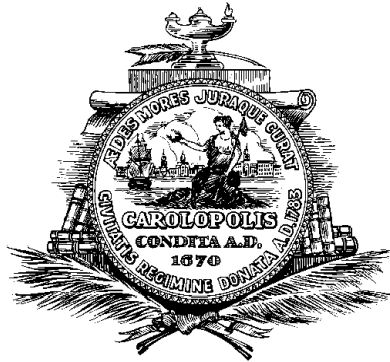


TRC

Technical Review Committee Procedure Manual



Site Plan Review

PUD Master Plan Review

Subdivision Review

City of Charleston, South Carolina, USA

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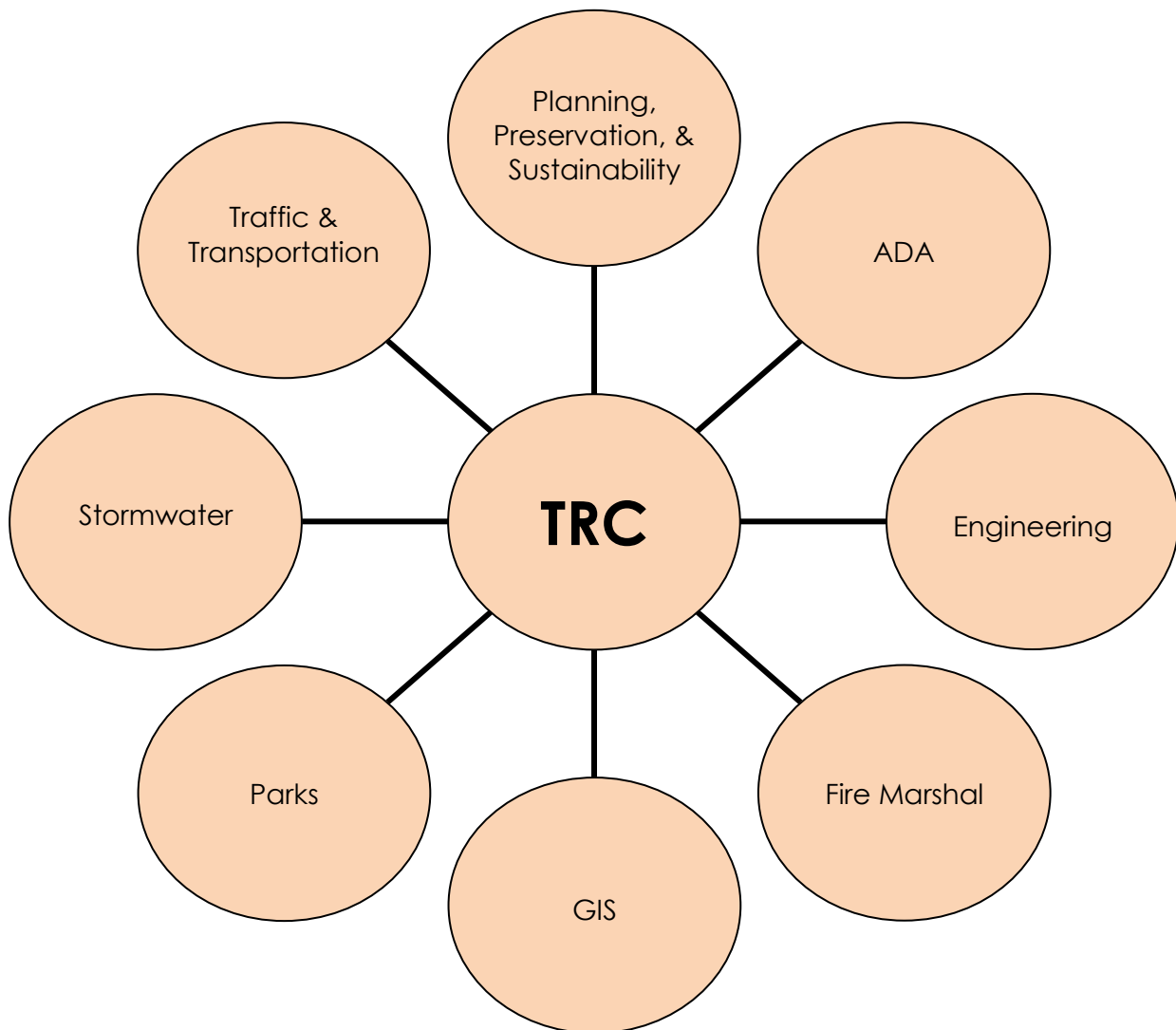
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Welcome and Purpose

