



DPS

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Department of Permitting Services

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Guidelines for Non-Standard Covered Sidewalks in the Right-of-Way

OVERVIEW – Walkways and Covered Walkways

Pedestrians shall be protected during excavation, construction, façade repair/remodeling, and demolition activities as required by Chapter 33 of the IBC. A walkway shall be provided for pedestrian travel that leads from a building entrance or exit of an occupied structure to a public way. A walkway shall be provided for pedestrian travel in front of every construction and demolition site unless Montgomery County Right of Way (ROW) authorizes the sidewalk to be fenced or closed. A combination of approved public way closures, directional barricades, dedicated walkways, construction railings, barriers and covered walkways shall be installed and maintained in place and kept in good order for the entire length of time pedestrians are subject to endangerment.

Where safety or other conditions require overhead protection in the form of a covered walkway, the covered walkway must meet the general requirements for walkway width, floor and ADA accessibility set forth in [COMCOR 49.11.01](#) (referenced below). The term covered walkway means a wood or metal scaffolding-type structure constructed to protect pedestrians and bicyclists adjacent to a construction work zone that involves overhead work.

PERMITS

Any construction in the right-of-way requires a Right-of-Way permit. When the building abutting the right-of-way is more than two stories tall and construction activities pose overhead hazards, a Building Permit is required for any proposed covered walkway that is an alternate design from the DPS standard detail (MC SSK 1 & 2). An Electrical Permit is required for installation of light fixtures when no existing compliant lighting source is present. The applicant is responsible for obtaining permits and scheduling inspections as required prior to use of the covered walkway, and after removal of the covered walkway. Permits are valid for one (1) year, after permit issuance. Re-inspection of facilities may be required to approve permit extension requests.

DESIGN CRITERIA

Walkways shall be of sufficient width to accommodate pedestrian traffic but shall be not less than 4 feet (1219 mm) in width. Walkways shall be provided with a durable walking surface. Walkways shall be accessible in accordance with ADAG 2010 and include a minimum 60” deep turning/passing pads where required. The walkway shall be designed to support all imposed loads. The design live load shall be no less than 150 psf (7.2 kN/m²).

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BUILDING PERMIT SUBMITAL REQUIREMENTS

The submittal for the Commercial Building Permit for overhead protection shall include following:

- A. Drawings: Scaled design drawings stamped, signed, dated, and certified by the designer of record.
1. Title Block with relevant project and designer information.
 2. Project Coversheet (may be omitted if all relevant information is included elsewhere on the plans) Site Plan overview of proposed covered walkway, adjacent buildings, structures, roads, crosswalks, features, existing building entrances, pertinent dimensions, transit stops, etc.
 3. Typical Covered Walkway Plans and Section(s):
 - a. Show all pertinent information of for construction including:
 - i. Types of Materials, Framing Members orientation/spacing, Anchorage, Bracing, Dimensions, etc.
 - ii. Site specific accommodations for building entrances and transit stops to maintain egress and access.
 - iii. Site specific accommodations for site features, trees etc.
 - iv. ADA compliance for egress & maneuverability requirements, flooring and grade changes.
 - v. Compliance with lighting requirements.
 - vi. Compliance with signage requirements for existing buildings/facilities to remain open/accessible.
 - b. Structural notes (as applicable per design)
 - i. Include applicable code and reference standards.
- B. Documents:
1. Manufacturer's cut sheet of proposed materials, and fasteners/anchors (if applicable)
 2. Analysis/Computations (if required) for design loadings over 150psf or covered walkways with proposed staging load capacity.
- C. General: Drawings and Calculations shall include the signature, seal, and MD certification of the PE (see excerpt below).

Professional Certification:

"I hereby certify that these documents were prepared or approved by me, and that I am a duly licensed professional engineer under the laws of the State of Maryland, License No. _____, Expiration Date: _____."

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[Commercial Permit Submittal Guidelines](#) can be found here:



montgomerycountymd.gov/DPS/Resources/Files/COMBUILD/ComSubGuideNonFT.pdf

COVERED WALKWAY STANDARD DETAILS

The details at the end of this document represent standards for construction of a covered walkways that may be incorporated in the Right-of-Way permit application and allow exception to the building permit application requirement. The following would apply:

- a. A Right-of-Way permit would be required and include a site plan locating the extent of overhead protection.
- b. Compliance with signage and ADA requirements must be met.
- c. The field construction shall match the standards.
- d. The Right-of-Way inspector will perform inspection for approval of the erected covered walkway.

