

CITY OF LAWRENCEVILLE

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SB 447 PERMIT ADMINISTRATION AND COMPLIANCE POLICY

Section 1. Purpose and Intent. The purpose of this Policy is to establish a uniform administrative framework for the receipt, processing, review, evaluation, approval, denial, issuance, inspection, enforcement, modification, suspension, expiration, abandonment, and closure of permit applications administered by the City of Lawrenceville.

This Policy is intended to promote consistency, transparency, accountability, and procedural efficiency in the administration of permits and related development activities while maintaining compliance with applicable federal law, state law, local ordinances, adopted codes, technical standards, and administrative procedures.

This Policy is adopted pursuant to and intended to supplement, implement, and coordinate applicable provisions of Georgia law, including but not limited to:

- O.C.G.A. § 8-2-20;
- O.C.G.A. § 8-2-26;
- O.C.G.A. § 12-7-3;
- O.C.G.A. § 12-7-9;
- O.C.G.A. § 12-7-11;
- O.C.G.A. § 36-60-34;
- O.C.G.A. § 36-66-1 et seq.;
- O.C.G.A. § 36-70 et seq.;
- and other applicable provisions of state law governing permit administration, land-disturbing activities, development review, code enforcement, inspections, and related regulatory functions.

Nothing contained herein shall be construed to modify, supersede, redefine, limit, waive, or conflict with any requirement, right, obligation, definition, review timeline, enforcement authority, or procedural standard established by applicable law.

Section 2. Definitions. For purposes of permit administration, workflow processing, inspections, approvals, enforcement actions, review procedures, authorized work, and related permitting activities, status may also include the current administrative condition, classification, designation, or procedural position assigned by the Local Issuing Authority to identify workflow progression, review activity, compliance

condition, enforcement condition, administrative action, or procedural disposition within the permitting system.

For purposes of permit administration, status classifications may include synonymous workflow descriptions, software-generated labels, administrative terminology, or procedural designations having substantially similar meaning as determined by the Local Issuing Authority, provided such interpretation does not conflict with applicable law, ordinance, or adopted code.

A. Status. The current stage of review or action on a building or land disturbing activity permit application.

Status classifications may include, but shall not be limited to, and shall be defined as follows:

1. Abandonment. The failure of an applicant, permit holder, owner, contractor, or responsible party to actively pursue, continue, maintain, respond to, or complete a permit application, approved plans, authorized work, required corrective action, review comments, requests for additional information, deficiency notices, or other permitting obligations within the timeframes established by applicable codes, ordinances, regulations, permit conditions, administrative procedures, or written directives of the Local Issuing Authority.

Abandonment may include, but is not limited to:

- failure to respond to review comments;
- failure to provide requested information;
- failure to submit required revisions or corrections;
- failure to satisfy permit conditions;
- failure to commence or continue authorized work;
- prolonged inactivity;
- expiration due to inactivity; or
- other conduct demonstrating that the application, permit, approval, or authorized work is no longer being actively pursued.

The term "Abandonment" shall include, but not be limited to, abandoned, inactive, expired due to inactivity, administratively abandoned, or lapsed.

2. Approved. All applicable requirements have been satisfied and the submitted plans, documents, and supporting materials comply with applicable building codes, zoning requirements, land disturbance regulations, and adopted standards. The project is approved to proceed toward permit issuance;

however, the permit may not yet be issued pending satisfaction of all remaining administrative requirements, conditions, fees, bonds, agreements, recordings, or other applicable prerequisites.

The term "Approved" shall include, but not limited to, approved plans, plans approved, approved construction plans, or approved set of plans.

- 3. Closed.** All required administrative, regulatory, construction, inspection, recording, and post-development obligations associated with the permit or approval have been satisfied, completed, terminated, or otherwise resolved in accordance with applicable codes, ordinances, regulations, permit conditions, or development requirements.

The term "Closed" shall include, but not limited to, completed, finalized, completed and close, or administratively closed.

- 4. Denied.** The Local Issuing Authority determines that the application, plans, documents, reports, supporting materials, proposed work, or requested authorization do not comply with applicable codes, ordinances, regulations, permit requirements, approved conditions, or adopted standards, and the application is therefore formally denied or rejected.