Thank you for doing business in the City of Charleston. The Technical Review Committee (TRC) exists to help people working in Charleston get development projects designed and permitted in the most efficient manner possible. Like all cities, Charleston has a set of laws established by City Council that are intended to protect the health and safety of citizens. These laws often are also for the purpose of improving the quality of design and construction in Charleston. Since there are multiple City departments responsible for administering these laws it is beneficial to have development review coordinated to avoid confusion and delay. That is the purpose of TRC.

For information about the TRC, applications, and meeting schedules please visit the City's website at www.charleston-sc.gov.



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Section 1: Introduction

The TRC consists of representatives from various city departments who address design, development, and construction issues including building codes, zoning requirements, stormwater management regulations, traffic impacts, fire codes, and right-of-way improvements.

The Technical Review Committee Procedure Manual has been prepared in accordance with the [Zoning Ordinance](#) to assist designers and developers through three different types of project reviews.

1. **Site Plan Review** includes multi-family, institutional, commercial and industrial development in accordance with [Article 6](#) of the Zoning Ordinance.
2. **PUD Master Plan Review** includes properties zoned Planned Unit Development (PUD) in accordance with [Article 2](#) and [Article 8](#) of the Zoning Ordinance. PUD Master Plans typically include Subdivision Concept Plans and both follow the same approval process: TRC review and approval followed by Planning Commission review and approval.
3. **Subdivision Review** includes properties being subdivided in accordance with [Article 8](#) of the Zoning Ordinance. TRC subdivision review and approval typically includes three components: Subdivision Concept Plan, Preliminary Subdivision Plat, and Road Construction Plans. Each component is submitted to TRC for review and approval. Subdivision Concept Plans also require Planning Commission approval.

This manual describes the general information that must be provided with each application to allow for adequate staff review. This manual does not include all regulations pertaining to new development. For these regulations, various publications available from the City of Charleston or other agencies should be consulted. These include the following:

- [City of Charleston Website](#)
- [City of Charleston Code of Ordinances](#)
- [City of Charleston Zoning Ordinance](#)
- [International Building Code](#)
- [International Fire Code](#)

- [ADA Architectural Guidelines](#)
- [City of Charleston Stormwater Design Standards Manual](#)
- [City of Charleston Street Tree Manual](#)
- [City of Charleston Street Light Management](#)
- [SCDOT ARMS Manual](#)
- [MUTCD](#)
- [Standard Highway Signs and Markings](#)
- [ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#)

Section 2: TRC Review Requirements

2.1 Developments Requiring TRC Site Plan Approval ([Sec. 54-604.a.](#))

1. Any new building construction in excess of 500 square feet; or
2. Any construction or renovation resulting in the addition of 2,000 square feet or more of space to an existing structure; or
3. Any construction or development resulting in changes to traffic circulation and/or stormwater drainage systems onto or off of a site; or
4. TRC approval required by the zoning classification of a given site; or
5. Site Plan review required by restrictive covenants applicable to a given site; or
6. Single-family or two-family dwelling unit construction resulting in a total of four or more units on a single lot

2.2 Exemptions from TRC Site Plan Approval ([Sec. 54-604.b.](#))

1. Single-family or two-family dwelling unit construction resulting in a total of three or fewer units on a lot
2. Small storage structures or garages not exceeding 500 square feet
3. Routine repairs and maintenance of existing structures
4. Parking lots that are less than 5,000 square feet do not require review by TRC, but do require review and approval by the City's ADA Coordinator for ADA compliance

