

## Construction Plan Submission & Review Policy

*Last Updated September 8, 2025*

Construction plans submitted for permitting must identify a project location and provide a scope of work. Per the Illinois Architectural Practice Act, projects that involve life safety or structural changes require construction plans prepared by an Illinois licensed design professional as shown below. Mechanical and electrical plans, when needed, must also be prepared by an Illinois licensed design professional. Per the Illinois Plumbing License Law, plumbing plans may be prepared by a licensed Illinois engineer or plumber.

Scope of Work	Definition	Examples	Plans Required
Repair	Maintenance or patching to keep a building in safe condition.	Fixing a pipe, repairing drywall, replacing flooring.	✗ No, unless affecting life safety systems (sprinklers, alarms).
Renovation	Cosmetic work not changing function, occupancy, or life safety features.	Replacing finishes, upgrading lighting, new millwork.	✗ No, unless altering egress, fire barriers, or safety systems.
Modification	Altering or reconfiguring building systems or components.	Moving walls, new HVAC layout, electrical rework.	✓ Yes, especially if affecting exits, fire-rated assemblies, alarms, sprinklers, or structure.
Reconstruction	Significant reworking, gutting, or rebuilding of spaces.	Gut renovation of a floor, converting open space to offices or apartments.	✓ Yes, because it approaches new construction.
Change of Use	Different purpose within the same occupancy classification.	Storage → office (both Business).	⚖ Maybe, it depends on egress, occupant load, and life safety changes. The City may require plans to verify compliance.
Change of Occupancy	Shift to a different occupancy classification.	Warehouse (Industrial) → apartments (Residential).	✓ Yes, it must comply with new occupancy requirements.
New Construction or Additions	Increase in floor area, height, or volume.	Adding a wing, extra story, or attached garage.	✓ Yes, additions must meet new construction requirements.

The City recognizes qualified design professionals to be those who meet the following definitions established by the International Code Council (ICC). They include but are not limited to Illinois licensed architects and engineers. Depending on the scope of work, multiple professionals from different design disciplines may be required to submit or contribute to planning documents.

**Registered Design Professional:** An individual who is registered or licensed to practice his or her design profession as defined by the statutory requirements of the professional registration laws of the state or jurisdiction in which the project is to be constructed.

**Registered Design Professional in Responsible Charge:** A registered design professional engaged by the owner or the owner's authorized agent to review and coordinate certain aspects of the project, as determined by the code official, for compatibility with the design of the building or structure, including submittal documents prepared by others, deferred submittal documents, and phased submittal documents.

Plans for accessory structures without plumbing and mechanical systems, specifically residential detached garages, may be submitted without the aid of a design professional provided that they have engineer stamped structural elements. Plans for residential decks and patios may be submitted in the same manner. Accessory structures lacking plumbing, mechanical, and electrical systems that are less than two hundred square feet (200 sq ft) in size do not require plan review or permitting, but are still subject to all applicable zoning regulations.

Permit applications submitted without plans prepared by design professionals as described above will be rejected. Plans submitted that are not prepared by design professionals will also be rejected. All plans and associated documents will be submitted in a manner consistent with established best practices. The City will accept plans in a traditional manner on paper but prefers that plans are submitted digitally. Plan review and permitting for all projects will be coordinated through a permit technician who will also serve as the primary contact for all applicants.

Plans prepared by qualified design professionals will be reviewed for completeness and compliance with all applicable adopted codes. Plans will be reviewed within two weeks of submission unless the Building Official determines that a third party review is advisable or necessary. In that case, the applicant will be notified. During review, a code deficiency notice will be prepared identifying missing information, design details that are not code compliant, and any other plan deficiencies. When the review is complete, the deficiency notice will be presented to the submitter stating whether or not some or all permits may at that time be issued. This will be indicated on the deficiency notice as *denied*, *partially approved*, or *approved*.

Permits may not be issued until plans have been determined complete and code compliant by the Building Official. Any disagreement with regard to code interpretation may be appealed by the design professional to the Inspections Commission. See *Chapter 4: Building Regulations* of the Code of Ordinances for more information.