



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PERMITS

Questions? Call Customer Service at 517-676-9155 or email info@mason.mi.us Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Always call before you dig! Contact MISS DIG at least three (3) business days prior to excavating on your property. Visit www.missdig.org or call 811 or 1-800-482-7171.

This document was last revised on April 30, 2020. Updates are made periodically throughout the year as necessary to meet Customer requests for information.

Project Type*	Description	Permit Required
*Any project in the Downtown Historic District may require Historic District Approval in addition to any type of permit required.		
Addition to an existing structure	A building permit is required for any alteration to an existing structure regardless of size. Additional zoning requirements may apply.	Building Permit
Asbestos removal	A permit from the State of Michigan EGLE is required for projects involving asbestos. If the alteration of a structure or demolition is involved, a building permit from the City is also required.	State of Michigan EGLE, building permit
Attic remodel	A building permit is required for any alteration to an existing structure. If a project involves creating habitable space in an attic, an egress window or stairway with door may be required. If you are converting the space into an apartment, additional zoning requirements may apply.	Building Permit, possibly a Zoning Permit for apartment use
Basement remodel	A building permit is required for any alteration to an existing structure. If a project involves creating habitable space in a basement, an egress window or stairway with door will be required. If you are converting the space into an apartment, additional zoning requirements may apply.	Building Permit, possibly a Zoning Permit for apartment use
Blocking the street or sidewalk for any reason	When a project requires the closure or use of a sidewalk or traffic lane for the purpose of excavation related to construction or repair, or for staging construction equipment or materials, a Right of Way Permit is required. A Water/Sewer Permit is required for connection to City utilities.	Right of Way Permit
Change of Occupancy or Use, new tenants in existing space	A building permit for a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) is required to verify that any change to the occupancy or use of a structure is consistent with state and local construction codes and zoning ordinances. Even if there are no structural alterations, the new occupants, use or arrangement of the interior must demonstrate compliance with current construction codes, fire safety, and zoning ordinances. If the change involves an alteration to the structure that requires a building permit, the requirement for a CO will be satisfied through that application and does not require a separate building permit for a CO.	Building Permit - Certificate of Occupancy (CO)
Commercial property	Please contact contact Customer Service to speak with Community Development regarding any type of project on commercial property. Changes to the site, parking areas, and/or structures may require additional zoning approvals.	Zoning Permit, building permit may be required
Deck	If a door opens onto a porch or deck, it is considered a landing for egress. A building permit is required regardless of size whether attached or detached. Note: Detached structures are required to be 10 feet from any other structure (zoning).	Building Permit
Demolition	A building permit is required for the alteration of any structure. This includes the demolition of all or a portion of a structure, interior demolition only. You may need a permit from the State of Michigan EGLE if asbestos is present.	Building Permit; Permit from Michigan EGLE if asbestos is present
Doors - alteration of opening	A permit is needed if the doorway frame is altered to be wider or taller.	Building Permit
Doors - replacement of door only	A permit is not needed for new door installation or replacement of the door only when there is no structural change.	None
Drainage	Water collected on a property, gutters, and sump pumps must be directed to an appropriate storm water management utility. Contact us for more information.	
