Support [Administration]	332,440	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	252,253	0.00
Increase Cost: Microsoft License Chargeback [Administration]	150,458	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY25 Lapsed Positions	131,909	0.00
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment	125,904	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment	35,575	0.00
Increase Cost: IT Maintenance and Support [Administration]	4,171	0.00
Decrease Cost: Risk Management Adjustment	(5,616)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY25 Personnel Costs	(544,278)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY25	(597,404)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Eliminate Expenditures Associated with Terminated Contract [Administration]	(756,951)	0.00
FY26 APPROVED	48,487,764	254.03

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs	FY26 APPR Expenditures	FY26 APPR FTEs
Administration	11,591,756	26.13	11,873,355	26.13
Commercial Building Construction	8,695,076	54.00	9,478,715	56.00
Customer Support & Outreach	4,963,864	41.90	5,275,967	41.90
Land Development	8,597,613	54.00	9,090,848	54.00
Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance	7,224,873	47.00	7,914,242	47.00
Zoning and Code Compliance	4,586,373	29.00	4,854,637	29.00
Total	45,659,555	252.03	48,487,764	254.03

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CC APPROVED (\$000S)

Title	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30	FY31
PERMITTING SERVICES						
EXPENDITURES						
FY26 Approved	48,488	48,488	48,488	48,488	48,488	48,488
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Annualization of Positions Approved in FY26	0	62	62	62	62	62
New positions in the FY26 budget are generally assumed to be filled at least three months after the fiscal year begins. Therefore, the above amounts reflect annualization of these positions in the outyears.						
Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY26	0	2	2	2	2	2
Items recommended for one-time funding in FY26, including operating expenses for new staff, computer equipment for department staff and an IT contract, will be eliminated from the base in the outyears.						
Labor Contracts	0	142	142	142	142	142
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	48,488	48,694	48,694	48,694	48,694	48,694

ANNUALIZATION OF FULL PERSONNEL COSTS

	FY26 Approved Expenditures	FTEs	FY27 Annualized Expenditures	FTEs
New Program Manager Position	101,219	1.00	133,549	1.00
Senior Permitting Services Specialist	105,082	1.00	135,108	1.00
Total	206,301	2.00	268,657	2.00