An application may also be denied or rejected when the Local Issuing Authority determines that the applicant has failed to act in good faith to advance the review process, including, but not limited to:

- failing to adequately respond to review comments, correction notices, deficiency notices, or requests for additional information;
- repeatedly submitting incomplete, deficient, inaccurate, inconsistent, nonresponsive, or substantially unchanged materials;
- failing to provide information reasonably necessary to evaluate compliance with applicable requirements;
- failing to pursue the application within applicable timeframes;
- abandoning the application;
- submitting revisions that do not reasonably address previously issued review comments; or
- otherwise impeding, delaying, frustrating, or preventing completion of the review process.

For purposes of this section, good faith pursuit shall mean the timely and reasonable submission of information, revisions, corrections, clarifications,

and supporting documentation necessary to advance the application toward a review determination.

The term "Denied" shall include, but not limited to, rejected, formally rejected, deficient and rejected, rejected pending resubmittal, application denied or permit denied.

- 5. Expired.** A permit, approval, application, authorization, extension, certificate, or related entitlement is no longer valid or enforceable due to the passage of time, failure to commence work, cessation of work, failure to satisfy required conditions, inactivity, expiration of an authorized time period, or failure to comply with applicable codes, ordinances, regulations, permit conditions, or administrative requirements.

The term "Expired" shall include, but not limited to, lapsed, terminated by expiration, no longer valid, expired permit, or expired approval.

- 6. Incomplete.** An application, plans, documents, reports, fees, signatures, supporting materials, or other required submission elements are missing, deficient, inconsistent, inaccurate, illegible, or otherwise insufficient to allow the Local Issuing Authority to commence or continue substantive review and determine compliance with applicable requirements.

The term "Incomplete" shall include, but not limited to, require re-submittal, pending applicant response, incomplete submission, or pending additional information.

- 7. Issued.** A permit has been officially granted. The applicant is authorized to begin construction or land-disturbing activity. Any required conditions (fees paid, bonds posted, etc.) have been satisfied.

The term "Issued" shall include, but not limited to, authorized, granted, or authorized to proceed.

- 8. Submitted.** An application has been formally received by the local government permitting authority. All required initial documents and fees have been turned in. The application is now in the system but has not yet been reviewed.

The term "Submitted" shall include, but not limited to, filed, received, logged, accepted for intake, submittal, or application received.

Submission does not constitute approval, issuance, or acceptance for substantive technical review.

- 9. Suspended.** Suspended. A permit or application has been temporarily halted. This may occur due to, including but not limited to, violations, public health

or safety concerns, stop work orders, enforcement actions, expired approvals, failure to satisfy permit conditions, failure to comply with applicable laws or regulations, failure to respond to requests of the Local Issuing Authority, or other circumstances requiring the temporary suspension of permit processing or authorized work. Work shall remain suspended until the deficiency or condition giving rise to the suspension has been satisfactorily resolved, as determined by the Local Issuing Authority.

10. Under Review. An application is actively being evaluated by staff. Plan reviewers, engineers, or zoning officials are checking compliance with applicable codes, ordinances, regulations, and adopted standards. Comments, corrections, requests for additional information, or required revisions may be generated during this stage, and the applicant shall be responsible for timely responding to and addressing all identified comments, deficiencies, corrections, and requested revisions necessary to continue the review process.

The term "Under Review" shall include, but not limited to, review, in review, pending review, under evaluation, in process, or substantially similar administrative classifications.

11. Withdrawn. An applicant, owner, permit holder, authorized representative, or responsible party voluntarily requests the removal, cancellation, discontinuation, or termination of a permit application, permit, approval, review process, or authorized work prior to final completion, issuance, expiration, denial, revocation, or administrative closure.

The term "Withdrawn" shall include, but not limited to, voluntarily withdrawn, application withdrawn, permit withdrawn, administratively withdrawn, or withdrawn by applicant.

Section 3. Applicability. This Policy shall apply to all permit applications, development reviews, land disturbance permits, building permits, site development permits, engineering permits, inspections, approvals, certificates, and related administrative authorizations processed by the Planning and Development Department unless otherwise governed by applicable state law, ordinance, adopted code, intergovernmental agreement, or separate departmental policy.

Section 4. Policy Administration, Completeness Determinations, and Review Procedures. The City of Lawrenceville Planning and Development Department shall administer permit applications through a structured workflow process utilizing identifiable procedural statuses, documented administrative actions, written communication practices, and objective intake and review procedures.

The Department recognizes that SB 447 emphasizes:

- procedural accountability,
- timely permit processing,
- identifiable workflow stages,
- written communication,
- completeness determinations,
- and administrative transparency.

Accordingly, the Department shall maintain procedures intended to support consistent and defensible permitting administration.

