
Permitting Services

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) is to protect the safety and welfare of County residents and businesses through the permitting and inspections process to ensure that the structures in which we live, work, congregate, and recreate are safe, secure and in compliance with zoning and building requirements. DPS contributes to the economic vitality of Montgomery County through the effective and efficient processing of land development and building construction permits and licenses.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

The total approved FY13 Operating Budget for the Department of Permitting Services is \$27,619,194, an increase of \$2,590,564 or 10.4 percent from the FY12 Approved Budget of \$25,028,630. Personnel Costs comprise 77.3 percent of the budget for 192 full-time positions and one part-time position for 197.60 FTEs. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 22.7 percent of the FY13 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***
- ❖ ***Healthy and Sustainable Neighborhoods***
- ❖ ***Safe Streets and Secure Neighborhoods***
- ❖ ***Strong and Vibrant Economy***
- ❖ ***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 FY12 estimates reflect funding based on the FY12 approved budget. The FY13 and FY14 figures are performance targets based on the FY13 approved budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY14.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND INITIATIVES

- ❖ ***DPS received a NACO Achievement Award for its “Permitting Services Case Management Program”.***
- ❖ ***DPS maintained maximum allowable delegation of sediment control inspections from Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and is working on changes to the Code to comply with new Maryland sediment control regulations and for the protection of street trees.***
- ❖ ***DPS improved its Insurance Services Office (ISO) Building Code Grading for residential property from the last assessment from 5 to 4. DPS maintained the rating of 4 for commercial and industrial property. The lower Building Code Grading has an indirect positive impact on insurance rates for residents and businesses.***
- ❖ ***DPS developed a quality control program and technical training programs through new field supervision. DPS is also initiating a final inspection protocol to ensure completion and close out of permits.***
- ❖ ***DPS will upgrade to Hansen 8 for improved permit tracking and initial steps towards e-permitting.***
- ❖ ***DPS launched a redesigned website.***
- ❖ ***DPS will develop short-term and long-term strategies for electronic receipt, processing and storage of permit applications and approved plans which will result in reduced costs to the Department and permit review and***

issuance efficiencies.

❖ *In conjunction with the Planning Board and other agencies, DPS will analyze the development process and initiate changes for streamlining the entitlements and inspections processes. DPS will also work to improve permit requirements and coverage to more effectively address one-time events taking place in established communities.*

❖ **Productivity Improvements**

- *In cooperation with MCFRS, the inspection of new construction Fire Protection Systems was transferred to DPS. This ensures the entire permit process is now housed in one department with inspection scheduling times reduced from two weeks to 24 hours.*
- *To improve efficiencies at permit counters and provide enhanced services, DPS is in the process of defining hours for "heavy users" (applicants with multiple permit packages) and will be establishing defined "pick up" times for permit issuance.*
- *Improved the enterprise fund cash flow through new executive regulations to allow collection of 30% of DPS fees at time of permit application, and began collecting fees from all utility companies for permits for construction within public rights of way as allowed under the law.*
- *Integration of environmental site design and stormwater management in the public right-of-way in collaboration with the Planning Board, DOT, DEP, and other agencies.*

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 land and water resources and for the protection of the environment and the safety of residents and businesses 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, and work in the public right-of-way.

FY13 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY12 Approved	6,810,950	57.30
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs. Other large variances are related to the transition from the previous mainframe budgeting system to Hyperion.	420,848	5.20
FY13 Approved	7,231,798	62.50

Customer Service

The Customer Service program ensures customer service and satisfaction. This division measures customer satisfaction through communication and public outreach. Customer service receives complaints, processes information requests, responds to departmental correspondence, maintains the DPS web site, publishes the DPS newsletter, and coordinates outreach events and seminars for residents, civic organizations and professionals. Customer Service assists applicants with intake and issuance of permits and facilitates the processing of permits for "green tape" projects (i.e., affordable housing and areas such as the Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Long Branch enterprise zones). This division develops customer service surveys for the department, analyzes the results, reports findings, and recommends a course of action for improvement.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY10	Actual FY11	Estimated FY12	Target FY13	Target FY14
Response time on complaint investigations - Average number of days from the complaint being filed to first contact between a Permitting Inspector and the customer	3.4	5.0	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	6.3	14.0	13.0	13.0	13.0
Percent of complaints that are resolved on the first inspection	83.6	80.0	80.0	80.0	80.0