If the permittee elects to use these standards but there exists field deviation in geometry, materials and/or details, then a formal building permit application as established above will be required.

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MC CHAPTER 49.11.01.08– COVERED WALKWAY STANDARDS (excerpts for reference)

STRUCTURAL SPECIFICATIONS AND DRAWINGS.

1. **LOADING.** The loading for the covered walkway must be project specific and the specifications and plans must be designed, signed, and sealed by a professional engineer registered in the State of Maryland who is familiar with the abutting project. Covered walkways must be designed to support all imposed loads if used for staging, be of sufficient width to prevent persons and materials from falling, and in no case may the design live load be less than one hundred-fifty pounds per square foot (150 PSF). All imposed loads which are utilized in the design must be clearly stated in the drawings, showing the support system plan, sections, details, and anchorage to the ground (IBC 3306.2 and 3306.7). The structure must be braced sufficiently or anchored to the building so that it will not fall, be blown away, or otherwise collapse.
2. **ADA COMPLIANCE.** All covered walkways must provide an ADA accessible pedestrian route in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (2010 ADA Standards). This includes but is not limited to: constructing structural floors when required (See “FLOORS” below) that have a surface that is firm, stable, slip-resistant, and that is compliant in slope, counter slope, vertical clearances, turning radii, and surface irregularities; providing compliant ramps connecting the structural floor to an existing ADA accessible route; and implementing sufficient measure to ensure the safety and welfare of the pedestrians traversing the site. All ramps with a rise greater than six inches (6") must be constructed with handrails on both sides of the ramp.
3. **RAILING.** A continuous handrail must be installed along at least one side of the walkway to aid pedestrians. The handrail must comply with the requirements of ADA. The top of the railing must be between thirty-four inches and thirty-eight inches (34"-38") above the walkway floor and be capable of withstanding a fifty-pound (50 LBS) load per linear foot applied horizontally to the top rail.
4. **TRANSIT ACCESS.** The covered walkway must be designed to maintain ADA-compliant access from the sidewalk to any operating bus stop or bus shelter. (2010 ADA Section 810.2.3)
5. **ELECTRICAL LIGHTING.** The interior of the covered walkway area must be continuously well-lit between sunset and sunrise, and at other times as necessary to illuminate the area. Lighting must be one-hundred-watt (100W) bulbs or equivalent, enclosed in vandal-resistant fixtures, and spaced at a maximum of sixteen feet (16') on-center and eight feet (8') minimum above the floor level. If the ingress/egress of the covered walkway is within thirty

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- feet (30') of a crosswalk, then additional lighting may be required to illuminate the crosswalk. An Electrical Permit is required when no lighting source is present.
6. **FLOOR.** Structural floors are not required unless needed to cross an opening or obstruction in the sidewalk, to comply with requirements of the ADA. Otherwise, the sidewalk or road may serve as the floor of the covered walkway. Any structural floor provided must be firm, treated with a non-slip coating, provide adequate drainage, and must comply with the ADA requirements (*See ADA COMPLIANCE* above).
 7. **ROOF.** The roof must be designed to carry the loads imposed upon it, provided the minimum live load to be used in design must not be less than seventy-five pounds per square foot (75 PSF) for buildings less than two stories above grade and one hundred-fifty pounds per square foot (150 PSF), uniformly loaded, for buildings of greater height. The roof must be tightly boarded with a covering of roofing paper or other material to prevent water from falling through. If materials are stored or work is done from the roof of the walkway, the roof must have sufficient strength to support the weight to be placed upon it, sufficient width to prevent persons and materials from falling, and the roadway side must have a barrier that extends one foot (1') above the roof or as high as needed to contain the material stored on the roof. Compliant guards (42" tall) shall be provided at any locations to be accessed by workers without personal fall protection gear.
 8. **HEIGHT.** Covered walkways must have a clear and unobstructed ceiling height of not less than eight feet (8') vertical above the walkway floor.
 9. **WIDTH.** Covered walkways must have a clear unobstructed width of not less than five feet (5'). In urban areas, the minimum width is six feet (6'). Upon request, the Director may allow increase of the minimum widths depending on the existing pedestrian walkway and volume of users. Width is measured from wall to wall or handrail to handrail. Covered walkways must not allow unprotected passage along the sidewalk on either side of the covered walkway.
 10. **ROADWAY-FACING SIDE.** If the walkway abuts upon or within the roadway area, the side of the covered walkway facing the travel lanes of the roadway must have either concrete barriers with proper attenuation or water-filled barriers. The wall of the covered walkway must rest on the roadbed inside of the concrete/water-filled barriers. The walkway must not be constructed within or on any tree box. Within thirty feet (30') of the intersection of two-streets, the sides facing the roadway must be constructed to maintain an unobstructed line of sight for drivers and bicyclists in the roadway and pedestrians using the covered walkway. The intersection of two streets is the point of intersection of the curb lines extended.
 11. **CONSTRUCTION-FACING SIDE.** The side of the covered walkway facing the construction area must be completely enclosed with plywood, except the side may have openings, adequately protected by screening, that allow those persons interested to view the construction work site.

