

# COLUMBIA COUNTY BUSINESS GUIDE

## A PERMIT GUIDE FOR BUSINESS LOCATION, EXPANSION AND START-UP

Prepared by the Columbia County Land Development Services Department in Association with the  
South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce

**BUSINESS IS WELCOME IN COLUMBIA COUNTY !**

Your business is welcome in Columbia County. Whether you are looking for a location to do business or expanding your existing business we are glad you have chosen Columbia County. We are proud of our vibrant, friendly, and diverse County. In order to assist with the location of a new business or industry or the expansion or relocation of an existing business or industry in unincorporated Columbia County, the County Land Development Services Department, in cooperation with the South Columbia County Chamber of Commerce and all County departments, have produced this Business Guide.

This Guide is primarily for business development in locations within the unincorporated area of Columbia County(outside of incorporated Cities). Each of the Cities in Columbia County administer their own land use/zoning ordinances. If your location is within one of our Cities, you will need to contact them directly concerning land use compliance for what you want to do(See [Section VI Contact Directory for Business Development](#), below for City Contact information).

Please note that Columbia County currently provides certain building services to its Cities as follows:

The County provides Building Plan Review for the Cities of Columbia City, Prescott and Rainier. You must obtain land use approval and apply for building permits with these Cities. The City will forward building permit applications/plans to the County for review. The City will issue the building permit after County plan review. The County schedules and performs inspections once permits are issued by the Cities. A Certificate of Occupancy is issued by the County.

The County provides Electrical Permitting for the Cities of Scappoose, St. Helens, Columbia City, Rainier and Prescott. Applications, plan review, permit issuance and inspections are handled by the County.

## How to Use This Guide

Beginning or expanding a business is an exciting experience. Sometimes the rules, procedures and policies can seem overwhelming. As you have the responsibility for obtaining all the appropriate permits necessary to develop and conduct business in unincorporated Columbia County, you will discover that you have help. Columbia County Land Development Services is ready to assist you through the process because we believe that service is our most important product. Please remember though, the help Land Development Services provides is dependent on the information we receive from you, so it is very important that you provide us a clear and thorough understanding of your proposal.

The review process and permits required depend upon your type of business and your circumstances of business development. **Sections I thru IV** of the Business Guide are designed to provide you with information and assistance which is specific to the nature of your proposed business development. Simply go to the Section that most nearly describes what you want to do for targeted information on how to do it. Each of these Sections provide you with links to related application forms, fee schedules and instructions as applicable. **Sections V and VI** provide detailed fee schedule information and a directory of useful contact information related to Business Development.

- **[Section I New Business Site Location](#)**: For those business seeking a new location and need to know if the vacant site or existing building is properly zoned for their proposed use and, if not, considerations and process for changing the plan designation and/or zoning, getting a conditional use permit or use determination on a proposed site.
- **[Section II New/Remodeled/Expanded Building Construction](#)**. For those businesses who have a site and/or building and need to know considerations, permits and process for constructing a new building, expanding an existing building or remodeling an existing building in a permanent location which is properly zoned for the proposed use other than a home occupation.
- **[Section III Change in Use of Existing Building/Tenant Improvements](#)** : For those businesses who have an existing building or are considering an existing building which is on a site which is properly zoned for the establishment of a new business use and need to make physical improvements to the building to accommodate the new use(tenant improvements).
- **[Section IV Home Occupations](#)**: For businesses that may be operated as an accessory use to single family home in a residential zoning district.
- **[Section V Land Development Services Department Fee Schedule](#)**
- **[Section VI Contact Directory for Business Development](#)**: A listing of useful contact information for Business related services and agencies.

## Your First Step

After you have looked at the section of this Guide which you believe is applicable to your situation, the first step in developing your business is to contact the Planner on Duty at the Land Development Services Department to identify your development options and review information regarding necessary permits and permit processes/time requirements to accomplish what you want to do. You may call(503-397-1501 x3) to talk to the Planner on Duty or to leave a message for a Planner to call you.

### Pre-Application Conference

If your project requires a change in the plan designation or zoning of the site you have chosen for your business or industry, a conditional use permit, site design review or other land use approval, the Planner on Duty will arrange a Pre-application Conference with you. For simple projects not requiring land use or site plan approval, a Pre-Application Conference may not be necessary.

Pre-Application Conferences are scheduled on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month between 10 and 12 Noon with the County's Development Review Committee(DRC).