2.3 Developments Requiring TRC PUD Master Plan Approval ([Sec. 54-253](#) & [54-809](#))

PUD Master Plan Approval is required for all properties zoned or being rezoned PUD (Planned Unit Development). PUD Master Plans typically include a Subdivision Concept Plan and both follow the same approval process. A PUD Master Plan is reviewed by TRC as part of the rezoning and/or Subdivision Concept Plan approval process. The review of a PUD

rezoning application may be carried out simultaneously with the review of the PUD Master Plan and Subdivision Concept Plan.

2.4 Developments Requiring TRC Subdivision Approval ([Sec. 54-808](#), [54-809](#), [54-810](#))

TRC Subdivision Approval is required for any property being subdivided in a manner such that it is considered a Major Subdivision. Major Subdivisions require Subdivision Concept Plan approval by TRC and Planning Commission, Preliminary Subdivision Plat approval by TRC, and Road Construction Plan approval by TRC. All Final Subdivision Plats and Preliminary Subdivision Plats for Minor Subdivisions are not approved by TRC and are instead reviewed and approved by the Plat Review Committee through a weekly review process.

Section 3: Development Classifications for TRC Review

3.1 TRC Site Plan Classifications

Site Plans are not classified by different project types. All Site Plan applications include the same requirements and follow the same process.

3.2 TRC PUD Master Plan Classifications

A PUD may be classified as a PUD Site Plan; if being subdivided, a PUD may also be classified as a Minor or Major Subdivision (see 3.3 below). All PUD projects require the review of a PUD Master Plan by TRC.

3.3 TRC Subdivision Classifications ([Sec. 54-808.2](#))

- A. **Minor Subdivision:** all divisions of a tract or parcel of land into 4 or fewer lots and any subdivision not considered a Major Subdivision. Minor Subdivisions do not require approval by the TRC, but instead require Preliminary Subdivision Plat and Final Subdivision Plat approval by the Plat Review Committee, which is managed by the Engineering Division.
- B. **Major Subdivision:** all divisions of a tract or parcel of land into 5 or more lots, or any division of land involving any of the following:
 - 1. A new or extended public or private right-of-way, but not including future street alignments illustrated in a plan of resubdivision as required by [Sec. 54-814](#)
 - 2. Improvements within an existing street right-of-way, other than repair of streets, or repair or construction of sidewalks or other pedestrian connections required by these regulations, fire hydrants or other types of minor improvements necessary to serve the lots being created
 - 3. A future public school site, park site, greenway corridor or open space site
 - 4. The dedication of a right-of-way or easement for construction of a public water or sewer transmission line
 - 5. Dedications, reservations, improvements, or environmental conditions that, in the opinion of the Zoning Administrator with advice from reviewing agencies, require construction documents to be reviewed prior to final plat approval in order to insure the public health, safety, and welfare

Major Subdivisions require Subdivision Concept Plan approval by TRC and Planning Commission, Preliminary Subdivision Plat approval by TRC, Road Construction Plan approval by TRC, and Final Subdivision Plat approval by the Plat Review Committee.

Section 4: TRC Procedures

The Technical Review Committee must approve all Site Plans, PUD Master Plans, and Subdivision Plans during a regularly scheduled or appointed meeting date. The Technical Review Committee usually meets 4 times per month on Thursdays at 9:00a.m. in Conference Room 1408 in the Gaillard Center at 2 George Street. A schedule of meetings and submittal deadlines is available at the Permit Center at 2 George Street and on the [City's website](#).