Section 5. Permitting Workflow Statuses. The Department shall utilize the following workflow classifications for permit administration:

- Abandonment
- Approved
- Closed
- Denied
- Expired
- Incomplete
- Issued
- Submitted
- Suspended
- Under Review
- Withdrawn

No application shall remain without an identifiable workflow classification.

Section 6. Completeness Determinations. The Department shall evaluate submitted applications for completeness in accordance with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, permit requirements, application checklists, technical standards, and adopted codes.

For purposes of permit administration, workflow processing, and review timelines, the procedural review clock shall begin when the Local Issuing Authority formally receives, processes, and enters a permit application into the permitting system during normal administrative intake operations, and not necessarily at the exact moment an applicant transmits, uploads, or otherwise submits application materials at an arbitrary time or date.

The Local Issuing Authority may evaluate submitted applications to determine whether sufficient plans, reports, fees, supporting documents, technical information, certifications, signatures, forms, and other required materials have been provided to commence substantive review.

A complete application shall include:

- required forms;
- required plans;
- required reports;
- required fees;
- required supporting documents; and
- other submission materials identified by applicable permit requirements, application checklists, ordinances, regulations, technical standards, or adopted codes.

A. Initial Status Determination. During the first three (3) business days following administrative receipt, intake processing, and entry of a permit application into the permitting system by the Local Issuing Authority, the Local Issuing Authority shall determine the current stage of review or action associated with the permit application and provide a written response indicating the applicable permit status classification.

Such written response may include, but shall not be limited to, the following status classifications:

- Submitted;
- Incomplete;
- Under Review; or
- as determined by the Local Issuing Authority based upon the condition, sufficiency, and completeness of the application materials submitted.

B. Submitted Status. Applications determined to be Submitted shall be formally received by the Local Issuing Authority and processed through the permitting system for administrative intake processing.

1. An application classified as Submitted may:

- undergo completeness evaluation;
- be assigned for departmental, technical, engineering, zoning, stormwater, erosion and sedimentation, or code review;

- be designated as Incomplete, Additional Information Required, or Under Review based upon the condition and completeness of the submitted materials;
- require verification of fees, forms, signatures, certifications, supporting documents, reports, or other submission requirements;
- remain pending intake review, staff assignment, or administrative processing; or
- be returned to the applicant for correction, clarification, or resubmittal prior to commencement of substantive review.

2. An application Submitted status does not constitute:

- acceptance for substantive review;
- determination of completeness;
- approval;
- permit issuance;
- authorization to commence work;
- confirmation of code compliance; or
- vested rights inconsistent with applicable law.

C. Incomplete Status. Applications determined to be Incomplete or Additional Information Required shall be identified by the Local Issuing Authority as lacking sufficient plans, reports, fees, supporting documents, technical information, certifications, signatures, forms, or other required materials necessary to commence or continue substantive review in accordance with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, permit requirements, application checklists, technical standards, or adopted codes.

1. An application classified as Incomplete may:

- remain pending applicant response;
- require resubmittal;
- require additional information, clarification, corrections, or revisions;
- generate deficiency notices, correction comments, or requests for supplemental documentation;
- be administratively delayed pending correction of identified deficiencies;
- be reassigned to Under Review upon determination that sufficient information has been provided to commence substantive review; or

- be rejected, denied, closed, abandoned, expired, or otherwise administratively terminated for failure to adequately respond within applicable timeframes.

The applicant shall be responsible for responding in good faith to all requests for additional information, corrections, revisions, clarifications, or supporting documentation necessary to continue the review process.

2. An Incomplete status does not constitute:

- acceptance for substantive review;
- approval;
- permit issuance;
- authorization to commence work;
- confirmation of code compliance; or
- vested rights inconsistent with applicable law.

D. Under Review Status. Applications determined to be Under Review shall be actively undergoing substantive administrative, technical, engineering, zoning, stormwater, erosion and sedimentation, code, or interdepartmental evaluation by the Local Issuing Authority to determine compliance with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, permit requirements, approved conditions, technical standards, and adopted codes.

1. Applications classified as Under Review may:

- proceed through substantive administrative or technical review;
- be circulated to departments, consultants, agencies, inspectors, engineers, or technical staff for review and comment;
- generate review comments, correction notices, deficiency notices, requests for additional information, or approval conditions;
- require revised plans, supplemental documentation, technical reports, calculations, certifications, or supporting materials;
- remain pending applicant response, outside agency coordination, technical analysis, or resolution of identified issues;
- proceed through one or more subsequent review cycles following resubmittal or correction response;
- be approved, conditionally approved, suspended, rejected, denied, or otherwise reassigned to a different permit status classification based upon review findings; or

- continue in active review until final administrative disposition by the Local Issuing Authority.

