



City Manager's Office

Dear Business Owner,

The City of Cedar Springs has made significant strides over the last several years to reduce government inefficiencies, reduce the costs of business development, and modify zoning requirements to improve the time, experience, and cost of starting a business within the city.

The City recognizes the importance of a robust commercial and industrial base in the City for the Citizens of Cedar Springs. Local jobs and local retail opportunities are important parts of a healthy City and it is our goal to bring new businesses to the City and help retain those businesses who already call Cedar Springs home.

If you are considering opening a new business in Cedar Springs please review the requirements of the most popular methods of opening a business below:

1. **New Build:** All new commercial or industrial buildings require a site plan review with the Planning Commission. The process generally begins with the submission of the site plan review application and all accompanying documents to City Hall with the required fee and escrow amount. **Planning Commission approval generally takes between 21 and 60 days to complete.** Many applicants find it helpful to discuss the project with the zoning administrator prior to submission of the application. Building setback requirements can be seen [here](#). The applicant should review the zoning Table of Uses of the City's Ordinances to identify permitted and special land uses in the zoning district, that ordinance can be reviewed [here](#).
 - a. The site plan review procedures can be seen [here](#).
 - b. The site plan application checklist can be seen [here](#).
 - c. The site plan escrow policy can be seen [here](#).
 - d. The site plan ordinance can be seen [here](#).
 - e. The landscaping ordinance can be seen [here](#).
 - f. The lighting ordinance can be seen [here](#).
 - g. The parking and access management ordinance can be seen [here](#).
 - h. The site plan review application can be seen [here](#).
 - i. If your proposed use is considered a Special Land Use (SLU) you must also submit the special land use approval permit which can be seen [here](#).
2. **Improvement of an existing building:** an increase in building or parking lot size or footprint on what already exists at the location. To reduce business costs and shorten permitting approval time the City allows many such plans to receive administrative approval from the zoning administrator instead of requiring Planning Commission approval. **Administrative approval generally takes 1-3 days if all the necessary information is submitted.** If you are unsure if you fall in this category please contact the city manager/zoning administrator with any questions.
 - a. Enlargements or modifications of existing non-residential buildings or multiple family buildings which do not increase the need for additional parking may submit a sketch plan zoning permit application to the zoning administrator. The sketch plan review form can be found [here](#).
 - b. Enlargements or modifications of existing non-residential buildings or multiple family

buildings which do increase the need for additional parking must go through the site plan review procedure similar to a new build. The City's parking requirements can be found [here](#). The rules for deferred parking can be found [here](#).

3. **Change of use of an existing building or land:** a business takes over and changes the use of a building or land from what previously exists or existed at that location without making any significant building or land improvements. It is helpful to identify what zoning designation the previous business and the proposed business are classified as under the City's zoning Table of Uses which can be found [here](#). It is also helpful to submit a narrative description of the proposed business activities to enable the zoning administrator to understand how your business meets the zoning requirements. If you have any questions about these requirements, please feel free to contact the city manager/ zoning administrator.
 - a. Changing ownership of a business does not require any kind of permitting or approval so long as the business maintains the same use of the property.
 - b. Changing the use of a property to the same use of the property, so long as that use is a permitted use or had previously acquired a special land use for that specific use does not require zoning approval.
 - i. For example: Changing from a sit down restaurant to a sit down restaurant, from a drive-thru restaurant to a drive-thru restaurant or from a retail business to a retail business (without changing the building or the parking) is exempt from zoning approval.
 - ii. For example: Changing from a sit down restaurant to a drive-thru restaurant, from a retail business to a warehouse or from a medical office to a bank all require a zoning permit application (sketch plan review) or planning commission approval.
 - c. Changing the use of a property from a permitted use to a special land use will require planning commission approval.
 - d. Changing the use of a property from a special land use to a different type of special land use will require planning commission approval.
 - e. Changing the use of a property from either a permitted use or a special land use to a not allowed use will not be approved.
 - f. Adding new/different additional uses to a property which are not normal activities associated with the existing business is considered to be changing the use of the property and must receive zoning approval

If you have any thoughts, questions or concerns about anything listed here the zoning administrator/city manager would be happy to discuss them with you on the phone, in person or via e-mail.

Sincerely,



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