

**CITY OF MERIDIAN PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING POLICY  
REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPLICATIONS**

**DEFINITION:** Administrative applications are land use and zoning permits that are processed, reviewed and approved or denied by the Director. Nearly all administrative applications do not require any form of public notification. The exception is for family day care and home occupations with customers and clients.

The full list of administrative approvals is noted below.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS
Accessory use for daycare, family
Accessory use, home occupation with customers or clients
Accessory use, home occupation with no customers or clients
Administrative design review*
Alternative compliance
Certificate of occupancy
Certificate of zoning compliance*
Director determination
Director modification to an approved conditional use
Landscaping plans*
Property boundary adjustment
Sign and/or planned sign program
Surety
Temporary use (including firework stands)
Tenant improvements
Time extension, director
Vacations: exempt per Idaho Code section 50-1306A(5)
Zoning verification

\* Please note that certificates of zoning compliance and administrative design review approvals have specific SOPs. Similarly, initial landscape plans are reviewed in association with a certificate of zoning compliance and/or administrative design review and therefore do not have a specific SOP.

**AUTHORITY &**

**RESPONSIBILITY:** The Director (or an authorized representative) is charged with approving or denying administrative applications (UDC 11-5A-2 C.) Practically, this means that Planning Department staff is authorized to approve or deny these administrative applications.

## **REQUIRED**

**INFORMATION:** All applications shall be on forms provided by the Planning Department and shall be completed in full and submitted with an accompanying checklist and fees. The application forms and checklist may be downloaded from the Planning Department website at [www.meridiancity.org](http://www.meridiancity.org).

## **APPLICATION**

**PROCESSING:** The following steps are required for processing the following administrative applications: accessory use for family daycare, accessory use for home occupation with customers or clients, alternative compliance, property boundary adjustment, sign and/or planned sign program, director modification to an approved conditional use, director time extension, and vacations that are exempt per Idaho Code section 50-1306A(5).:

1. Applicant submits development application to Planning Department Assistant City Planner.
2. Assistant ensures the following over the counter prior to accepting the application:
  - a. Applicant is submitting the correct application and fee(s). Ensure that all applicable areas of the application are complete. (Follow the appropriate checklist.) Director modifications to a conditional use permit, also known as minor modifications, must meet the requirements set forth in UDC 11-5B-6G2.
  - b. Application is signed by the owner or authorized agent.
  - c. All the required approvals (such as development agreements, final plats, conditional use permits, planned sign program, etc.) are approved and recorded prior to the applicant's submission.
  - d. There are no outstanding enforcement issues on the property that would prevent the Planning Department from approving the application.
3. When application is deemed complete, the application is given to the Deputy Director or his or her designee who then logs the project in the data base and assigns it to a staff planner.
4. Planner enters the application information into the database.
5. Planner calls applicant to introduce themselves and ask the applicant for clarification on any outstanding issues.
6. If application **does not** require public notice then:
  - a. Planner reviews application for compliance with UDC; any conditions of previous approvals (development agreements, conditional uses, final plats, alternative compliance, planned sign program etc.); pathways plan; and coordinates with Public Works on floodplain requirements.
  - b. For director modifications to an approved conditional use permit, staff conducts a review of the request and researches the original approvals and meeting minutes to ensure that the request was (1) not a subject of review during the original public hearing and (2) will not adversely impact adjacent properties.

- c. Prior to approving a alternative compliance, director time extension, director modification to an approved conditional use, family daycare, and/or home occupation with customers or clients, the assigned staff conducts field inspection to assure site layout is accurately depicted on the proposed plan.
- d. For sign permits, the Planning staff signs the application (if approved) and forwards the original copy to the Building Services Division who issues the building permit for the sign.
- e. With regard to vacation applications, very few will qualify as staff review. For those that do, staff shall review the request and the impacts it may have on surrounding property owners.
- f. For any approvals that appear to have adverse impacts to surrounding property owners, consult with the Deputy Director prior to taking action on the request. The Deputy Director will consult with the Director as appropriate and/or necessary.
- g. Planner prepares a decision letter, notifies applicant via phone and mailed letter, and files the decision letter with the application or, for modifications, with the original approval.
- h. Administrative Assistant uploads decision letter into the database.
- i. If application requires public notice then:
  - i. Planner reviews application for compliance with UDC;
  - ii. Planner schedules an inspection with the applicant to conduct a field inspection. The field inspection is required to assure conformance with the submitted site plan;
  - iii. Staff completes a staff report and prepares two separate letters of approval or denial (one shall be addressed to the applicant and the other to property owners within 100 feet of the project).
  - iv. Staff mails the staff report and approval or denial letter to the applicant and property owners within 100 feet.
  - v. Staff contacts applicant after 15 days to inform them if anyone has filed for council review (appeal) of the decision.
  - vi. Administrative Assistant uploads decision letter into the database.

**OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS:** Certain approvals require a simple review and/or sign-off by the Planning Department. Such approvals include: accessory use for home occupations with no customers or clients, temporary use permits, temporary sign permits, tenant improvements, certificate of occupancy, surety, zoning verification, and director determinations.

