



Permitting Services

APPROVED FY21 BUDGET

\$40,699,250

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

245.90

 MITRA PEDOEEM, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT




The Department of Permitting Services' (DPS) primary mission is to promote the health, safety, welfare, and economic wellbeing of residents, businesses, and communities of Montgomery County with timely, professional, transparent, and consistent review and processing of plans and permits and through inspections of structures, rights-of-way, and development. DPS protects the public through application and enforcement of national, State, and local codes for fire and life safety, electrical, mechanical, energy, accessibility, building, and other public safety and zoning codes. DPS protects residential and business communities and users of public rights-of-way through inspections of work within public rights-of-way to assure adherence to approved site plans and special exceptions. DPS strives to promote economic well-being and customer service through ongoing process improvements, timely response, and service, while ensuring that structures are safe for occupants and visitors, sustainable for future generations and that development is consistent with requirements to protect the environment.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total approved FY21 Operating Budget for the Department of Permitting Services is \$40,699,250, a decrease of \$1,189,537 or 2.84 percent from the FY20 Approved Budget of \$41,888,787. Personnel Costs comprise 74.52 percent of the budget for 239 full-time position(s) and two part-time position(s), and a total of 245.90 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 25.48 percent of the FY21 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

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

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

INITIATIVES

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- ★ Relocate Department of Permitting Services offices to Wheaton as part of a Countywide initiative to centralize government services to support business growth and development. This move was planned as part of the Wheaton Redevelopment Program, which will encourage private reinvestment in Wheaton through targeted, complementary public investment.
 - ★ Integrate all communication and outreach and develop a comprehensive communication program to inform and engage Department staff, County agencies, County Council, advocacy groups, news media, and the public about the Department's initiatives, programs, and events. This integration will be achieved through development and implementation of a strategic plan for communications; use of various forms of communication including social media, websites, presentations, and speeches; and outreach to County residents.
 - ★ Participate in the development of National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) code 915 governing remote inspections. Department staff are in the early stages of accepting video inspections for certain permitting jobs including decks and reinspections. Having a staff member on the code development committee allows the Department to contribute to the code and keep aware of the latest developments and requirements for remote inspections.
 - ★ Improve Quality Control (QC) by implementing monthly Department of Permitting Services manager ridealongs to observe and document Residential inspections.
 - ★ Develop a process to implement collaboration between the Department of Permitting Services plans examiners and inspectors prior to permit issuance by identifying complex projects well suited for a collaborative approach; coordinating through meetings and on-site inspections before, during, and after plan reviews; and capturing data from the collaboration to measure the impact on customer service.
 - ★ Transition from paper plans to electronic submissions increasing efficiency, decreasing review times, and moving toward a more environmentally-friendly method of processing plans in support of the County Executive's "A Greener County" initiative.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- ★ Performed over 5,936 Plan Inspections on over 150 Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) Certified Site Plan Projects, including 3,210 Site Plan Inspections, 1,569 Building Inspections, 709 Commercial Building Inspections, and 448 Use & Occupancy Inspections.
- ★ Other accomplishments include 1,146 Conditional Use and Special Exception Inspections, 28,015 Zoning Reviews, issuing 266 Zoning Confirmation Letters, and serving 20,199 walk-in customers.
- ★ Implemented OneDrive Solution for Maryland Public Information Act requests.
- ★ Upgrade to newest Project Dox platform that will allow greater flexibility to move additional permit types to electronic plans submissions.
- ★ Processed over 210 telecommunication related permits related to ZTA 18-44.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Barbara Suter of the Department of Permitting Services at 240.777.6244 or Gary Nalven of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2779 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 FY20 estimates reflect funding based on the FY20 Approved Budget. The FY21 and FY22 figures are performance targets based on the FY21 Approved Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY22.

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. Staff specialists are responsible for a full range of administrative, financial, and budgetary tasks, including daily operations, revenue collection (fees and development taxes and charges), reporting and management, automation, human resources, fleet management, training, safety, quality assurance, legislative coordination, space management, historic files maintenance, and management services. This program provides outreach, customer service satisfaction, and case management, which coordinates Department disciplines engaged in plan reviews on complex projects or projects needing a higher level of assistance such as "green tape" projects (i.e., affordable housing; and areas such as the Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Long Branch enterprise zones; strategic economic development projects; strategic redevelopment areas such as White Flint, and faith-based institutions). This program receives complaints, processes information requests, maintains the Department of Permitting Services' website, publishes the Department's newsletter, and coordinates outreach events and seminars for residents, civic organizations, and professionals.

