Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the current review period for building drawings?
We generally review plans within a targeted 3-5 business day period. Larger plans and number of projects under review may affect this period somewhat

Who submits the construction plans?
We accept plans from design professionals, agents, contractors, or owners for a project. Plans should not be submitted without having a Combination Permit Application submitted as well. This application may be completed on-line, we can email you the appropriate application, or place the application in an ftp account folder we can set up for you for plans larger than typical email attachments will handle. Please note however that permits are ONLY issued to properly licensed and insured contractors who are approved to do business in Tennessee and the City of Bristol. If any person other than the contractor submits the application, the contractor will be required to submit a revised application as soon as he is identified and have his information verified and approved prior to permit issue.

The FTP Site & Process?
The service is being instituted to improve access for our customers and is intended to improve the efficiency of the plan review process and conserve natural resources.

* You may use your account for business with the City of Bristol Only.
* Once your account is active and you may begin using it immediately.
* When you drop plans in your folder, notify our office via e-mail that the plans are there:
  To: Sherry Stover @ sstover@bristoltn.org
  Matt Bailey @ mebailey@bristoltn.org

  * Initial submission of plans MUST be in a single pdf file. Resubmission of plan sheets MUST be in Individual sheets so that they are inserted into the reviewed or approved set in the proper order when review is complete.
  
  * We will notify you when they are approved or if there are comments for resolution prior to approval.
  
  * When the plans are approved, we will place an electronic plan review stamp on the plans and secure the document so that changes cannot be made after approval. You will still be able to print the documents.
  
  * When you receive an approved set of plans, you will need to print at least one complete colored set of the plans and have them available at the job site for the inspector when he is performing his inspections. You may print additional approved copies for subcontractors on the project as needed.
  
  * When changes are made to any of the pages in an approved set of plans, follow the same submission process above for the sheets that have changed only. When the changes are approved, print copies with the approval stamps and replace the originally approved pages at the job site. Please don't re-submit the entire plan package.
What Needs To Be Submitted for Review To Begin?

- Permit Application – Submitted electronically through the City’s website OR from an application emailed to you or placed on your ftp site.
- Construction Plans – 1 set submitted electronically through your ftp site. See instructions for this submittal above.
- ComCheck Energy Analysis for:
  o Envelope
  o Mechanical (HVAC) Systems
  o Interior Lighting
  o Exterior Site Lighting (if any)
    Please ensure that the information required by the ComChecks is compatible with plan details.

Are energy calculations required?
Yes, the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code applies and ComCheck is the most widely used compliance tool. We will need submittals for building envelope, interior lighting, exterior (site) lighting & mechanical (hvac) systems.

Can the drawings be submitted via mail, FedEx, etc.?
We prefer plans to be submitted electronically and we will set up an ftp account for your plans and documents. Contact us and we can set up this account for you generally in a time span of few minutes.

Do the plans need to be embossed?
No, we accept electronic delivery of the plans and as long as the seal is properly displayed and signed, we are OK. State of Tennessee registered design professional seals are required.

Do we need to state the general contractor's name at time of permit?
Yes, before the permit is issued. As indicated above, a design professional, expeditor or construction manager may submit the initial application and plans for the review process to begin. The Combination Permit will only be ISSUED to a properly licensed contractor, design professional or construction manager.

Do we need to state any subcontractor’s names?
List all that you know at the time the permit is applied for. Before any subcontractor shows up on site and starts work, they need to be listed on the Contractor/Subcontractor Listing and have their licenses and insurance verified.

Do we need to submit licenses for any contractors?
If they are not local contractors who are already listed in our system, we will need license information (state & local if required) before the permit can be issued.

Are insurance certificates or bonds required?
Liability and worker's compensation insurance is required for all contractors (including subcontractors) and we must see proof of these. A Bond is not required.

Do we need to submit to the Fire Department separately?
No, there is only one submission. That is to our office. If we need additional approvals from other departments or agencies, we will obtain them as part of the review process or advise you after the initial review that additional reviews are required and give you contacts for these agencies.

How many permits do I need and who obtains them?
On most commercial projects, there is only one Commercial Combination permit issued and the general contractor or construction manager obtains this permit. It is an all inclusive permit and the permit fee is based on the total cost of construction for the entire project. The permit applicant will
submit a Contractor/Subcontractor Listing form along with the permit application that provides the required information about all of the subcontractors for the project. Should you need to phase your project, such as the need to start foundation work prior to all plans being completed, we can accommodate this request. Discuss this with the Code Enforcement staff to work out the submission requirements and coordinate plan submissions.

