



SITE PLAN REVIEW

Site plan review approval is required for all commercial, industrial, multiple-family housing (3 or more units) or institutional development applications. The site plan review will be coordinated with the review of applications for preliminary plats, rezoning, conditional use permits, and variances. Provisions for site plan review for a planned unit development are found in Section 542 of the zoning ordinance.

PLANNING & ZONING
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DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT

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Site plan approval is required before:

- Constructing a building;
- Moving a building within the city;
- Expansion or change of the use of the building, or modification a building, accessory structure, or site or land feature; and
- Lot preparation including grading, removing or adding soils, except in conformance with a permit or an approved plan that complies with the city's comprehensive surface water management plan.

Application process:

1. An application and all supporting documentation is submitted online via [Citizen Serve](https://www5.citizenserve.com/richfield). (<https://www5.citizenserve.com/richfield>)
2. The application is reviewed by the Administrative Review Committee (ARC). ARC is made up of staff members from different city departments who review the request for compliance with applicable codes and standards, and for the possible effects the request may have on city services or adjacent properties. ARC members may request additional information and/or ask changes to be made to the proposal prior to the application being placed on an agenda.
3. The applicant submits the required fee and any additional information and/or changes to the application as required by ARC.
4. If the project requires an Environmental Assessment Worksheet or an Environmental Impact Statement the application for the site plan review will not be considered complete until the City Council has issued a finding. City staff may begin review of an application and communicate to the applicant its findings on the application before receiving the environmental review.
6. The application is then placed on the Planning Commission schedule.

Applications must be submitted 6 weeks before the scheduled Planning Commission meeting to be considered for the agenda. An application must be *complete* at least 2 weeks before the scheduled Planning Commission meeting to be placed on the agenda. The Planning Commission meets on the fourth Monday of every month at 7:00 pm.

7. The Planning Commission will conduct a public hearing and make a recommendation to the City Council. Notice of the public hearing is mailed to property owners and residents within 350 feet and notice of the public hearing is also published in the *Richfield Sun-Current* newspaper.
8. Then the recommendation of the Planning Commission is forwarded to the City Council for final determination on the application. The City Council may impose conditions and require guarantees on the granting of approval in order to ensure compliance.

**ZONING CODE
SECTION 547.13**

12/2023

Criteria and Standards for Site Plan Review:

The Planning Commission and City Council shall consider its compliance with the following when conducting a site plan review:

- Consistency with the elements and objectives of the city's comprehensive plan and any additional long range plans;
- Consistency with purposes of the zoning code;
- Preservation of the site in its natural state to be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed or developing areas;
- Creation of a harmonious relationship of buildings and open spaces with the terrain and with existing and future buildings having a visual relationship to the proposed development;
- Creation of a functional and harmonious design for structures and site features;
- Creation of energy-conserving design through design, location, orientation and elevation of structures, the uses and location of glass structures, and the use of landscape materials and site grading; and
- Protection of adjacent and neighboring properties through reasonable provisions which may have substantial effects on neighboring land uses.

Application Review Timeline: The City is required to notify applicants within 15 working days of receiving an application as to whether or not an application is complete. Once an application is complete, the City has 60 days to make a decision on the application. The City has the option of extending the 60-day review period if it informs the applicant in writing of the reason why an extension is needed. The City makes every effort to process applications within 60 days.

Terms of Approval: Site plans are only valid for the project for which approval was granted. If the project is not in compliance with the approved plans the project shall be subject to review of an amendment.

Expiration of Approval: A building permit shall be obtained and construction of the project shall begin no later than one year following the date on which the site plan approval is granted, unless the City Council approves a different time period. The Council may extend the expiration date; the applicant must submit a request for an extension prior to the expiration of the one-year time limit.

Security Deposit: When screening, landscaping, parking lot or other similar improvements to property are required; a security deposit acceptable to the City shall be supplied by the owner in an amount equal to 125 percent of the value of such improvements.

Amendment to an Approved Site Plan

Any changes to an approved site plan require approval of an amendment. There are two types of amendments:

- ⇒ **Minor amendments** are reviewed administratively. Review criteria remain the same and the City may require nonconforming site improvements to be brought into conformance.
- ⇒ **Major amendments** must be considered by the Planning Commission at a public hearing, and final approval granted by the City Council.

THE FOLLOWING ARE CONSIDERED MINOR AMENDEMENTS:

- Landscape changes.
- Parking lot configuration changes.
- Less than 20% change in the number of parking spaces provided or required.
- Less than 25% change in floor area in any one structure.
- Less than 25% change in the approved separation of buildings.
- Less than 20% change in the ground area covered by the project.
- Less than 20% change in the number of residential units.

THE FOLLOWING ARE CONSIDERED MAJOR AMENDMENTS:

- More than a 25% change in floor area in any one structure.
- More than 25% change in the approved separation of buildings.
- Any reduction in the original approved setbacks from property lines if adjacent to single or two-family residential property.
- More than 20% change in the ground area covered by the project.
- More than 20% change in the number of residential units.
- More than 20% change in the number of parking spaces provided or required.

Application Fee:

Fees for site plan review are as follows:

Site plan review = \$500 plus \$5.00 / \$1,000 of project value to a maximum of \$3,500

Major plan amendment = \$500 plus \$5.00 / \$1,000 of project value up to a maximum fee of \$3,500.

Minor plan amendment = \$350.

This is a guide to the most common questions and problems. It is not intended nor shall it be considered a complete set of requirements.