1. Home occupations with no customers or clients do not require review. The applicant must, however, fill out a statement certifying that they will meet the code allowance for the district. Please note that the home occupation standards within the TN-R and TN-C districts have a separate certification forms.
2. Most temporary uses require permits and are transmitted to the Planning Department from the City Clerk. The assigned Planning staff reviews the

- application for conformance with the MCC Title 3 Chapter 4 and recommends approval or denial to City Clerk.
3. Some temporary uses are allowed as accessory uses and do not require specific review and/or approval from Planning Department staff. Fireworks stands do not (by code) require Planning Department approval; however, Planning staff traditionally reviews all firework permits to make sure that they are not in landscape buffers and that they have a dustless driving surface. For stands that are not paved, Planning staff traditionally inspects the site to ensure that it is a dustless surface prior to signing a permit card.
  4. Temporary sign permits reviews are completed when the applicant comes in. Staff reviews the temporary sign permit checklist and ensures the sign meets the standards set forth in the UDC. Staff also researches whether there are any illegal unresolved issues with the property. If the sign meets the standards set forth in the code and the property is not in current violation, then staff will approve the temporary sign permit. At that time, staff fills out a temporary sign permit sticker with the expiration date and stamps it with the Meridian Planning stamp. Applicant is given the sticker to place on the temporary sign.
  5. Tenant improvements require Planning Department sign-off. Typically the Building Services Division will send the applicant up to the Planning Department with a copy of the plans for an over-the-counter review. At that time, staff previews the plan to verify the applicant is not doing any exterior changes to the building. Staff researches whether there are any illegal unresolved issues with the property. Staff will also pull the CZC on file to ensure the new tenant is operating an approved use in the building. If applicant is deemed to be in compliance with all the above, Staff will sign the tenant improvement form and verify the CZC number on the application.
  6. A certificate of occupancy is completed by a site inspection by the Planning staff. Applicant will call and schedule an inspection. Staff will pull the approved CZC plans and measure everything on-site such as drive aisles, sidewalks, and parking stalls to ensure conformance with the approved CZC. Staff will also ensure that the landscaping has been installed per the approval.
    - a. If site is compliant, staff will sign the green occupancy card.
    - b. If site is not compliant, staff will notify the applicant of any deficiencies. Any follow-up site inspections require an additional fee as noted within our fee schedule.
    - c. At times, due to weather or other factors, applicant may not have installed the landscaping. If the applicant meets the requirements defined in UDC 11-5C-2, Staff may allow the applicant to post surety as defined in UDC 11-5C-1 and obtain temporary occupancy until the landscaping is completed. See the following SOP for surety in this section.
  7. Surety is done in conjunction with Public Works Department staff. Surety requires the applicant post an irrevocable letter of credit or a cash deposit worth 110% of the cost needed to complete the required improvements. Applicant is required to bring a detailed invoice to the Planning Department documenting every improvement/tree/shrub depicted on the CZC plan, which is not installed.

The detailed invoice must also include the labor required for installation of such improvements.

- a. Once Staff reviews the detailed list, the applicant is sent to the appropriate party in the Public Works Department to obtain a receipt for their letter of credit or cash deposit. Staff will then sign the back of the green occupancy card, allowing the applicant temporary occupancy for a specific amount of time.
- b. Once the landscaping and all other required improvements are completed, the applicant will call for an inspection. If staff finds that the site is compliant, staff signs the green occupancy card and request release of the surety.
- c. One week prior to the end of the allowed days, staff will contact applicant to review the status of the deficient items. If the landscaping will not be complete prior to the expiration of the surety, applicant must post a new surety prior to the expiration.
- d. If applicant is unable to complete landscaping and/or post new surety, Planning Staff will contact the appropriate Public Works staff to cash the surety immediately. Planning Staff will then seek assistance from Public Works staff to hire contractors to install the deficient items. This has a severe impact on the Applicant's credit and should, therefore, only be done in limited and extreme circumstances. Our aim is to give the applicant every opportunity to complete the required work themselves.
- e. If landscaping is complete, applicant will pay the inspection fee and Staff will complete another inspection to ensure the landscaping has been installed. If complete, staff will sign the green occupancy card, notify the appropriate party in Public Works to release surety, and notify the Building Services Division that Planning Staff is approving full occupancy.

8. Zoning verification is a simple form reply regarding the zoning allowances of a particular piece of property. If the applicant request includes anything beyond the items listed in the form, Planning Staff should consult the Deputy Director to see if the request qualifies as a director determination (see below).

9. Director determinations are required when an applicant requests written interpretation of code provisions with regard to a specific issue or property. Planning staff shall work with the Deputy Director and Director to research and compose such determinations. Depending on the issue, the Director may ask for review by the Legal Department as well.

**REVIEW OF DECISION:** Parties aggrieved by the decision of the Director (staff) may request City Council review of the decision by filing a written request within fifteen (15) days of the date the written decision was issued. (UDC 11-5A-6).