Total Cost of Construction is defined as, "Fair Market Value" and includes the actual cost incurred by the owner, all contractors, subcontractors and other parties for labor, materials, equipment, profit and incidental expenses for the entire project. Be sure that this Total Cost of Construction is reflected on your permit application.

Any work that is to be performed that is not under the control of the general contractor, the person/firm wishing to perform the work must apply for a separate permit and submit the proper state and local licensing and insurance requirements to be qualified to obtain a permit.

**Do we need low voltage permits? If so, do low voltage drawings have to be submitted prior to issuing the building permit?**

Low voltage is part of the Commercial Combination permit issued for the project. Low voltage portions of the project, including the subcontractors.

**Special Flood Hazard Area Requirements.**

If your property is in the Special Flood Hazard Area, then you will need to provide a Flood Elevation Certificate and the design, if new construction, must be based on the Design Flood Elevation. A final elevation certificate must be submitted for approval after the Base Flood Elevation is established to verify compliance with the Design Flood Elevation. If the project will be a substantial improvement or renovation of an existing building elevation of the building or other approved floodproofing measures will be required.

**Site Utility Construction.**

Site infrastructure and utilities will be inspected by City of Bristol Code Enforcement Inspectors according to the standards contained within the 2018 International Codes and the 2017 National Electric Code as adopted by the City of Bristol. Materials used and methods employed must comply with the requirements of these codes and the standards referenced by these codes or obtain approval for any modifications in writing and in advance of the use and installation.

Utilities installed in the public right of way or in public easements must comply with the requirements contained within the City of Bristol Standards and Specifications.

**Special Inspections.**

If your project contains a provision (typically within the structural drawings or specifications) for special inspections as they relate to Chapter 17 of the International Building Code, the Registered Design Professional in Responsible Charge will be required to complete a Statement of Special Inspections form as provided by the City of Bristol and include all of the required supporting documents.

**Pre-Construction Meeting.**

A pre-construction meeting may be required on all projects. Once your review is started a determination can be made as to whether or not a meeting is required for your project. If your project has a special inspections program, a pre-construction meeting **IS REQUIRED**. At a minimum, the registered design professional in responsible charge and the contractor are required to attend. Others may attend if you wish.
A complete set of design professional's sealed design drawings must include:

1. A Cover Sheet drawing showing a code analysis for the building with any currently adopted minimum building, fire, life safety, and accessibility codes enforceable at the time of the submittal.
2. An approved Site Plan (or civil plans). Refer to the Planning and Zoning website at: https://www.bristoltn.org/138/Planning for information related to the Site Plan approval process. This process may occur concurrent with the building plan review process.
3. Life Safety Plan showing use for each space with occupant loads based on occupant load factors, exiting paths with exit occupant load and capacity of the exit door or exit stairway; common path and travel distance; limits and enclosures of smoke partitions, smoke barriers, fire- resistance rated partitions, and fire-resistance rated fire walls with appropriate legends.
4. Architectural floor plans showing the use of each space, dimensions, door, door hardware schedules, window schedule, sections, details, UL fire-resistance rated assembly details for rated walls, rated floor/ceiling assemblies, rated roof/ceiling assemblies, rated columns, girders, and beams; head-of-wall joints, and floor-to-exterior wall joints.
5. Structural design plans and details with seismic and other minimum design loads and location and details of any fire-resistance rated fire walls.
6. Mechanical HVAC system design drawings which include fire, smoke, and combination fire/smoke damper locations, gas furnace/boiler combustion air, fire-resistance rated wall limits and legend that matches architectural plans, UL firestopping details for penetrations through rated assemblies.
7. Plumbing systems design drawings including fire-resistance rated wall limits and legend that matches architectural plans and UL firestopping details for penetrations through rated assemblies.
8. Fire protection sprinkler/standpipe/fire pump systems design drawings (when included or required) including fire-resistance rated wall limits and legend that matches architectural plans and UL firestopping details for penetrations through rated assemblies.
9. Electrical design drawings including complete fire alarm system, emergency lighting, exit signs, duct smoke detectors for HVAC fan shut down, including fire-resistance rated wall limits and legend that matches architectural plans and UL firestopping details for penetrations through rated assemblies.

(The above list is not all inclusive and may require additional submissions based on the scope of the project.)

See Adopted Codes

https://www.bristoltn.org/DocumentCenter/View/183/Adopted-Technical-Codes-PDF