



Permit & Development Center

809 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, WI 53202 | (414) 286-8210 | milwaukee.gov/permits | DevelopmentCenterInfo@milwaukee.gov

To assist persons who are involved in the building construction process, City of Milwaukee plan examiners are available for preliminary discussions regarding building and zoning code interpretations affecting proposed construction projects. These discussions may be informal conversations over the phone or in person, or they may involve more formal meetings.

If you seek a preliminary plan review meeting, please **complete the questionnaire** at the end of this information sheet, and bring the answers with you to the meeting.

Preliminary plan review meetings are charged per Milwaukee Code of Ordinance 200-33:

- \$220 per hour or fraction of an hour for commercial buildings, or,
- \$125 per hour or fraction of an hour for one and two-family homes.

Plan examiners may not need to charge a preliminary plan review fee if a complete application has been made and plan exam fee paid.

Customers who want to know which code provisions apply to a particular project are advised to consult a design professional, such as a registered architect or professional engineer, before contacting a plan examiner.

The design professional combines code knowledge with design expertise, and the designer also will consider the many aspects of the development process that are not dictated by the code.

Getting the most out of a preliminary review: We suggest the following preparation for a preliminary plan review:

- Be specific. The more specific the question, the better the potential for satisfactory answers.
- Remember that the plan examiner's function is to review a project for compliance with building and zoning codes. The plan examiner's job is not to design a project or to do a feasibility study.
- Codes are concerned with providing a minimum degree of health, safety, and welfare, without regard to costs that may put a desired project out of reach for a given budget.
- Know what you want to accomplish in the meeting and communicate that to the plan examiner at the start. We work with a range of customers, and knowing up front what you want to accomplish will help both you and the plan examiner.
- Put your questions in writing before meeting with the plan examiner. Formulating written questions helps clarify the issues, and if you share with the examiner in advance can allow them to provide better replies.
- Provide drawings whenever possible, and in advance of the meeting whenever possible.
- Ensure you have researched the codes for the particular application. The following web sites provide information that may assist in your preparation, and formulation of specific questions:
 - [City zoning ordinance](#)
 - [City maps \(including zoning\)](#)
 - [City building code](#)
 - [Property information](#) for buildings in Milwaukee
 - [WI state building code](#) (does not include the International Building Code)
 - [International Code Council](#)
 - [Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services](#)

Expectations: Preliminary plan exam may not be able to provide definitive answers. Although we administer very detailed zoning and building codes, that work also involves designs where various options available to achieve a desired results. Therefore, many questions are answered not "yes" or "no," but "it depends." Alternate design solutions may often be found to achieve code compliance. Beware of changing plans in one regard may occasionally result in new issues.

Preliminary plan review questionnaire: Please provide the following information about the building that is the subject of the preliminary plan review meeting. Please bring plans, photos, a survey and a site plan to supplement this information.

Property Address	
Zoning of Property	
Use(s) of property under Milwaukee Zoning Ordinance (Chapter 295)	
Number of Stories	
Total square footage	
First floor square footage	
Scope of project (e.g. new construction, tenant alteration, etc.)	
Occupancy classification(s) under the International Building Code (chapter 3)	
Does the project involve a change of use under IBC? If so, identify previous use(s).	
Building construction type (per IBC chapter 6)	
Describe fire protection and/or alarm systems proposed for the building	
In the table below, please list the specific code sections and related questions you wish to discuss.	
Code Section(s)	Specific questions you wish to discuss