4.1 Procedures for All Applications

- A. Required application materials must be submitted to the Permit Center at 2 George in accordance with the published schedule of deadlines and meeting dates. Applications that do not include all required information or that are submitted late will not be accepted. All subsequent submittals made after the first submittal must include a copy of previous TRC comments and written responses to those comments.
- B. Application materials and plans shall be forwarded by the TRC Coordinator to the appropriate departments prior to the scheduled meetings.
- C. The applicant, upon a showing of extreme hardship, may petition the Chairman of the Technical Review Committee to schedule a special meeting. If approved by the Chairman, the date and time of the special meeting shall be set with notice of the meeting sent to the applicant and members of the Technical Review Committee. If a special meeting is called, a total application fee equal to double the standard fee shall be charged to the applicant.
- D. During the TRC meeting, written comments noting all items of the proposed development not in compliance with city codes shall be provided to and discussed with the applicant.
- E. The applicant may submit application(s) to any City of Charleston board or commission concurrently with any TRC application. It is strongly recommended, however, that the applicant first apply for TRC review before proceeding to any City of Charleston board or commission. The applicant is also advised that final approval by TRC is not granted until all other City approvals, including staff, board, and commission approvals, have been obtained.

- F. All work within the right-of-way of state roads must be permitted by the SCDOT and all state permits must be obtained and submitted to TRC with the application for final approval. Therefore, applications for developments requiring SCDOT permits are advised to begin that review process concurrently with the TRC process.
- G. Signage for developments should be considered early in the design phase and in conjunction with landscaping improvements. Sign information identifying the type, dimensions and locations of the proposed signs must be submitted with the application for final approval. A separate sign permit application must be filed and approved by the Zoning and Preservation Divisions prior to the installation of the sign.

4.2 Procedures for Site Plan Review

- A. A pre-application submittal to TRC may be made for all Site Plan projects prior to subsequent full application submittals. After the pre-application Site Plan review, all subsequent applications to the TRC shall include all required information required to issue final approval.
- B. Site Plan submittals made for optional pre-application review by TRC do not constitute a site specific development plan as defined in [Sec. 54-961](#). A vested development right is established upon the first review by TRC following an optional pre-application submittal.
- C. An Early Site Package submittal may be made to TRC for approval of site work prior to the approval of the full TRC Site Plan and Building Inspections plans for vertical construction. Activities that may be approved with an Early Site Package include tree removal and clearing, demolition of buildings or hardscape, rough grading and surcharge, and test piles. Utility installations, production piles, or other vertical construction is not permitted as part of an Early Site Package approval.
- D. When a Site Plan application receives final approval, 6 full sets of the plans and 1 set of the landscape plans and details and a digital copy shall be submitted to the Zoning Division and shall be stamped and signed by the Chair of the Technical Review Committee.
- E. After final Site Plan approval, the applicant is authorized to install erosion and/or sediment control measures and tree protection barricades. Additionally, the applicant shall be required to pay a silt fence/erosion control inspection fee to the Engineering Division. Inspections of the erosion controls by an Engineering inspector and the tree protection

barricades by a Zoning inspector must be completed. Upon approval of the erosion controls and tree protection barricades by the inspectors, the applicant will pick up two (2) sets of the approved and stamped Site Plans: one set to be presented to the Building Inspections Division with the application for a Building Permit, and one set for the applicant to keep at the construction site during all phases of construction.

- F. Building construction drawings may be submitted to the Building Inspections Division for their review at any time during the TRC Site Plan review process.
- G. A Building Permit shall be issued by the Building Inspections Division after they have approved the building construction plans and received a copy of the stamped TRC Site Plans from the applicant.

4.3 Procedures for PUD Master Plan Review

- A. A mandatory pre-application meeting with City Planning and Zoning staff shall be arranged prior to a formal submittal for TRC review.
- B. Upon a formal submittal being made, TRC shall review the PUD Master Plan to determine if the plan satisfies all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and City Code. PUD Master Plans shall be reviewed at TRC two times prior to being presented to Planning Commission, unless, at the mandatory pre-application meeting, City staff determines that two visits to TRC prior to Planning Commission are unnecessary.
- C. The findings of the TRC review process shall be presented to the Planning Commission and a staff recommendation for approval, conditional approval, disapproval, or deferral will be made. The Planning Commission shall provide a recommendation to City Council to approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove the PUD Master Plan.
- D. The applicant may coordinate the PUD rezoning and PUD Master Plan review with the Subdivision Concept Plan review. PUD Master Plans typically include a Subdivision Concept Plan and both follow the same approval process. Therefore, the review of a Subdivision Concept Plan may be carried out simultaneously with the review of a PUD rezoning application or PUD Master Plan application.

