



Permitting Services

APPROVED FY25 BUDGET

\$45,659,555

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

252.03

 RABBIAH SABBAKHAN, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Permitting Services' (DPS) primary mission is to ensure the health, safety, sustainability and economic vitality of residents, businesses, communities and the built environment in Montgomery County. This is accomplished by accurate, consistent and timely review and issuance of submittal documents and permits and extensive outreach. DPS conducts prompt and thorough inspections for residential, commercial, land development, zoning and code compliance and responds to service requests and emergencies.

BUDGET OVERVIEW


The total approved FY25 Operating Budget for the Department of Permitting Services is \$45,659,555, an increase of \$3,996,659 or 9.59 percent from the FY24 Approved Budget of \$41,662,896. Personnel Costs comprise 80.64 percent of the budget for 244 full-time position(s) and no part-time position(s), and a total of 252.03 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 19.36 percent of the FY25 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

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

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

INITIATIVES

-  Two new positions will be responsible for developing data analytics, customer and internal facing tools, and assisting with code development. This requires in-depth knowledge and understanding of how the energy code, green code, and general DPS functions interact with the Climate Action Plan.

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- ★ Plan review staff will absorb responsibility for reviewing plans related to Streetlights, Signs and Markings and Mobile Cranes, historically reviewed by MCDOT. This change is in line with the "One Stop Shop" model and will eliminate conflicts with review comments and result in faster permit issuance. One reviewer will be responsible for the entire public right-of-way construction plan set.
 - ★ The Department of Permitting Services is working with the Department of Health and Human Services to streamline the restaurant plan review process. Two new Environmental Health Inspector positions, to be funded in the Permitting Fund, will be added to ensure timely completion of plan reviews and provide education and assistance through outreach to local restaurants.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- ★ Adoption of 2021 IBC, IECC, IEBC, IgCC, 2020 NEC and 2021 NFPA Codes (Building, Energy, Existing Building, Green Building, Electrical & Fire Codes), 2021 International Residential Code (IRC) and the 2020 National Electric Code (NEC).
- ★ Upgrade electronics plans submission system to improve system reliability, scalability, collaboration, security, and performance.
- ★ Adopted and implemented the Compliance Engine application to better protect county residents and businesses with enhanced, proactive fire prevention related to maintenance and testing compliance of fire protection systems in buildings.
- ★ Permitting Services' Podcast is an archive of topics featured on social media platforms that include news releases that raise awareness, feature subject-matter experts, and discuss a variety of topics that promote innovation and outreach within the community.
- ★ Reinstated the Residential Fast Track program with the goal of significantly shortening the issuance time (1 day) for small residential projects.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Barbara Suter of the Department of Permitting Services at 240.777.6244 or Justine Jones of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2627 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 FY24 estimates reflect funding based on the FY24 Approved Budget. The FY25 and FY26 figures are performance targets based on the FY25 Approved Budget and funding for comparable service levels in FY26.

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 Central Services Unit

The Administration program provides policy development and leadership for all programs within the Department.

The administrative staff are specialists 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.

Information Technology

DPS' Office of Information Technology (DPS-IT) leverages technology to deliver better services to the department that enables staff and the public to access their resources at their convenience anywhere at any time. The IT unit's mission is to provide a robust and secure IT infrastructure to support mission-critical applications, mobile computing, and desktop support employing industry best practices. The IT unit has embarked on an IT modernization project to enhance multimedia improvement by enabling Microsoft Teams telephony and conference rooms. The IT unit will incorporate teamwork and technology enhancement with TEBS to access their services and provide IT services to help DPS achieve its mission. IT services will include, but will not be limited to, IT desktop and server support, land use, and cloud application.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Percent of screenings passed with fewer than 2 returns to the customer	98%	98%	95%	95%	95%
Percent of inspections passed - all divisions	85%	84%	85%	85%	85%
Percent of customers satisfied with DPS services ¹	91%	75%	77%	77%	77%

¹ A new customer survey process was implemented in FY23, resulting in more customers receiving the survey and a much higher response rate.