FY21 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY20 Approved	13,180,092	33.10
Increase Cost: Wheaton Relocation Operating Budget Impact	922,385	0.00
Increase Cost: Furniture for Wheaton Move	167,428	0.00
Technical Adj: Adjust Ombudsman Charges from the Office of the County Executive from 1.0 to 0.9 FTE	0	(0.10)
Decrease Cost: Retiree Health Insurance Pre-Funding	(3,870)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Council Reduction - Vehicles for Temporary Positions to be Converted to Term	(40,626)	0.00
Decrease Cost: IT Equipment Replacement	(300,000)	0.00
Shift: Transfer Seven FTEs from Administration to Residential Division	(800,852)	(7.00)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(1,303,413)	0.00
FY21 Approved	11,821,144	26.00

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, and energy conservation codes and standards. This is accomplished through plan reviews and construction inspections for compliance with approved plans and codes. This program processes applications for and issues Building, Mechanical and Electrical Permits. The program also handles construction complaints during natural and other disasters and provides assistance in disaster recovery.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Estimated FY20	Target FY21	Target FY22
Commercial Permits - Number of final permit approvals issued	1,821	2,517	2,200	2,200	2,200
Commercial Permits - Percent of commercial construction inspections completed on the scheduled day	96.7%	97.0%	97.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Percent of commercial plans first full review completed in 30 days	92.0%	92.2%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
FY21 Approved Changes			Expenditures	FTEs	
FY20 Approved			5,712,807	43.50	
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.			73,975	1.00	
FY21 Approved			5,786,782	44.50	

Fire Prevention and Code Compliance

The Fire Prevention and Fire Code Compliance program is responsible for ensuring public safety through enforcement of the National Fire Codes and Standards, the Montgomery County Fire Code and the Maryland State Fire Prevention Codes. For new construction, this is done through plans review, permits issuance, and inspections of fire protection systems and fire alarm systems. For existing occupied facilities, the program is responsible for preventive inspections. This program issues Fire Code Compliance permits and operational permits for all businesses, schools, multi-family buildings, healthcare facilities, places of worship, and all other commercial buildings or occupancies. This program responds to and investigates code violations through a complaints program.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Estimated FY20	Target FY21	Target FY22
Number of fire protection systems plans approved	3,034	3,924	3,300	3,300	3,300
Percent of fire systems inspections completed on the scheduled day (Fire Prevention and Code Compliance)	98.5%	90.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Percent of commercial establishments compliant with the Fire Code	72.2%	59.7%	70.0%	80.0%	90.0%
FY21 Approved Changes			Expenditures	FTEs	
FY20 Approved			4,526,549	33.00	
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.			33,995	0.00	
FY21 Approved			4,560,544	33.00	

Land Development

The Land Development Program ensures the protection of the County's land and water resources, the environment, and the safety of residents and the businesses that operate in the County. This is accomplished through its engineering and inspection functions related to stormwater management; sediment control; floodplain management; special protection areas; well and septic systems approval; storm drain design and construction; roadside tree protection; tree canopy enhancement; record plat approval; and work in the public right-of-way.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Estimated FY20	Target FY21	Target FY22
Land Development permits issued	4,293	4,127	4,200	4,200	4,200
Percent of record plat reviews completed 2 business days or less	99%	99%	99%	99%	99%

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Estimated FY20	Target FY21	Target FY22
Successful Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Delegation of Review of Sediment Control and Storm-Water Management ¹	Yes	N/A	Yes	N/A	Yes

¹ Sediment Control Delegation reviews are performed biennially, with the next review scheduled in July 2020.