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12. **STRUCTURAL MEMBERS.** Plans must show that the structural members of the covered walkway are adequately braced and connected to prevent displacement or distortion of the framework.

13. **BUILDING ENTRY.** If the construction work abuts an occupied building while the covered walkway is in place, the covered walkway must be designed to maintain an ADA-accessible entry to and from the building. Coordination with Fire Code Compliance must be done to ensure emergency access is not obstructed. The covered walkway must have signs advising people that businesses and residences can be accessed directly from the covered walkway. Handwritten signs are not allowed.

14. **ADVANCED SIGNAGE.** Advance signs must advise pedestrians and bicyclists that a pedestrian walkway is open ahead. These sign locations must not impede pedestrian, bicyclist or transit user mobility, ADA access, bus stops, or other similar sidewalk-related considerations and signage must be posted at the ingress and egress locations.

15. **POSTINGS, GRAFFITI, and ADVERTISING.** No postings other than signs permitted in accordance with [Chapter 59](#) of Montgomery County Code are allowed. The walls, roof, and floor of the covered walkway must be maintained free of postings, graffiti, or advertising of any type. Any such material must be removed or appropriately covered by the permit holder within 24 hours or the next business day.

16. **SIDEWALK FIXTURES.** The covered walkway must be designed to incorporate any existing sidewalk fixture including fire hydrants, light poles, traffic signal devices, parking meters, trash receptacles, bus stops and bus shelters, and benches. The covered walkway cannot cover or obstruct in any way traffic operation signage and signals, including those related to parking.

If an existing sidewalk fixture must be removed to construct the covered walkway, the Right-of-way permittee must provide the following details: what fixtures are to be removed and by whom; where they are to be stored pending the work being completed; and how they will be restored and by whom after the covered walkway is removed. No sidewalk fixture may be removed without prior approval from the MCDPS Director.

17. **ROADSIDE TREE PROTECTION.** Roadside trees may not be removed, pruned, or disfigured for the construction or razing a covered walkway except under valid right-of-way tree removal permits issued by MCDPS and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service. Roadside trees may not be used as an attachment point to support the covered walkway. Damage to any roadside tree caused by the construction or placement of the covered walkway subjects the permit holder to fines. The covered walkway must be constructed to provide adequate tree and critical root zone protection.

Guidelines for Non-Standard Covered Sidewalks in the Right-of-Way **(continued)**

18. **MAINTENANCE.** The covered walkway must be maintained in good and safe condition for the duration of its use by the permittee.

19. **REMOVAL.** The covered walkway must be removed immediately after the permitted work is completed and the public right-of-way is restored in coordination with the MCDPS Right-of-Way Inspector and when any potential hazard to pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users no longer exists. The covered walkway must be removed without damage to any tree, the tree canopy, or critical root zone. A Temporary Traffic Control Plan for removing the covered walkway must be approved before the covered walkway is removed.

20. **COVERED WALKWAY VISIBILITY.** Generally, a covered walkway must provide openings above the barrier to the maximum extent practical on the non-construction side.

21. **ALTERNATE MATERIALS.** Steel or other materials having equivalent strength and suitability may be used in lieu of wood to construct a covered walkway. If alternate materials are selected, then they must satisfy the requirements of ADA and the International Building Code (IBC).

22. **OTHER COVERED WALKWAY CONDITIONS.** Covered walkway entrances must have detectable warnings; and the walkway must be designed to preclude access to any pedestrian hazard that may exist abutting the walkway. The walkway may be opened on the non-construction side if no hazard exists except for structural support.

Signs identifying “Covered Walkway Ahead” must be placed at the crosswalk immediately before both ends of the covered walkway. If the covered walkway begins at an intersection, a sign must be placed on the opposite side of the intersection to allow the public the opportunity to cross the street using the nearest crosswalk and avoid the covered walkway if desired.