FY25 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	10,758,484	25.13
Increase Cost: Increase in Utilities/Maintenance/Parking	260,664	0.00
Increase Cost: Increase IT Maintenance and Support	223,849	0.00
Increase Cost: Transfer Fiscal Assistant to Central Services Unit	209,826	2.00
Increase Cost: Operating Expenses for Wheaton Office Building	15,040	0.00
Decrease Cost: Eliminated One Term Imaging Operator	(74,928)	(1.00)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	198,821	0.00
FY25 Approved	11,591,756	26.13

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, accessibility, and sustainability construction codes and standards. As the "First Preventers," this is accomplished through plan review and construction site inspections to facilitate compliance with approved plans and regulations. This program processes applications for and issues building, mechanical, fire protection, and electrical permits. The program also handles construction complaints during natural and other disasters and assists in disaster recovery.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
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Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Number of permits receiving final approvals ¹	10,868	6,747	6,800	6,800	6,800
Commercial Permits - Percent of inspections completed on the scheduled day	98.2%	98.3%	98.0%	98.0%	98.0%
Percent of plans receiving a complete first review within 22 business days	89.5%	86.0%	90.0%	90.0%	90.0%

¹ The calculation method was revised in FY23, resulting in a lower number than the previous year.

FY25 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	7,416,598	52.00
Enhance: Provide Funding for Two Environmental Health Specialists in HHS to Expedite Restaurant Facility Plan Reviews	270,046	2.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	1,008,432	0.00
FY25 Approved	8,695,076	54.00

☀ Customer Support & Outreach

The Customer Support and Outreach Division is responsible for all administration and issuance of building, land development, and zoning-related permits, applications and licenses, information requests, pre-design consultations, and other specialty services. This Division was formed to provide a multi-prong approach to enhance the methods in which our services are delivered and to provide enhanced communication for our clients. This heightened focus on service will include empowerment of staff to act as facilitators rather than regulators.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Number of applications processed (at intake) by permit technicians ¹	51,124	50,247	50,000	50,000	50,000
Percent of screenings completed (plans ready for review) within 2 business days	73%	83%	75%	75%	75%
Percent of customers satisfied with DPS Customer Service Division	97%	98%	95%	95%	95%

¹ Starting in FY22, the data parameters have been corrected to include only permits processed by permit technicians (as opposed to all). That explains the decrease in FY22 compared to previous years.

FY25 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	4,950,527	43.90
Decrease Cost: Transfer Fiscal Assistant to Central Services Unit	(209,826)	(2.00)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	223,163	0.00
FY25 Approved	4,963,864	41.90

☀ Land Development

The Land Development Division is responsible for ensuring the protection of the County's land and water resources, the protection of the environment, and the safety of residents and businesses through its engineering and inspection functions related to storm water management; sediment control; floodplain management; special protection areas; storm drain design and construction; roadside tree protection; tree canopy enhancement; well and septic system reviews and approvals; record plat approval; and work in the public right-of-way.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
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Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Total number of public right of way permits issued (roadside trees, driveways, plats, et al.)	3,478	3,790	3,400	3,400	3,400
Number of Sediment Control inspections completed	18,959	20,646	19,500	19,500	19,500
Number of roadside tree plan reviews	1,796	1,615	1,450	1,450	1,450
Percent of Sediment Control inspections that pass inspection indicating a compliant site	95.6%	96.4%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
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.

FY25 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	7,619,215	53.00
Re-align: Transfer Plan Reviewer Position from Residential to Land Programs	128,180	1.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	850,218	0.00
FY25 Approved	8,597,613	54.00

Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance

The Residential Construction staff is responsible for ensuring public safety through the effective application of residential building, structural, electrical, mechanical, and energy conservation codes. This is accomplished through technical plan review and inspection processes.

The Fire Code Compliance staff is responsible for ensuring compliance with adopted National Fire Codes and Standards, the Montgomery County Fire Code, and the Maryland State Fire Prevention Codes in existing buildings. This is accomplished through reviews and preventive inspection processes for businesses, schools, multi-family buildings, healthcare facilities, places of worship, and all other commercial buildings or occupancies.