The applicant shall be responsible for timely responding to all review comments, correction notices, deficiency notices, requests for additional information, and required revisions necessary to continue the review process.

E. Review Response Timeline. Following acceptance of a permit application for review, the Local Issuing Authority shall endeavor to provide written review comments, correction notices, deficiency notices, review determinations, or other written review response within ten (10) business days whenever practicable and consistent with:

- applicable law;
- application completeness;
- project complexity;
- interdepartmental coordination;
- outside agency review;
- technical review requirements;
- workload conditions; and
- other circumstances reasonably affecting the review process.

F. Administrative Limitations. Completeness determinations and permit status classifications are administrative threshold determinations only and shall not constitute:

- approval;
- permit issuance;
- authorization to commence work;
- confirmation of final compliance;
- determination of substantive technical compliance; or
- vested rights inconsistent with applicable law.

1. Nothing within this Policy shall be construed to:

- waive applicable state law;
- create vested rights;
- guarantee approval;
- require approval of incomplete or noncompliant applications; or

- limit the authority of the Local Issuing Authority to require compliance with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, permit conditions, technical standards, or adopted codes.

Section 7. Permit Review Timelines. The procedural review clock should begin when the Local Issuing Authority formally receives and processes the application into the permitting system during normal administrative intake operations, not necessarily the exact moment an applicant transmits or uploads materials at an arbitrary time or date.

A. The Department shall provide the following:

- During the first three (3) business days following administrative receipt, intake processing, and entry of a permit application into the permitting system by the Local Issuing Authority, the Local Issuing Authority shall determine the current stage of review or action associated with the permit application and provide a written response indicating the applicable permit status classification.

Such written response may include, but shall not be limited to, status classifications including Submitted, Incomplete, or Under Review, as determined by the Local Issuing Authority based upon the condition and completeness of the application materials submitted.

- Following acceptance of a permit application for substantive review, the Local Issuing Authority shall endeavor to provide written review comments, correction notices, deficiency notices, review determinations, or other written review response within ten (10) business days whenever practicable and consistent with applicable law, application completeness, project complexity, interdepartmental coordination, outside agency review, technical review requirements, workload conditions, and other circumstances reasonably affecting the review process.

B. Nothing within this Policy shall be construed to:

- waive applicable state law,
- create vested rights,
- guarantee approval,
- or limit the authority of the Local Issuing Authority to require compliance with applicable regulations.

Section 8. Private Professional Inspection Reports. Pursuant to applicable state law and City ordinance, the Building Official may accept inspection reports from approved agencies or individuals.

The Building Official retains authority to determine whether agencies or individuals are acceptable or qualified for purposes of providing inspection reports relied upon by the City.

1. The Building Official may require:

- licensure verification,
- certifications,
- proof of qualifications,
- insurance documentation,
- conflict disclosures,
- or other information reasonably necessary to determine qualification or report acceptability.

Section 9. Recordkeeping and Documentation. The Planning and Development Department shall maintain records relating to:

- status changes,
- review comments,
- inspection reports,
- approvals,
- deficiencies,
- denials,
- enforcement actions,
- and other administrative actions associated with permit processing.

Written communication may include:

- letters,
- email correspondence,
- electronic permitting system notifications,
- review comments,
- inspection reports,
- or other documented communication methods authorized by the Department.

Section 10. Administrative Interpretation. For purposes of permit administration, workflow classifications identified within this Policy may include synonymous administrative classifications, software-generated labels, workflow descriptions, or common permitting terminology having substantially similar procedural meaning as determined by the Local Issuing Authority.

The Local Issuing Authority retains authority to interpret and administer this Policy in a manner consistent with:

- applicable law,
- adopted codes,
- ordinances,
- permit conditions,
- and public health, safety, and welfare.

Section 11. Reservation of Authority. Nothing within this Policy shall be construed to:

- limit the enforcement authority of the City,
- waive compliance with applicable law,
- require approval of noncompliant work,
- restrict the authority of the Building Official,
- or create rights inconsistent with applicable statutes, ordinances, regulations, or adopted codes.

Section 12. Effective Date. This Policy shall become effective upon approval by the Planning and Development Department or other authorized City authority and may be amended administratively as necessary to maintain consistency with applicable law, adopted codes, permitting practices, and operational requirements.