4.4 Procedures for Subdivision Review

- A. A mandatory pre-application meeting with City Planning and Zoning staff shall be arranged prior to a formal submittal for TRC review.
- B. **Subdivision Concept Plan:** TRC shall review the Subdivision Concept Plan to determine if the plan satisfies all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and City Code. Subdivision Concept Plans shall be reviewed at TRC two times prior to being presented to Planning Commission, unless, at the mandatory pre-application meeting, City staff determines that two visits to TRC prior to Planning Commission are unnecessary. The findings of the TRC review process shall be presented to the Planning Commission and a staff recommendation for approval, conditional approval, disapproval, or deferral will be made. The Planning Commission shall approve, conditionally approve, or disapprove the Subdivision Concept Plan.
- C. **Preliminary Subdivision Plat:** Upon receipt of TRC approval, 2 full copies and a digital copy of the plat shall be submitted to the Zoning Division and shall be stamped and signed by the Chair of the Technical Review Committee.
- D. **Road Construction Plans:** Upon receipt of TRC approval, 6 full sets of the plans, 1 set of the landscape plans and details, and a digital copy shall be submitted to the Engineering Division and shall be stamped and signed by the City Engineer.

4.5 Appeals

Staff or TRC actions to approve or disapprove a TRC Site Plan, Preliminary Subdivision Plat or Road Construction Plans may be appealed to the Planning Commission by any party in interest. The Planning Commission shall act on the appeal within sixty days of the action being appealed and the action of the Planning Commission is final (Sec. [54-607](#) & [54-810](#)).

4.6 Revisions to Approved Plans

Any major changes to the TRC approved plans within public right-of-way or private property that are specific to an approved detail and/or code must be submitted for consideration to the Chair of the Technical Review Committee by the engineer of record and/or the professional whose registration stamp and

signature appears on the plans. The Chair of the TRC will consider the request and determine if additional TRC review is warranted. Within the public right-of-way, any changes in previously approved specifications for materials must only be submitted and approved in writing by the City Engineer.

Section 5: TRC Site Plan Review Submittal Requirements

A Technical Review Committee application with required plan sheets, supplemental information, and fees must be submitted to and accepted by the Zoning Division prior to the deadlines set forth in the TRC "Schedule of Meetings".

Incomplete applications or Site Plans that do not include all required information will not be accepted. Please note that 24" x 36" drawings are preferred, oversized Site Plans must be justified.

5.1 Site Plan Requirements

Applications for TRC Review must include eight (8) complete sets of Site Plans. TRC Site Plan application and checklists are available on the [City's website](#). A City of Charleston Construction Activity Permit Application may also be required (see City of Charleston [Stormwater Design Standards Manual](#)).

5.2 Site Plan Submittal Requirements

In general, Site Plan submittals must provide the following information. Drawings shall be prepared by an architect, landscape architect, surveyor, or engineer registered in South Carolina. Site Plans should be drawn at a scale of 1" = 50' or greater. Applications requiring a smaller scale, such as 1" = 100', must gain prior approval from the TRC Chair.

A. Pre-Application Review

- Title Sheet
- Existing Conditions
- Layout Plan

B. All Subsequent Reviews

Plan Sheets

- Title Sheet
- Existing Conditions
- Layout Plan
- Grading and Drainage Plan
- Utility Plan
- Landscape Plan
- Fire Protection Plan
- ADA Accessibility Plan

- Elevations

Supplemental Information (if required)*

- Traffic Impact Study**
- Construction Activity Application with Supporting Documentation
- Comprehensive Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
- Street Name Reservation Documentation
- Addressing Plan
- City Encroachment Agreements
- Permits from Other Agencies

*The necessity of these items shall be determined at the Pre-Application Review. If required, the applicant shall provide documentation of each item's status as part of each submittal following the Pre-Application Review. When completed, these items must be submitted only once.