The Division staff respond to and investigate code violations and aid in recovery during disasters and other incidents.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Percent of service requests completed within 3 business days	92.1%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%
Percent of commercial establishments in compliance with the Fire Code	78.5%	86.3%	78.0%	78.0%	78.0%
Number of inspections performed by Residential and Fire Code Compliance FCC inspectors	69,820	66,171	63,000	63,000	63,000
Number of residential plan reviews performed	9,491	9,761	9,500	9,500	9,500
Residential Permits - Percent of inspections completed on the scheduled day	99.4%	99.1%	99.0%	99.0%	99.0%

FY25 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	6,547,188	46.00
Enhance: New Permitting & Code Compliance Inspector	149,221	1.00
Enhance: New Plan Reviewer Position	91,706	1.00
Re-align: Transfer Plan Reviewer Position from Residential to Land Programs	(128,180)	(1.00)
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	564,938	0.00
FY25 Approved	7,224,873	47.00

☀ Zoning and Code Compliance

The Zoning and Code Compliance Division protects the quality of life, public health, safety, and welfare of Montgomery County. This is accomplished through the effective application and enforcement of the Montgomery County Zoning Ordinance development and use standards; Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission certified site plan requirements; and ensure compliance of M-NCPPC certified site plan projects. Division Permit Specialists perform zoning reviews of plan applications prior to permit issuance, monitor applicant adherence to M-NCPPC certified site plans and provide direct staff support to the Sign Review Board, M-NCPPC Development Review Committee, Predesign Consultation Services and the Tower Committee - Transmission Facilities Coordination Group. Division Field Staff inspect for compliance with M-NCPPC certified site plan projects, and Conditional Uses/Special Exceptions. Moreover, ensure zoning ordinance compliance through scheduled inspections, investigations of constituent complaints and when necessary, issue civil citations, and enforce the orders issued by the Hearing Examiner, Board of Appeals, District Court, Circuit Court, and Maryland Court of Special Appeals.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY22	Actual FY23	Estimated FY24	Target FY25	Target FY26
Number of zoning and fire department access reviews	32,427	29,614	29,500	29,500	29,500
Percent of MNCPPC active site plans in compliance every 10 business days	94%	96%	95%	95%	95%
Percent of Zoning service requests started and responded to the customer within 2 business days	87%	87%	90%	90%	90%

FY25 Approved Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY24 Approved	4,370,884	29.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	215,489	0.00
FY25 Approved	4,586,373	29.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY23	Budget FY24	Estimate FY24	Approved FY25	%Chg Bud/App
PERMITTING SERVICES					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	23,921,076	26,110,430	26,191,870	28,996,079	11.1 %
Employee Benefits	6,336,763	7,009,753	7,083,195	7,823,025	11.6 %
Permitting Services Personnel Costs	30,257,839	33,120,183	33,275,065	36,819,104	11.2 %
Operating Expenses	8,012,290	8,542,713	8,181,493	8,722,851	2.1 %
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	117,600	—
Permitting Services Expenditures	38,270,129	41,662,896	41,456,558	45,659,555	9.6 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	243	243	243	244	0.4 %
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	249.03	249.03	249.03	252.03	1.2 %
REVENUES					
Building Permits	25,859,436	25,865,408	22,248,652	26,757,490	3.4 %
Electrical Permits and Licenses	4,805,962	4,907,130	4,295,694	4,500,000	-8.3 %

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY23	Budget FY24	Estimate FY24	Approved FY25	%Chg Bud/App
Fire Code Enforcement Permits	2,381,418	2,548,228	2,245,628	2,354,099	-7.6 %
Grading/Storm Drains/Paving/Driveway Permits	4,513,455	4,075,018	3,554,574	4,400,000	8.0 %
Occupancy Permits	568,645	498,435	577,209	578,272	16.0 %
Other Licenses/Permits	313,141	314,662	706,536	578,009	83.7 %
Sediment Control Permits	3,143,285	2,798,592	3,041,736	3,437,873	22.8 %
Sign Permits	188,992	197,600	186,169	205,983	4.2 %
Special Exception Fee	204,809	189,052	189,052	203,782	7.8 %
Stormwater Mgmt and Water Quality Plan Fee	286,171	248,396	217,346	209,117	-15.8 %
Well and Septic	577,457	315,194	341,520	498,893	58.3 %
Automation Enhancement Fee	59	0	0	0	—
Other Charges/Fees	2,233,264	1,600,479	1,766,457	1,690,858	5.6 %
Other Fines/Forfeitures	54,683	27,543	135,387	86,275	213.2 %
Investment Income	1,998,370	2,595,390	3,278,130	2,580,520	-0.6 %
Mechanical Construction Permit	1,900,114	1,680,824	1,886,815	2,146,150	27.7 %
Information Requests	0	136,533	114,825	116,634	-14.6 %
Permitting Services Revenues	49,029,261	47,998,484	44,785,730	50,343,955	4.9 %