FY21 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY20 Approved	8,568,224	63.50
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(26,541)	0.00
FY21 Approved	8,541,683	63.50

Residential Building Construction & Intake

The Residential Building and Intake Program is responsible for ensuring public safety through plan review of applications and inspections services during construction. This program issues all commercial, fire protection, and residential permits and is responsible for code enforcement activities and abatement of dangerous or substandard buildings or structures; aids in recovery during natural and other disasters and incidents; assists in project completions, reduces un-permitted construction activities, collects impact fees to support a growing economy while safeguarding homeowners' life and property.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Estimated FY20	Target FY21	Target FY22
Residential Permits - Number of permits issued ¹	34,552	34,204	35,770	35,000	35,000
Residential Permits - Percent of inspections completed on the scheduled day	98.9%	97.8%	98.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Residential (Home) Fast Track -- Percent of permits serviced within 2.5 hours	95.44%	92.44%	93.00%	95.00%	95.00%

¹ This is total number of permits issued by DPS permitting technicians under the Residential Program as totaled by a current report; this report is not limited to residential permits nor is it a count of all DPS permits.

FY21 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY20 Approved	5,285,023	40.90
Shift: Transfer Seven FTEs from Administration to Residential Division	800,852	7.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(503,385)	(1.00)
FY21 Approved	5,582,490	46.90

Zoning and Site Plan Enforcement

The Zoning and Site Plan Enforcement program protects the quality of life in Montgomery County and the public health, safety, welfare, and comfort through the effective application and enforcement of zoning code standards and Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission certified site plan requirements. This division reviews plans prior to permit issuance, conducts inspections, and investigates and responds to complaints to administer and enforce the zoning standards established by Chapter 59 of the Montgomery County Code. This program regulates the size, shape, height, and mass of a building; the uses that are allowed on the property; and signage.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Estimated FY20	Target FY21	Target FY22
Number of signs approved	553	531	550	575	600
Percent of plans approved for compliance with Zoning Ordinance	92.9%	92.3%	92.0%	90.0%	90.0%

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Program Performance Measures	Actual FY18	Actual FY19	Estimated FY20	Target FY21	Target FY22
Percent of sites compliant with zoning ordinance within 14 days of initial inspection	97%	98%	95%	90%	90%
FY21 Approved Changes			Expenditures	FTEs	
FY20 Approved				4,616,092	32.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.				(209,485)	0.00
FY21 Approved				4,406,607	32.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY19	Budget FY20	Estimate FY20	Approved FY21	%Chg Bud/App
PERMITTING SERVICES					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	22,611,457	23,531,841	22,770,949	23,232,929	-1.3 %
Employee Benefits	7,636,152	8,020,750	7,932,569	7,094,564	-11.6 %
Permitting Services Personnel Costs	30,247,609	31,552,591	30,703,518	30,327,493	-3.9 %
Operating Expenses	8,029,079	10,295,570	8,351,976	10,371,757	0.7 %
Capital Outlay	0	40,626	40,626	0	-100.0 %
Permitting Services Expenditures	38,276,688	41,888,787	39,096,120	40,699,250	-2.8 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	236	239	239	239	—
Part-Time	2	2	2	2	—
FTEs	243.75	246.00	246.00	245.90	—
REVENUES					
Automation Enhancement Fee	89,571	0	0	0	—
Building Permits	25,032,702	24,261,450	22,814,403	19,826,070	-18.3 %
Electrical Permits and Licenses	4,418,780	4,200,000	4,440,021	3,654,000	-13.0 %
Fire Code Compliance	0	1,187,437	0	0	-100.0 %
Fire Code Enforcement Permits	2,572,530	2,405,943	3,004,166	2,588,286	7.6 %
Grading/Storm Drains/Paving/Driveway Permits	3,881,390	4,200,000	3,222,294	3,045,000	-27.5 %
Information Requests	0	0	145,525	95,700	—
Investment Income	904,945	880,000	756,400	408,000	-53.6 %
Mechanical Construction Permit	1,576,079	1,648,328	2,405,684	1,452,900	-11.9 %
Miscellaneous Revenues	4,432	0	0	0	—
Occupancy Permits	597,011	633,880	600,756	522,000	-17.7 %
Other Charges/Fees	718,395	1,661,907	1,418,696	1,218,000	-26.7 %
Other Fines/Forfeitures	87,008	89,772	41,400	78,300	-12.8 %
Other Licenses/Permits	492,741	638,329	699,136	441,825	-30.8 %
Sediment Control Permits	3,171,598	3,101,270	2,894,976	2,698,105	-13.0 %
Sign Permits	207,873	262,500	232,634	226,635	-13.7 %
Special Exception Fee	281,153	242,076	242,076	210,605	-13.0 %