**A Traffic Impact Study is required when a development includes one or more of the following:

- a. A drive-through service window
- b. More than six fuel dispensing units
- c. More than 10,000 square feet of non-residential building coverage in existing and/or new buildings
- d. Five or more acres
- e. The requirement of a variance from the driveway spacing requirements of Article 3, Part 3 of the Zoning Ordinance
- f. A restaurant with more than 4,000 square feet of gross floor area
- g. Single- or two-family dwellings in which the total area ultimately to be developed permits 45 or more dwelling units

These types of developments shall require a Traffic Impact Study unless the Department of Traffic and Transportation deems that a Traffic Impact Study is not required on the basis of the Department's prior studies, analysis, and evaluation of existing or proposed transportation facilities. Similarly, and depending on the type and size of a single- or two-family development, the Department of Traffic and Transportation may require a basic level of traffic study as opposed to a full Traffic Impact Study. Additional components of a Traffic Impact Study may be required as deemed necessary.

5.3 Early Site Package Submittal Requirements

In general, Early Site Package submittals must provide the following information. Drawings shall be prepared by an architect, landscape architect, surveyor, or engineer registered in South Carolina. Site Plans should be drawn at a scale of 1" = 50' or greater. Applications requiring a smaller scale, such as 1" = 100', must gain prior approval from the TRC Chair.

A. Pre-Application Review

- Title Sheet
- Existing Conditions
- ESP Plan

B. All Subsequent Reviews

Plan Sheets

- Title Sheet
- Brief Project Description
- Existing Conditions
- Demolition Plan
- Erosion/Sediment Control and Tree Protection Barricade Plan/Details
- Rough Grading Plan/Surcharge Plan
- Test Pile Plan

Supplemental Information (if required)*

- Traffic Impact Study and Truck Route Plan
- Construction Activity Application with Supporting Documentation
- Comprehensive Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
- Approved Plat
- City Encroachment Agreements
- Permits from Other Agencies

*The necessity of these items shall be determined at the Pre-Application Review. If required, the applicant shall provide documentation of each item's status as part of each submittal following the Pre-Application Review. When completed, these items must be submitted only once.

Section 6: PUD Master Plan Review Submittal Requirements

A Technical Review Committee application with required Master Plan, supplemental information, and fees must be submitted to and accepted by the Zoning Division prior to the deadlines set forth in the TRC "Schedule of Meetings".

Incomplete applications or Master Plans that do not include all required information will not be accepted. If a Subdivision Concept Plan is submitted in conjunction with the PUD document, 24" x 36" drawings are preferred.

6.1 PUD Master Plan Submittal Requirements

Applications for PUD Master Plan approval must include eight (8) complete sets of plans. The application and submittal checklist are available on the [City's website](#) and in the Permit Center at 2 George.

A. Mandatory Pre-Application Meeting

It is not required for these plans to be prepared by a licensed professional.

- Conceptual Land Use Plan
- General Plan for Public Facilities

B. PUD Master Plan Submittal

Each plan shall be certified by an architect, engineer, landscape architect, or surveyor registered in the State of South Carolina and shall, at a minimum, include the following information:

- Title Page
- Current Survey of Existing Conditions
- Aerial Photograph with Project Boundaries
- Land Use Plan
- Open Space Plan
- Zoning Regulations
- Cultural Resource Inventory
- Preliminary Drainage Study*
- Traffic Impact Study*
- Any additional information requested at the Pre-Application Review

*The extent of information required in these items shall be determined at the Pre-Application Meeting.

