

What is a Special Use Permit?

A Special Use Permit allows for a more intense review of a potential use, due to the possibility of undue impacts, and compatibility with neighboring land uses, properties and the surrounding neighborhood. A Special Use Permit is approved, denied or approved with conditions by the City Council, after a review and recommendation by the Planning Commission.

When is a Special Use Permit required?

To determine if a potential use requires a Special Use Permit, the zoning and use category needs to be determined. The zoning of a property can be found online at [Manassas Zoning and Parcel Map App](#). All use categories can be found in [Zoning Ordinance Article 8](#). Development Services can be reached at 703-257-8278 and is able to look up a property and provide the zoning information and permitted uses for a property.

Overview of Process:

The first step of a Special Use Permit is to set up a pre-application meeting with the City of Manassas. This meeting is used to discuss the use and any potential issues or other items that may cause an issue during the review process. The pre-application meeting can be scheduled by calling 703-257-8225 or email to PlanningCommission@manassasva.gov. After the pre-application meeting is held, a complete application is submitted and reviewed by the case Planner. Fees are due once the application is accepted and then routed for review by the necessary departments where comments may be made regarding different aspects of the application. Once the application has completed review, the case will be scheduled for a Planning Commission meeting and Public Hearing in which the application will be presented and heard. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the City Council and the case will then be scheduled for a City Council meeting and Public Hearing. City Council will hear the application and decide whether to approve or deny the application. Conditions of approval may be applied to mitigate issues raised by staff or during the Public Hearings.

Who can apply for a Special Use Permit?

A Special Use Permit can be submitted by a representative, the owner of the property or any other person/organization. The Power of Attorney affidavit that is part of the application package should be completed and submitted if any person other than the property owner is submitting the application.

What is the average review time for a Special Use Permit?

The amount of time needed to obtain a special use permit is difficult to calculate and can vary depending on the scope of the proposal. Typically the Special Use Permit process takes approximately three (3) to six (6) months. Timing can be discussed during the pre-application meeting.

Who decides on a Special Use Permit?

Special Use Permits are approved or denied by City Council after a recommendation from the Planning Commission.

The meeting schedule for City Council and Planning Commission can be found at: <https://www.manassasva.gov/meetings>

What documentation do I need to submit as part of the Special Use Permit?

A comprehensive list of the required documents can be found in the application packet materials. The following documents are always required: a complete application with notarized affidavits, a written narrative, the general development plan (GDP), and a trip generation report or transportation impact analysis. Additional documents may be required, depending upon the extent of what is being proposed.

What is a General Development Plan?

A General Development Plan (GDP) is an visual representation providing an overview of the proposed changes to a property. This document shows the location of the building(s), parking spaces, landscaping, fences, trash enclosures and other important site features on the property. The GDP ensures that all the required development standards are met on a site.

What is a Trip Generation Report?

A trip generation report is a document that shows the estimated vehicle traffic generated by a use. It is used to review the potential traffic impact on the local streets and areas. If a proposed use exceeds more than 100 vehicle trips per day, a more detailed Traffic Impact Analysis may be required. Trip generation reports and traffic impact analysis documents are typically completed by a traffic engineer.

What is the requirement for parking spaces?

Parking space requirements are found in [Zoning Ordinance Article 6](#). Required parking is based upon the type of use.

What if there is not enough parking available?

If there is not enough parking available on site, the zoning ordinance allows for a parking agreement to be submitted. A parking agreement is a legal agreement made between property owners that allow for shared parking. This means if there is not enough available parking on a property to meet the requirement in the zoning ordinance, a shared parking agreement can be created that will provide additional parking to meet the parking requirements, if another site has surplus parking. Parking agreement requirements are found in Sec 130-204(d) of the zoning ordinance.

Common Special Use Permits

Assembly Uses

An assembly use is the use of land for the gathering of people for a specific purpose. This includes, but not limited to, **religious institutions, funeral homes, and conference centers**. In general, any assembly uses located in a residential zoning district will require a Special Use Permit. An assembly use with an occupancy load of 50 or more persons located in permitted non-residential zoning districts will require approval of a Special Use Permit. Those with an occupancy load of less than 50 persons are permitted by-right in the commercial zones and require a Special Use Permit in the I-1 Light Industrial and I-A Airport zones. Assembly uses are not permitted in the I-2 Heavy Industrial zones.

An assembly use that is submitting to move into an existing building and is not proposing any significant exterior changes to the site will in general need to include the following information as part of their Special Use Permit application:

- occupancy load of the building (space) – as determined by designer/architect
- number of people attending services and when events will occur
- available parking on site

Home Business

A Home Business allows for a home based business to be operated from an owner-occupied residence in the A-1, R-1, R-2, R-2-S and R-7 districts. A home business is permitted to have employees and customers come to the residence. To submit for a Special Use Permit for a Home Business, the property must be a **single family detached residence**, with adequate parking for the business. The available parking should be shown as part of the application. The written narrative should include an explanation of the business activities, and if there is a potential impact to neighboring properties. Refer to Zoning Ordinance Sec. 130-95 for additional requirements. Home Occupation permits are less intensive home based businesses, which may permit a limited number of customers, and are approved through administrative review with submission of a Home Occupation application.

Motor Vehicle Related Uses

In addition to the requirements found in the Special Use Permit application, motor vehicle related uses will need to submit documentation that the requirements in Zoning Ordinance Sec. 130-99 & 130-100 are met. Motor vehicle related uses in the I-2 district are permitted by-right, and do not require Special Use Permit approval. It is not uncommon for all motor vehicle related uses to require submission and approval of a site plan.

Kennels

In addition to the requirements found in the Special Use Permit application, kennel applications will need to submit documentation related to the care and accommodations for the animals. Noise studies/findings will also be required. Refer to Zoning Ordinance Sec. 130-97 for additional requirements.

Special Use Permit Application Package ([click here](#)) or the application can be found at www.manassasva.gov/development – Development Applications, Forms & Fees