FY13 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY12 Approved	945,010	12.10
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs. Other large variances are related to the transition from the previous mainframe budgeting system to Hyperion.	68,802	-1.10
FY13 Approved	1,013,812	11.00

Building Construction

The Building Construction program ensures public safety and welfare through the effective enforcement of construction, zoning codes and standards, and site plan requirements. This division reviews engineering plans for permit issuance and conducts construction inspections in the administration and enforcement of building, structural, electrical, mechanical, fire-safety, energy conservation, green building, and accessibility codes and standards. This division assists businesses and applicants through pre-submission meetings and guidance. County zoning standards are maintained by this division through review of building applications for zoning compliance and investigation of zoning complaints. The program is also responsible for conducting county-wide damage assessments during natural and other disasters and incidents and provides assistance in disaster recovery efforts.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY10	Actual FY11	Estimated FY12	Target FY13	Target FY14
Average number of days to issue a permit - New construction: Commercial permits	177.0	160.0	163.0	163.0	163.0
Average number of days to issue a permit - New construction: Residential permits	138.3	110.0	90.0	90.0	90.0
Average number of days to issue a permit - Additions: Commercial permits	117.8	78.0	73.0	73.0	73.0
Average number of days to issue a permit - Additions: Residential permits	22.0	21.0	16.0	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	137.0	140.0	160.0	160.0	160.0
Median number of minutes to issue a permit - Residential permits using the Department of Permitting Services' Fast Track process	53.0	60.0	58.0	58.0	58.0
Percent of building permits issued that received a final inspection: Commercial permits	34.8	38.0	50.0	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	57.2	77.0	74.0	74.0	74.0
Percent of building permits issued that received a final inspection: Residential new construction	42.9	85.0	83.0	83.0	83.0
Percent of building permits issued that received a final inspection: Residential all construction	47.5	70.0	63.0	63.0	63.0

FY13 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY12 Approved	10,861,060	93.90
Add: Fire Code Inspections	546,360	6.00
Enhance: Add two Plan Reviewers and two Inspectors to the Building Construction Division	273,676	4.00
Increase Cost: Adjustment to Overtime to Better Reflect Actual Expenditures - increased cost is funded by the overtime offset fee	204,500	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. Other large variances are related to the transition from the previous mainframe budgeting system to Hyperion.	701,796	8.10
FY13 Approved	12,587,392	112.00

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.

FY13 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY12 Approved	6,411,610	14.50
Add: IT Strategic Plan for Electronic Plan Filing and Review	200,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Increase IT Funding for Hardware, Software, Supplies, and Training	100,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Rent adjustment	71,560	0.00
Increase Cost: Replacement of Scanners - cost reflects annual payment of five year financing plan	31,500	0.00
Decrease Cost: IT Maintenance Costs	-11,700	0.00

	Expenditures	FTEs
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs. Other large variances are related to the transition from the previous mainframe budgeting system to Hyperion.	-16,778	-2.40
FY13 Approved	6,786,192	12.10

