



## Major Drainage and Regional Detention Projects Overview and Review Procedures

The following information provides General Information and a summary of the Review Procedures to obtain a major drainage and regional detention site plan permit within the City of Austin jurisdiction (full-purpose and limited-purpose city limits, and extraterritorial jurisdiction ETJ).

### General Information

#### What Is a Site Plan?

Section 25-5-1 of the City of Austin Land Development Code (LDC) requires that a site plan be submitted, approved, and released before an applicant can develop or change the use of their property, or a building permit can be issued. A site plan includes infrastructure necessary for the construction of the drainage improvements, but not limited to: detention and water quality, environmental controls and protection of important environmental features. Existing conditions typically included in site plans are topography, watercourses, floodplains, significant vegetation, other environmental features, and any existing improvements on the site. Within this framework, a site plan illustrates the proposed development and provides details on features such as access, utilities, landscaping, buffers, and location of new structures.

#### What a Site Plan Is Not

A site plan is not a building permit and does not authorize the construction, demolition, or relocation of buildings. The applicant is responsible for requesting building, demolition, and relocation permits once the site plan is approved.

#### When Is a Project Exempt from the Site Plan Process?

Section 25-5-2 of the City Code specifies when a project can be exempt from site plan submittal. Generally, certain types of minor development that do not have a site plan already on file do not require formal site plan review. This includes construction of single-family and most duplex residences, and other types of development that increase impervious cover by 1,000 square feet or less, and have limits of construction of 3,000 square feet or less. This development must meet the requirements of Section 25-5-2, Site Plan Exemptions. A Site Development Determination form (formerly called an Exemption) should be completed and filed with the Development Assistance Center in order to request an exemption.

#### Who Approves Site Plan Permits?

##### Administrative Approval

If review by the Land Use Commission is not required, the Director of Development Services Department may approve the site plan administratively. If additional variances are required beyond those identified and approved during the site plan process, additional approvals may be required by other boards, commissions, and city council.

- The **Construction Element** includes detailed information on the construction aspects of the site design (such as grading, detention, filtration, erosion/sedimentation controls, landscaping, and tree protection) and demonstrates compliance with drainage, water quality, and environmental regulations

### **Ethics and Financial Disclosure Information**

If you or your agent/representative were City of Austin employees or officials within the past 24 months, you may be subject to the Ethics and Financial Disclosure Ordinance (8607 17-X). Copies of the ordinance are available at the City Clerk's Office.

## **Major Drainage and Regional Detention Site Plan Review Procedures**

The procedures for review and approval of site plans are based on Volume III, Chapter 25 of the City of Austin Land Development Code (LDC). The process is summarized below:

### **Step 1: Development Assessment (Optional)**

A person may request an assessment of a proposed development *prior* to formal submittal by contacting the Development Assistance Center (DAC). The assessment is based on the information provided by the applicant at the time that an assessment is requested. An assessment of the project includes applicable code requirements pertaining to the site and identification of major development issues. A Development Assessment Application (see <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/land-use-applications#site>) can be submitted any work day with an appointment to the Intake Office.

#### Contact:

City of Austin  
Development Assistance Center  
505 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, Texas 78704  
Phone: (512) 978-4000

### **Step 2: Completeness Check**

In order to submit a site plan for review, an application for Completeness Check must be submitted to the **Intake** staff. No appointment is necessary. Intake reviews the application and pertinent information to determine if all required administrative items have been submitted. Intake then forwards it to the completeness check team, which determines whether the technical items needed for review have been submitted.