The DRC is a development assistance team made up of County and agency staff who will be reviewing your permit applications and who will assist you with detailed application information and advice before you submit your land use permit applications. You will be assigned a staff Project Representative who will be a single point of contact for your project for information and assistance throughout the course of your project. The assistance provided at the Pre-Application Conference is designed to help you determine your development options and constraints; to identify the specific permit applications and approvals you will require and to prepare and submit a complete application to avoid delays in the review process due to incomplete information.

**To schedule a Pre-Application Conference it is necessary to complete and submit a short [project summary form](#), site sketch and a Pre-Application Fee of \$55 to Land Development Services at least one week prior to the Thursday Pre-Application Conference date for which you would like to be scheduled. Submit the Pre-Application Form in person at the County Courthouse in St. Helens or by e-mail to [Jackie Welter](#) or by mail to Land Development Services, 230 Strand St., St Helens, OR 97051.**

Proper planning and research will help you eliminate problems before they arise. If you are using outside professionals (such as architects, engineers, consultants, etc.) to assist you in your business project, the extra effort you expend to hire qualified people, experienced in processing projects in unincorporated Columbia County, may save you time and money in the long run. You should have these professionals attend the Pre-Application Conference with you.

## SECTION I NEW BUSINESS SITE LOCATION

This section of the Guide is for those businesses who are in the process of selecting a new site or an existing building for a business or industry and need to verify that the site is properly zoned for the proposed use other than a home occupation.

- **FIRST STEP In The Planning Review Process.**

Before you select a site or an existing building for new business or industrial development you will need to verify that it is properly planned and zoned and whether the site will require any land use permits for the proposed use. Contact the Planner on Duty to discuss your project and schedule a [Pre-Application Conference](#) if necessary to confirm all planning requirements for what you want to do.

The following zoning districts allow commercial and industrial development. You will need to talk with the Planner on Duty to determine the specific uses that are allowed in each zone and other land use approvals that may be required for your use. Look in the [Zoning Ordinance](#) for more information on uses permitted in the various zoning districts.

### **Industrial Zones:**

Allowed outside of Urban Growth Boundaries:

- Resource Industrial Planned Development District(RIPD)
- Airport Industrial(AI)

Allowed inside of Urban Growth Boundaries.

- Heavy Industrial District(M-1)
- Light Industrial District(M-2)

### **Commercial Zones:**

Allowed outside of Urban Growth Boundaries

- Rural Center District(RC)
- Existing Commercial District(EC)
- Marine Commercial(C-2)

Allowed inside of Urban Growth Boundaries

- General Commercial(C-3)
- Neighborhood Commercial(C-4)
- Highway Commercial(C-5)

- **OTHER LAND USE APPROVALS WHICH MAY APPLY**

Once proper zoning for you proposed use is verified, other land use approvals may be required before a new business or industry is sited on a commercially or industrially zoned site or an existing building may be occupied for a new business or industrial use.

- **Conditional Use Permit**

Some uses are listed as ‘Conditional Uses’ in a particular zoning district. These uses require a [Conditional Use Permit](#) before they are allowed to be located due to their special characteristics, potential impacts and siting considerations. A CUP allows a use or development under specified conditions designed to assure that the use will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, and will be compatible with the character of the zoning district. Through the public hearing

process, the Planning Commission or the Planning Director either approve the project subject to conditions, or deny such uses based on applicable standards of the zoning district in which the use is to be located and conditional use criteria contained in Section 1503 of the [Zoning Ordinance](#). Each application is considered on its individual merit.

- **Land Divisions/Modification of Parcel Boundaries**

If the site being considered needs to be created out of a larger site or the size or shape of an existing site needs to be modified to suit your business or industry [land partition](#) or [lot line adjustment](#) may be needed. Lot line adjustments are governed by criteria in Section 212 of the [Zoning Ordinance](#). Land partitions are governed by criteria in Article VII of the [Subdivision and Partitioning Ordinance](#).

- **Site Design Review**

When your site is properly zoned and has all other necessary land use approvals and before you are eligible to submit a building permit application, you will need to apply for and obtain [Site Design Review](#) approval. To do this you will need to prepare a preliminary site plan and supporting information consistent with standards contained in the zoning district in which your use is located and site design standards contained in Chapter 1550 of the [Zoning Ordinance](#).

## SECTION II NEW/EXPANDED BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

This section of the Guide is for those businesses who have a site and/or an existing building in a permanent location which is properly zoned for the proposed use other than a home occupation and need to know considerations, permits and process for constructing a new building or expanding an existing building.

### 1. PLANNING: Land Use Considerations, Permits and Processes

- **FIRST STEP In The Planning Review Process.** Contact the Planner on Duty to discuss your project and schedule a [Pre-Application Conference](#) if necessary to confirm all planning requirements for what you want to do.
  