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY11	Budget FY12	Estimated FY12	Approved FY13	% Chg Bud/App
PERMITTING SERVICES					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	14,801,220	14,271,570	13,884,167	15,432,309	8.1%
Employee Benefits	5,295,209	4,847,140	4,972,594	5,914,325	22.0%
Permitting Services Personnel Costs	20,096,429	19,118,710	18,856,761	21,346,634	11.7%
Operating Expenses	5,062,890	5,909,920	5,884,733	6,272,560	6.1%
Debt Service Other	12,256	0	0	0	—
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0	—
Permitting Services Expenditures	25,171,575	25,028,630	24,741,494	27,619,194	10.4%
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	182	182	182	192	5.5%
Part-Time	1	1	1	1	—
FTEs	173.00	177.80	177.80	197.60	11.1%
REVENUES					
Automation Enhancement Fee	2,656,161	2,742,810	3,380,520	2,864,710	4.4%
Building Permits	13,599,237	15,950,310	17,143,420	14,343,500	-10.1%
Electrical Permits and Licenses	2,666,404	2,699,190	3,124,760	2,726,170	1.0%
Fire Code Enforcement Permits	723,579	783,930	650,500	1,529,410	95.1%
Grading/Storm Drains/Paving/Driveway Permits	4,356,597	4,732,410	4,340,040	4,737,000	0.1%
Investment Income	4,986	4,530	4,420	4,520	-0.2%
Mechanical Construction Permit	710,356	744,230	744,230	751,670	1.0%
Miscellaneous Revenues	2,623	0	0	0	—
Occupancy Permits	361,999	346,260	429,060	555,760	60.5%
Sediment Control Permits	2,037,230	3,071,580	2,330,400	2,569,000	-16.4%
Sign Permits	175,783	194,560	227,290	196,510	1.0%
Special Exception Fee	227,065	229,710	229,710	232,010	1.0%
Stormwater Mgmt and Water Quality Plan Fee	404,897	454,920	301,760	518,260	13.9%
Well and Septic	281,091	308,860	224,480	293,870	-4.9%
Other Charges/Fees	58,445	71,390	53,200	72,100	1.0%
Other Fines/Forfeitures	64,193	85,410	65,030	87,270	2.2%
Other Licenses/Permits	1,057,627	673,010	691,640	639,030	-5.0%
Permitting Services Revenues	29,388,273	33,093,110	33,940,460	32,120,790	-2.9%

FY13 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
PERMITTING SERVICES		
FY12 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	25,028,630	177.80
<u>Changes (with service impacts)</u>		
Add: Fire Code Inspections [Building Construction]	546,360	6.00
Enhance: Add two Plan Reviewers and two Inspectors to the Building Construction Division [Building Construction]	273,676	4.00
Add: IT Strategic Plan for Electronic Plan Filing and Review [Administration]	200,000	0.00
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: Retirement Adjustment	530,199	0.00
Increase Cost: Lump Sum Wage Adjustment	367,847	0.00
Increase Cost: Group Insurance Adjustment	334,561	0.00
Increase Cost: Adjustment to Overtime to Better Reflect Actual Expenditures - increased cost is funded by the overtime offset fee [Building Construction]	204,500	0.00
Increase Cost: Increase IT Funding for Hardware, Software, Supplies, and Training [Administration]	100,000	0.00
Increase Cost: Rent adjustment [Administration]	71,560	0.00
Increase Cost: Replacement of Scanners - cost reflects annual payment of five year financing plan [Administration]	31,500	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Rate Adjustment	31,430	0.00
Increase Cost: Risk Management Adjustment	9,180	0.00
Increase Cost: Longevity Adjustment	7,561	0.00
Technical Adj: Conversion of WYs to FTEs in the New Hyperion Budgeting System; FTEs are No Longer Measured for Overtime and Lapse	0	9.84
Technical Adj: Decrease FTEs Due to Rounding	0	-0.03
Decrease Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment	-1,670	0.00
Shift: Help Desk - Desk Side Support to the Desktop Computer Modernization NDA	-6,670	0.00
Shift: Remove Occupational Medical Services Chargeback from OHR	-7,440	-0.01
Decrease Cost: IT Maintenance Costs [Administration]	-11,700	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retiree Health Insurance Pre-Funding	-90,330	0.00
FY13 APPROVED:	27,619,194	197.60

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY12 Approved		FY13 Approved	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
Land Development	6,810,950	57.30	7,231,798	62.50
Customer Service	945,010	12.10	1,013,812	11.00
Building Construction	10,861,060	93.90	12,587,392	112.00
Administration	6,411,610	14.50	6,786,192	12.10
Total	25,028,630	177.80	27,619,194	197.60

ANNUALIZATION OF PERSONNEL COSTS AND FTES

	FY13 Approved		FY14 Annualized	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
Enhance: Add two Plan Reviewers and two Inspectors to the Building Construction Division [Building Construction]	264,116	4.00	337,346	4.00
Total	264,116	4.00	337,346	4.00

