



# Commercial Building Permit Guidelines

Your guide through the permitting process

## The City of Kent wants to help you and your business succeed!

We've developed this easy-to-follow brochure to help guide you through the permitting process.

### Do you need a permit?

Most likely, yes. Whenever you construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, remove, improve, convert, or demolish a building or other structure, almost all this work requires a permit.

But first, find the right location. Is your business activity allowed there?

Before signing a lease, thoroughly investigate your options to ensure a space is suitable for your business.

- If you haven't found a space, explore **CommercialMLS.com** for commercial properties available for sale or rent, or consult a qualified real estate broker to help identify available locations.
- Before starting the permit process, Permit Center staff will help determine if your proposed location allows your planned business activity.

Questions about proposed business locations, codes and development regulations can be answered on a walk-in basis, or via phone or email.

### City of Kent Permit Center

Centennial Building  
400 W. Gowe St.  
Kent, WA 98032

 **253-856-5300**

 **PermitCenter@KentWA.gov**

Monday - Friday  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.





# Why do I need a Building Permit at all?

Building permits are written authorizations issued by the City to construct a project. They are required for most construction or remodeling projects to ensure the safety of the work and its compliance with construction and zoning codes.

You need a building permit for most construction, alteration or repair work, such as:

- New construction
- Additions or alternations to existing buildings
- Temporary use and special events
- Changing a building's occupancy or structure
- Demolishing a building, including the foundation
- Adding, repairing, or removing any electrical\*, gas, mechanical or plumbing system
- Signs
- Revisions to an existing permit

To see projects that don't require a permit, visit [KentWA.gov/PermitCenter](http://KentWA.gov/PermitCenter) and click the "Do I Need a Permit" button.

*\*Electrical permits and inspections are overseen by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. For details, see: [LNI.WA.gov/licensing-permits/electrical/electrical-permits-fees-and-inspections/](http://LNI.WA.gov/licensing-permits/electrical/electrical-permits-fees-and-inspections/)*



## Step One – Schedule an Intake Appointment

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All new permit applications need an intake appointment and formal review. Schedule yours online at [KentWA.gov/PermitCenter](https://kentwa.gov/PermitCenter). Be sure to have the site address or parcel number available to complete your appointment request.

You will receive a OneDrive link via email for uploading your permit documents.

Kent's permitting process is paperless; all permits are processed electronically.

## Step Two – Gather your Application Materials for your Intake Appointment

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It's now time to prepare and submit your permit application and construction documents.

- Hire a registered design professional (architect and/or engineer) to prepare construction documents
- Choose the appropriate application to complete. Each type includes an application checklist. Please carefully follow the checklist for faster processing, then upload your documents through the OneDrive link.
- Pay Intake Fees: These fees are billed at the conclusion of your successful intake appointment. Payment is required before permit review can start. Fees must be paid within 15 days, or the application will be canceled.

### ***Do you need to hire a professional? Ask us!***

***The City is committed to explaining the process as clearly as possible, however, it can be complex, even for those experienced with it. Depending on the size and type of your project, you may need the services of a licensed professional. In fact, State law may require that a portion or your entire project be prepared by a licensed architect or engineer.***

### **The Review Process: What happens next?**

After your application is submitted, we will review your plans. Depending on the nature of your project, the review could involve several departments. The review will determine compliance with federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to building, plumbing, mechanical, energy conservation, disabled access compliance, fire safety, drainage, flood safety, parking requirements, signage, zoning regulations, etc.

### **Obtaining a Permit: How long will it take?**

The City reviews applications on a first-come, first-served basis. We are committed to processing your application and plans as quickly and efficiently as possible. Most applications are reviewed six to eight weeks after your initial document submission.

### **What if there are corrections, clarifications, or changes?**

Sometimes, your plans cannot be approved as submitted. If this happens, we'll email you a list of necessary corrections to approve your project.



## Step Three – Get Your Permit

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Upon receiving all approvals for your commercial project, construction permits will be issued to you via email when all applicable fees are paid.

- **Pay Issuance Fees:** When permit review is complete, you'll receive a new invoice with the remaining balance due. All fees must be paid before your permit is issued.

### **Payment Options:**

#### **Via Check**

Please include your invoice number and mail to:  
City of Kent Customer Service  
220 Fourth Ave. S, Kent WA, 98032

#### **Check Drop Off in Our Utility Payment Box**

Located at the south end of the parking between City Hall and the Centennial Center, 400 W. Gowe St.

#### **Visa/MasterCard by Phone**

Call 253-856-5201 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., Monday – Friday. Have your permit IVR number, located in the upper right-hand corner of the invoice.

Please note:

- ◆ A 2.65% processing fee will be added to all credit and debit card transactions
- ◆ Maximum payment amount is \$99,999

#### **Pay In-Person**

Customer Service Finance Counter, located on the first floor of the Centennial Center, at: 400 W Gowe St., Kent

- ◆ Monday – Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Permits will still be issued electronically via email.*

## **Construction can begin!**

Hire a contractor with a valid Washington State business license, and a City of Kent business license. Kent business licenses can be obtained at **FileLocal-WA.gov**

Your permit and associated approved documents will be emailed when we confirm that:

- The permit fees are paid
- The contractor's license is valid



## Step Four – Schedule an Inspection

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Inspections are for construction work permitted by the City of Kent. Schedule yours by calling our Inspection Line at **253-856-5427**. When you call, you'll need:

- The IVR number, listed on the top right-hand corner of the permit.
- The four-digit inspection code. Please review the job card included with your issued permit for inspection codes.

Please stay on the line until you receive a confirmation number. This ensures that your inspection is recorded in our system.

## Step Five – Request a Certificate of Occupancy

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A Certificate of Occupancy is issued to identify that a building (or portion thereof) has been inspected by the building official for the intended use and no code violations have been found. A Certificate of Occupancy is required only for new construction or change of use projects.

- After inspection, you'll receive a list of outstanding items to be completed, if any. Or receive an inspection sign-off for that stage of construction work.
- An inspector will address any questions, assist with project resolution, and help coordinate inspection requests if necessary.
- Request approval for use and occupancy of the building (Certificate of Occupancy) when inspection approvals for all construction work are received and outstanding fees are paid.



Upon receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy, apply for a local business license by completing the necessary forms and paying the business license fees. All businesses operating in Kent are required to obtain a City Business License. Get yours at **FileLocal-WA.gov**.

### ***Why is the permit process so complex?***

The process of issuing a building permit is complex because it involves many City departments and outside agencies. The City is required by law to enforce numerous Federal, State and Local construction and development regulations to ensure your business location is safe and an asset to the community.

### ***What if I skip getting a permit?***

If you are working with a contractor who suggests skipping this step, consider finding a different contractor.

***As cumbersome as the process can be, proceeding without a permit can significantly increase the costs and timeframe to open your business. It is not worth the risk.***



# We're here to help

At each step in the process, staff is available to answer your questions about opening your business.

Permit Center ..... 253-856-5300  
*Monday - Friday*  
*9 a.m. to 4 p.m.*  
**PermitCenter@KentWA.gov**

Site Selection Assistance ..... 253-856-5707

Business Licensing ..... 253-856-5200

**[KentWA.gov/PermitCenter](http://KentWA.gov/PermitCenter)**