Section 7: Subdivision Review Submittal Requirements

A Technical Review Committee application with required subdivision plan, supplemental information, and fees must be submitted to and accepted by the Zoning Division prior to the deadlines set forth in the TRC "Schedule of Meetings".

Incomplete applications or subdivision plans that do not include all required information will not be accepted. Please note that 24" x 36" drawings are preferred, oversized plans must be justified.

7.1 Subdivision Plan Requirements

Applications for subdivision approval must include eight (8) complete sets of subdivision plats/plans. The TRC subdivision application and submittal checklists are available at on the [City's website](#) or in the Permit Center at 2 George. Subdivision Plans shall be certified by an engineer or surveyor registered in South Carolina and shall be drawn to a scale of 1"=100' or greater. Submittals requiring a smaller scale must gain prior approval from the TRC Chair.

7.2 Subdivision Submittal Requirements

A. Subdivision Concept Plan

- Title Sheet
- Aerial Photograph with Project Boundaries
- Current Survey of Existing Conditions
- Layout Plan
- Open Space Plan (if required)
- Grading and Drainage Plan
- Preliminary Drainage Study
- Utility Plan
- Fire Protection Plan
- ADA Accessibility Plan (or ADA inclusive statement on title sheet)
- Phase Plan
- Right-of-Way Cross-Sections
- Traffic Impact Study (if required)

B. Preliminary Subdivision Plat

- Plat
- Street Name Reservation Documentation
- Permits from Other Agencies

C. Road Construction Plans

- Title Sheet
- Current Survey of Existing Conditions
- Approved Preliminary Subdivision Plat
- Street Name Reservation Documentation
- Roadway Plan and Profiles
- Open Space Plan
- Landscape, Street Tree, and Lighting Plan
- Grading and Drainage Plan
- Utility Plan
- Fire Protection Plan
- ADA Accessibility Plan (or ADA inclusive statement on Title Sheet)
- Tree Protection Plan
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
- Traffic Sign and Marking Plan
- Detail Sheets

D. Final Subdivision Plat

Final Plats are not reviewed by TRC but are reviewed by the Plat Review Committee via a weekly plat review and recording process.

7.3 Additional Requirements

A. Preliminary Drainage Study

A preliminary drainage study and plan shall be required for all single- and two-family developments requiring TRC subdivision review. A full basin study may be required as part of the preliminary drainage study and plan in basins with known drainage problems, as determined by the Engineering Division. The drainage study and plan shall be of sufficient detail to assess the preliminary sizing and location of all major drainage facilities proposed and the associated easements. The plan shall locate all existing easements and intended outfalls. The study and plan shall support compliance with all current drainage policies of the City.

B. Traffic Impact Study

Developments in which the total area to ultimately be developed permits 45 or more dwelling units or is five or more acres shall require a Traffic Impact Study unless the Department of Traffic and Transportation deems that a Traffic Impact Study is not required on the basis of the Department's prior studies, analysis, and evaluation of existing or proposed transportation facilities. Similarly, and depending on the type and size of a single- or two-family development, the Department of Traffic and Transportation may require a basic level of traffic study as opposed

to a full Traffic Impact Study. Additional components of a Traffic Impact Study may be required as deemed necessary.

C. Stormwater Requirements

A completed Construction Activity Application, review fee, Comprehensive Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan with Stormwater Technical Report, and other required information shall be submitted with the subdivision application for Road Construction Plans.

D. Encroachment permits from the SCDOT are required for any work within State rights-of-way. No project will be allowed to progress from final review to in-house review without SCDOT approval.