An application for completeness check must include:

- Site Plan Application
- Site Plan Review - Completeness Check fee (check, cash, money order, or credit card): see <http://www.austintexas.gov/department/fees>
- 2 copies of Site Plan sealed by professional engineer and/or Landscape Architect, as required by state licensing regulations (associated engineer's drainage reports and environmental site assessment, when applicable)
- All Items listed on the completeness checklist, located in the Intake Office and available online at <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/land-use-applications#site>

The completeness check review takes a maximum of 10 business days from the date of submittal. The applicant will be notified via email or fax whether the application is approved or additional information is required for submittal. When the application is approved, the plans can be formally

submitted for a detailed review. **The application must be submitted formally within 45 calendar days of the initial completeness check or it will expire and a new completeness check will be required.**

Contact:

City of Austin  
Land Use Review – Intake Section  
505 Barton Springs Road  
Austin, Texas 78704  
Phone: (512) 978-4000

### **Step 3: Formal Submittal Review Process**

The next step is to submit the Major Drainage and Regional Detention Projects Application to Intake to start the review process. Electronic copies of the application are available online at <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/land-use-applications#site>.

Applications may be submitted to Intake Monday through Friday. **An appointment is necessary.** Please contact Intake at the number listed above to schedule an appointment. For submittal the applicant will need to provide additional copies of plans and engineering reports, along with the remaining balance of the fee (number of plans and fee will be listed on the completeness check response).

**Electronic submittal of CADD files and other documents is also required** for the initial submittal and every update, as described in Exhibit VII (Major Drainage and Regional Detention Projects Application Instructions). A final version of the plans and reports incorporating all changes made during the review process must be submitted electronically prior to release of the site plan.

A Case Manager with the Land Use Review Division is assigned to coordinate interdisciplinary reviews and provide guidance on code requirements and procedures. A review team is also assigned to the project. The team reviews the plans and prepares a Master Comment Report that contains specific areas of non-compliance. The initial review of the plans by the team can take up to 28 days from the date that the plans were formally submitted. If the site plan complies with the provisions of the code and other applicable state and federal regulations, and Commission approval is not required, the site plan will be approved administratively. The Master Comment Report can be viewed on the City of Austin website at <http://www.austintexas.gov/page/interactive-development-review-permitting-and-inspection>.

### **Step 4: Update**

If it is determined that the site plan does not comply, the applicant must file an update in order to bring it into compliance. **Contact Intake staff to schedule an appointment and submit the updated plans.** Staff reviews the updates within 14 days of receipt, and the Case Manager will issue additional Master Reports identifying remaining items to be addressed. Updates will be required until the site plan is in compliance or the site plan expires.

Updates to the plan must be filed by the applicant within 180 days after the site plan has been filed. An applicant can request an extension to the 180-day update period if the request is made prior to the 180-day deadline. The request must be made in writing and the reason for the extension should be specified. Extensions may be granted for good cause at the Director's discretion for up to 180 days. All comments must be cleared prior to the expiration date, or the application will expire and a new application must be submitted.

## **Step 5: Site Plan Approval and Release**

Once all code requirements have been met, the Case Manager will notify the applicant that the site plan can be approved administratively or scheduled for Land Use Commission approval if necessary. If Commission approval is necessary, the Case Manager will inform you of the date and time of the public hearing. Commission-approved site plans may be appealed by the applicant or an interested party to the City Council. An appeal must be filed within 14 days of the Commission's action. If the plan is appealed, you will be notified of the date and time of the public hearing before the City Council.

Prior to site plan approval all fees must be paid. Additional fees may include but are not limited to: Landscape Inspection, Parkland Dedication, Variance, Notification, Phasing Fee, and Fiscal Surety. The Case Manager will inform you of any required fees prior to preparing the Site Development Permit.

Prior to release of the site plan, a reproducible full-size copy of the plans must be provided that will be signed by the Case Manager. A final version of the plans and reports incorporating all changes made during the review process must be submitted electronically prior to the release of the site plan, as described in Exhibit VIII (see Streets and Drainage Site Plan Application Instructions). A Site Development Permit will also be prepared to authorize site work on the property, except for work that requires a building, demolition, or relocation permit.

Once all fees have been paid, plans have been copied, and the appeal period has passed, you will be advised that the site plan has been released and will be told when you can pick up the approved plans and permit.