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY19	Budget FY20	Estimate FY20	Approved FY21	%Chg Bud/App
Stormwater Mgmt and Water Quality Plan Fee	263,167	288,814	263,344	251,268	-13.0 %
Well and Septic	410,462	274,308	295,362	238,648	-13.0 %
Permitting Services Revenues	44,709,837	45,976,014	43,476,873	36,955,342	-19.6 %

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	2,218	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Expenditures	2,218	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	2,218	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Revenues	2,218	0	0	0	—

DEPARTMENT TOTALS

Total Expenditures	38,278,906	41,888,787	39,096,120	40,699,250	-2.8 %
Total Full-Time Positions	236	239	239	239	—
Total Part-Time Positions	2	2	2	2	—
Total FTEs	243.75	246.00	246.00	245.90	—
Total Revenues	44,712,055	45,976,014	43,476,873	36,955,342	-19.6 %

FY21 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
PERMITTING SERVICES		
	FY20 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	41,888,787 246.00
Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)		
Increase Cost: Wheaton Relocation Operating Budget Impact [Administration]	922,385	0.00
Shift: Transfer Seven FTEs from Administration to Residential Division [Residential Building Construction & Intake]	800,852	7.00
Increase Cost: FY21 Compensation Adjustment	588,865	0.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY20 Compensation Increases	273,138	0.00
Increase Cost: Furniture for Wheaton Move [Administration]	167,428	0.00
Increase Cost: Risk Management Adjustment	84,648	0.00

FY21 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY20 Lapsed Positions	79,114	0.00
Increase Cost: MLS Pay for Performance (Increase to Base Pay)	27,078	0.00
Increase Cost: Print and Mail Adjustment	3,873	0.00
Technical Adj: Adjust Ombudsman Charges from the Office of the County Executive from 1.0 to 0.9 FTE [Administration]	0	(0.10)
Decrease Cost: Retiree Health Insurance Pre-Funding [Administration]	(3,870)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY20	(12,000)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Council Reduction - Vehicles for Temporary Positions to be Converted to Term [Administration]	(40,626)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	(175,957)	0.00
Decrease Cost: IT Equipment Replacement [Administration]	(300,000)	0.00
Decrease Cost: OPEB Adjustment	(610,320)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Council Compensation Adjustment	(642,062)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(665,948)	0.00
Shift: Transfer Seven FTEs from Administration to Residential Division [Administration]	(800,852)	(7.00)
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY20 Personnel Costs	(885,283)	0.00
FY21 APPROVED	40,699,250	245.90

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY20 APPR Expenditures	FY20 APPR FTEs	FY21 APPR Expenditures	FY21 APPR FTEs
Administration	13,180,092	33.10	11,821,144	26.00
Commercial Building Construction	5,712,807	43.50	5,786,782	44.50
Fire Prevention and Code Compliance	4,526,549	33.00	4,560,544	33.00
Land Development	8,568,224	63.50	8,541,683	63.50
Residential Building Construction & Intake	5,285,023	40.90	5,582,490	46.90
Zoning and Site Plan Enforcement	4,616,092	32.00	4,406,607	32.00
Total	41,888,787	246.00	40,699,250	245.90

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CC APPROVED (\$000S)

Title	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
PERMITTING SERVICES						
EXPENDITURES						
FY21 Approved	40,699	40,699	40,699	40,699	40,699	40,699
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY21	0	(167)	(167)	(167)	(167)	(167)
Items recommended for one-time funding in FY21 will be eliminated from the base in the outyears.						

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CC APPROVED (\$000S)

Title	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26
IT Maintenance Costs	0	7	15	24	33	43
Represents additional maintenance costs for the system upgrades and post-warranty maintenance for servers, scanners, and printers.						
IT Replacement Plan	0	(100)	(160)	(160)	115	515
Key components of Permitting Service's technology replacement plan include: FY21 \$160,000 in Scanners, and FY22 \$60,000 in printers.						
Retiree Health Insurance Pre-funding	0	(39)	(91)	(89)	(96)	(20)
Wheaton Move Operating Budget Impact	0	(2,890)	(2,891)	(2,890)	(2,875)	(2,875)
OBIs for Wheaton move include elimination of rent payment at 255 Rockville Pike and maintenance and utility expenses at Wheaton Building.						
Subtotal Expenditures	40,699	37,510	37,405	37,417	37,709	38,195

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