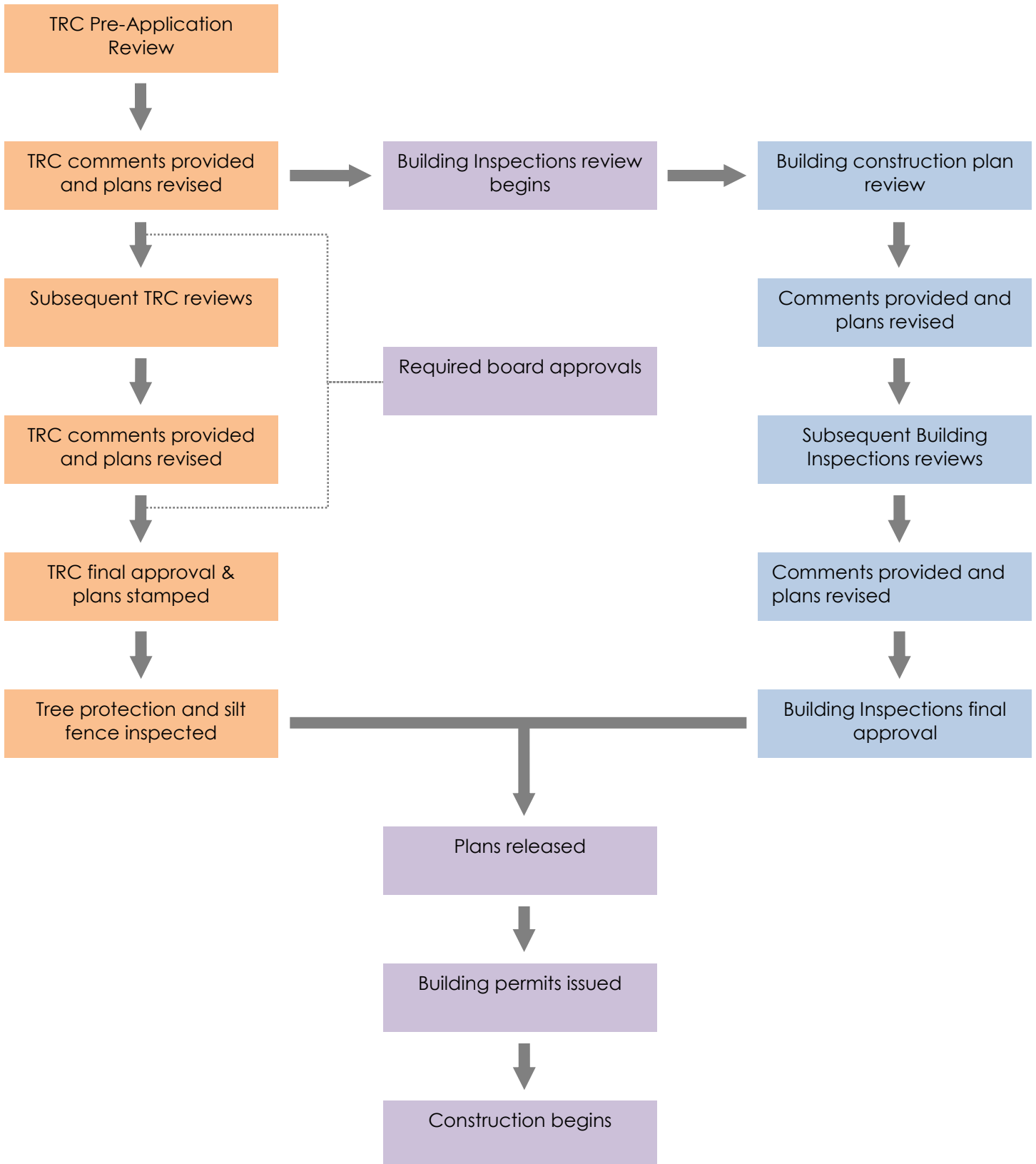
E. Permits from agencies other than the City of Charleston. This may include South Carolina DHEC/OCRM permits and/or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits where applicable.

F. A listing on the Preliminary Plat and Road Construction Plans of all approvals and/or variances obtained from any board or commission with the type, date, and conditions of approval indicated.

G. If applicable, all City encroachment agreements must have City Council approval prior to final TRC approval.

Section 8: TRC Review Process Flowcharts

TRC Site Plan Review Process



TRC Subdivision Review Process