Driveways - Residential	Alterations to a driveway can trigger the need for permits. Contact Customer Service for more information.	Zoning, Grading, Right of way, or Soil Erosion permits may be required. Contact Community Development.
Drywall	A building permit is required for the alteration of any structure. This includes new interior walls such as remodeling projects. A permit is not required for minor repairs to existing drywall.	Building Permit
Eavetrough/Gutters	If you are only replacing eavetroughs/gutters and doing no other work (ex. soffits) a permit is not needed. Please note that water collected by an eavetrough or gutter must be directed to an approved storm water facility such as the City storm water collection system, an approved drainage easement or detention area.	None
Egress window	If you are creating living space in basement with no escape window you will need to install an egress window or door for which a building permit is required.	Building Permit
Electrical	Contact State of Michigan LARA	Contact State of Michigan LARA
Fascia - the vertical band under a roof edge, or which forms the outer surface of a cornice	A building permit is not required for fascia work. However, if the project is located in the Downtown Historic District, Historic District Commission approval may be required. Contact Customer Service for more information.	No Building Permit required. May require Historic District Commission approval.
Fence	A permit is needed when a fence will be higher than 7 feet. In a front yard, the fence can be no higher than 3 feet. On a corner lot, nothing can interfere with the traffic visibility across the triangular area of the lot formed by the intersection of two public or private streets and can be no higher than 3 feet. Any constructed fence or retaining wall must not obstruct the natural flow of water especially in a legal drainage easement. A fence is required around any pool that holds water at a depth greater than 24".	Building Permit if over 7'; Soil Erosion Permit or Waiver from Ingham County Drain Commission; Homeowners Association approval may be required
Garage/carport	A permit is needed if the structure is over 200 sq. ft. for residential or 120 sq. ft. for commercial. All sizes must meet zoning requirements - be aware of setback/height/lot requirements for zoning.	Building Permit
Gutters	See Eavetrough above.	
Home business	Home businesses must meet state and local construction codes as well as zoning and signage requirements. Even if you are not making any structural changes, the type of use may still be subject to certain requirements. At a minimum, a building permit for a Certificate of Occupancy (general inspection) may be required. Contact Customer Service for more information.	Building Permit may be required
Landscaping - Residential	Changing the topography of the ground in a manner that alters the flow of water may require a Grading Permit from the City, and a Soil Erosion Permit or Waiver from the Ingham County Drain Commission. If the project involves wetlands, a permit from the State of Michigan EGLE may also be required. Plantings on private property must not obstruct vision at the intersection between the driveway and sidewalk, plantings on public property in the Right of Way may require additional permits. Contact Customer Service to speak with Community Development.	Grading Permit/Site Plan Review (Zoning Permit)
Historic District Building	Exterior changes to a building within the Downtown Historic District including but not limited to murals/paint, roof/siding, doors, windows, painting, lights, and signs may require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic District Commission. building permits are required for project types as listed herein.	Certificate of Appropriateness from HDC; Building Permit for roof, siding, windows, doors, signs; State permits for electrical, mechanical, plumbing
Insulation	The following types of insulation projects require a permit: blown in, for siding, interior, and attic/roof. A State of Michigan EGLE Permit may be required if asbestos is present.	Building Permit; Permit from Michigan EGLE if asbestos is present