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	275	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Expenditures	275	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	(2,960)	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Revenues	(2,960)	0	0	0	—

DEPARTMENT TOTALS

Total Expenditures	38,270,404	41,662,896	41,456,558	45,659,555	9.6 %
Total Full-Time Positions	243	243	243	244	0.4 %
Total Part-Time Positions	0	0	0	0	—
Total FTEs	249.03	249.03	249.03	252.03	1.2 %
Total Revenues	49,026,301	47,998,484	44,785,730	50,343,955	4.9 %

FY25 APPROVED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
PERMITTING SERVICES		
FY24 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	41,662,896	249.03
<u>Changes (with service impacts)</u>		
Enhance: Provide Funding for Two Environmental Health Specialists in HHS to Expedite Restaurant Facility Plan Reviews [Commercial Building Construction]	270,046	2.00
Enhance: New Permitting & Code Compliance Inspector [Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance]	149,221	1.00
Enhance: New Plan Reviewer Position [Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance]	91,706	1.00
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY24 Compensation Increases	1,484,518	0.00
Increase Cost: FY25 Compensation Adjustment	1,360,908	0.00
Increase Cost: Lapse Adjustment	452,204	0.00
Increase Cost: Increase in Utilities/Maintenance/Parking [Administration]	260,664	0.00
Increase Cost: Increase IT Maintenance and Support [Administration]	223,849	0.00
Increase Cost: Transfer Fiscal Assistant to Central Services Unit [Administration]	209,826	2.00
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY24 Personnel Costs	169,206	0.00
Re-align: Transfer Plan Reviewer Position from Residential to Land Programs [Land Development]	128,180	1.00
Increase Cost: Operating Expenses for Wheaton Office Building [Administration]	15,040	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail	2,685	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(34,394)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Risk Management Adjustment	(65,560)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Eliminated One Term Imaging Operator [Administration]	(74,928)	(1.00)
Re-align: Transfer Plan Reviewer Position from Residential to Land Programs [Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance]	(128,180)	(1.00)
Decrease Cost: Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY24	(150,000)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	(158,506)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Transfer Fiscal Assistant to Central Services Unit [Customer Support & Outreach]	(209,826)	(2.00)
FY25 APPROVED	45,659,555	252.03

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY24 APPR Expenditures	FY24 APPR FTEs	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs
Administration	10,758,484	25.13	11,591,756	26.13
Commercial Building Construction	7,416,598	52.00	8,695,076	54.00
Customer Support & Outreach	4,950,527	43.90	4,963,864	41.90
Land Development	7,619,215	53.00	8,597,613	54.00
Residential Construction & Fire Code Compliance	6,547,188	46.00	7,224,873	47.00
Zoning and Code Compliance	4,370,884	29.00	4,586,373	29.00

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY24 APPR Expenditures	FY24 APPR FTEs	FY25 APPR Expenditures	FY25 APPR FTEs
Total	41,662,896	249.03	45,659,555	252.03

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CC APPROVED (\$000S)

Title	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29	FY30
PERMITTING SERVICES						
EXPENDITURES						
FY25 Approved	45,660	45,660	45,660	45,660	45,660	45,660
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Annualization of Positions Approved in FY25	0	132	132	132	132	132
New positions in the FY25 budget are generally assumed to be filled at least two months after the fiscal year begins. Therefore, the above amounts reflect annualization of these positions in the outyears.						
Elimination of One-Time Items Approved in FY25	0	(597)	(597)	(597)	(597)	(597)
Items recommended for one-time funding in FY25, including a vehicle purchase and a decrease in lapse, will be eliminated from the base in the outyears.						
Labor Contracts	0	684	684	684	684	684
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	45,660	45,879	45,879	45,879	45,879	45,879

ANNUALIZATION OF FULL PERSONNEL COSTS

	FY25 Approved		FY26 Annualized	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
New Plan Reviewer Position	86,106	1.00	116,451	1.00
New Permitting & Code Compliance Inspector	76,967	1.00	110,907	1.00
Provide Funding for Two Environmental Health Specialists in HHS to Expedite Restaurant Facility Plan Reviews	178,334	2.00	245,958	2.00
Total	341,407	4.00	473,316	4.00

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