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PERMITS

Questions? Call Customer Service at 517-676-9155 or email info@mason.mi.us Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Always call before you dig! Contact MISS DIG at least three (3) business days prior to excavating on your property. Visit www.missdig.org or call 811 or 1-800-482-7171.

This document was last revised on April 30, 2020. Updates are made periodically throughout the year as necessary to meet Customer requests for information.

Project Type*	Description	Permit Required
*Any project in the Downtown Historic District may require Historic District Approval in addition to any type of permit required.		
Interior remodeling - Residential	Any type of alteration to a structure requires a building permit. This includes projects involving the demolition or building of walls, remodeling kitchens, bathrooms, basements, attics, etc. Projects may also require plumbing, mechanical, and/or electrical permits from the State of Michigan. A permit is not needed for carpet and flooring replacement, painting, or basic kitchen cabinet or counter top installation.	Building Permit unless cosmetic (paint, carpet, or cabinets.) State Permits if necessary (plumbing, mechanical and electrical).
Interior remodeling - Commercial	Any type of alteration to a structure requires a building permit. This includes projects involving the demolition or building of walls, remodeling kitchens, bathrooms, storage areas, or making a major change to store shelving, layout, etc. Projects may also require plumbing, mechanical, and/or electrical permits from the State of Michigan. A permit is not needed for carpet and flooring replacement, painting, or basic cabinet installation. For restaurants adding seating, additional zoning permit requirements may apply.	Building Permit unless cosmetic (paint, carpet, or cabinets.) State Permits if necessary (plumbing, mechanical and electrical).
Mechanical - HVAC	Contact State of Michigan LARA	Contact State of Michigan LARA
Minor repairs	The need for a permit depends on how detailed and/or large the repair is. You generally do not need a permit for minor repairs, but if you are not sure, contact Community Development for more information.	Building Permit may be required
Mobile home installation	A building permit is required for the installation of concrete piers, and for the placement of a new mobile home on new or existing concrete piers.	Building Permit
New residential home	A building permit is required for all structures; Water/Sewer Permit required for connection to City utilities; Right of Way (ROW) Permit required for curb cuts or obstruction of the sidewalk or roadway for construction equipment staging. A soil erosion permit or waiver is required from the Ingham County Drain Commission.	Building Permit, ROW Permit, Soil Erosion Permit (County)
Outdoor retail area - Commercial	Zoning permit is required. If the project involves a new, or alteration to an existing, structure, a building permit may be required. Contact Community Development for more information.	Zoning Permit, Building Permit may be required
Parking - Residential	A building permit is not required for parking areas but must meet local zoning requirements and may require a Right of Way (ROW) Permit. Contact us for more information.	ROW Permit may be required
Parking - Commercial	A building permit is not required for parking areas but must meet local zoning requirements for size and arrangement, and may require a Right of Way (ROW) Permit. Contact us for more information.	Zoning and ROW Permits may be required.
Plumbing	Contact State of Michigan LARA	Contact State of Michigan LARA
Pool	Any pool capable of holding 24 vertical inches or more of water requires a permit. This includes inflatable or PVC style pools. The pool must be enclosed by a fence.	Building Permit
Porch	If a door opens onto a porch or deck, it is considered a landing for egress. A building permit is required regardless of size whether attached or detached. Note: Detached structures are required to be 10 feet from any other structure (zoning).	Building Permit
Retaining walls	A grading permit/site plan review (Zoning Permit) may be required for projects that alter the flow of water on a property. A Soil Erosion Permit or Waiver from Ingham County Drain Commission may be required.	Building Permit if over 4 feet; SESC Permit may be required
Roof - covering	A building permit is required if a project involves tearing off the existing material and reroofing, or covering over the existing roof material.	Building Permit
Roof - structural	A building permit is needed for truss work and structural modifications of a roof.	Building Permit
Roof - minor repairs	Minor repairs on a roof such as sealing around a vent that is leaking, removing and replacing small areas of shingles, do not usually require a permit. If the work approaches 20% of the area of the roof, a building permit will be required. Call Community Development for additional information.	Building Permit
Sheds	A building permit is required if over 200 sq. ft. for residential or 120 sq. ft. for commercial. All sizes must meet zoning requirements for set-backs, height and lot coverage.	Building Permit
Sidewalk/curb repair	When a project requires the closure or use of a sidewalk or traffic lane for the purpose of excavation related to construction or repair, or for staging construction equipment or materials, a Right of Way Permit is required. A Water/Sewer Permit is required for connection to City utilities.	Right of Way Permit
Siding	A building permit is required when a project involves new or re-siding a structure, adding insulation, new soffit work, new fascia, and asbestos abatement. Minor repairs to any of the items listed do not require a permit.	Building Permit; Permit from Michigan EGLE if asbestos is present
Sign	A building permit is required for any permanent sign including monument, pole, roof, wall or window.	Building Permit
Sign - temporary on sidewalk	Signs placed on a public sidewalk require filing an indemnity form with the City. Signs may not obstruct access nor interfere with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).	Indemnity Form - contact Community Development
Soil Erosion	Contact Ingham County Drain Commission	Contact Ingham County Drain Commission
Soffits	A building permit is required for a project with new soffit work. Minor repairs to existing soffits do not require a permit	Building Permit
Stairs/Ramps - Interior	A building permit is required for new, or alterations to existing, stairs or ramps. Minor repairs, such as replacing a single board, do not require a permit.	Building Permit
Stairs/Ramps - Exterior	A building permit is required for new, or alterations to existing, stairs or ramps. Minor repairs, such as replacing a single board, do not require a permit.	Building Permit
Temporary rentals (Air BNB, Rooming House, etc)	Temporary rentals in buildings that are not owner-occupied are only permitted in the C1 Zoning District with a Special Use Zoning Permit. Some residential districts do allow temporary rentals in homes that are owner-occupied with a Special Use Zoning Permit. Contact Customer Service for more information.	Zoning Permit
Utility work being done on private or public property	Installing or repairing any utility (water or sewer) that connects to the City of Mason utilities will require a Water/Sewer Permit and/or a Right of Way permit.	Water/Sewer and/or Right of Way Permit
Windows - alteration to opening	A permit is needed if the window opening is altered to be wider or taller.	Building Permit
Windows - replacement only	A permit is not needed for new window installation or replacement of the window only when there is no structural change.	None