- **Key Planning Considerations: New/Expanded Building Construction**
  - **Physical constraints:** Physical features such as areas of your site within the flood plain, containing a wetland or stream and requiring riparian or wetland setbacks and steep or unstable slopes must be considered in both selecting a site and siting a proposed new building or expansion. State and County regulations may limit the area of the site which may be developed.
  - **Prior Land Use Actions:** If there has been prior land use actions on the property such as re-zoning, conditional use permits etc you will need to make sure that your projects site and building design complies with any conditions placed on prior approvals. Your Project Representative assigned in your [Pre-Application Conference](#) can help you determine if prior conditions apply.
  
- **Site Design Review**

When your site is properly zoned and has all other necessary land use approvals and before you are eligible to submit a building permit application, you will need to apply for and obtain [Site Design Review](#) approval. To do this you will prepare a preliminary site plan and supporting information consistent with standards contained in the zoning district in which your use is located and site design standards contained in Chapter 1550 of the [Zoning Ordinance](#) . Your site plan will be reviewed by either Planning Staff(Type I Review) or the Planning Commission(Type II Review) after public notice to surrounding property owners.
  
- **Services:**
  - **Water**

You will need to identify your water source and quantity during the Site Design Review process. Your water source will need to be adequate to provide service pressure to the proposed use and provide minimum fire flow pressure from hydrants or to fire sprinkler systems, if required for your use.
  - **On Site Wastewater**(See On Site Wastewater Information below)
  
- **Road Access**

**Road Access Permits:**  
Prior to issuance of a building permit for your project you will need to

obtain a [Road Access Permit](#). This permit gives permission to access the County road system and specifies what improvements to your point of access may be required.

#### Road Improvement Requirements

In order to accommodate new development in the County, certain public road improvements may be required. The specific road improvements required will be determined by the Public Works Director during the review of your site plan based on [County Road Standards](#).

- **Environmental Compliance**

Your business or industrial site will require compliance with environmental regulations depending on what environmental features you have on your site.

- **Flood Protection.** If any portion of your site is located within the 100 flood plain on Flood Rate Insurance Maps (FIRMS) issued by FEMA and you propose to build or expand into the flood plain, you will need to obtain a Certificate of Elevation for the base flood level, elevate any new structures at least one foot above base flood elevation and flood proof portions of your new buildings or additions below the base flood elevation. Flood plain requirements will be determined during your Pre-Application Conference.
- **Stream/Wetlands Protection** If a stream is located on any portion of your site, you will be required to setback all new construction from between 25 and 75 feet from the top of stream bank depending on the class of stream. In addition, if you have any mapped wetlands on your site, you will need to setback all new construction at least 50 feet from the upland edge of the wetland. In order to grade or build in a mapped wetland you will need to obtain a Removal Fill Permit from the [State Land Department](#)
- **Storm Water & Erosion Control.** New construction, expansion of existing buildings or grading affecting more than 2000 feet of site area will require a Stormwater and Erosion Control Plan. The Erosion Plan must incorporate measures to prevent erosion on your site during construction. The Stormwater Plan addresses how storm water flowing onto and through your site will be handled and directed to approved downstream facilities. Your Stormwater and Erosion Control Plan must comply with the County's [Stormwater and Erosion Control Ordinance](#) and is submitted with your application for Site Design Review.

- **Signs**

A [Sign Permit](#) approved by a Planner and a companion building permit approved by the Building Plans Examiner is required prior to the placement, erection, reconstruction, alteration or display of any sign. Regulations regarding the size, type, and placement vary based on the zoning of the parcel and the type of business. Chapter 1300 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies provisions for exempt signs, permitted signs, advertising banners, prohibited signs (including A-frames and portable signs), special sign permits, and non conforming signs/limited sign permits. The property owner must sign and approve all requests for sign permits

directly on the plans to be submitted Most signs also require a building permit. Larger signs and free-standing signs may require engineering. Lighted signs and/or moving signs require an electrical permit as well.

## **2. BUILDING: Construction Considerations, Permits and Processes.**

- **FIRST STEP In The Building Permit Process:** Your first step in obtaining a building permit is to schedule Pre-Submittal Meeting with your Planner/Project Representative and a Commercial Plans Examiner. To schedule a Pre-Submittal Meeting contact [Jackie Welter](#) by e-mail or by phone at 503-397-1501 x 2. This meeting is to assist you in preparing a complete building permit and plans application package. At this meeting, the Project Representative will identify any planning requirements that need to be met during construction phase of your project and the Plans Examiner will explain the construction code requirements to submit your project for review and permits. If you are employing the services of a design professional, it would be desirable to have that person at the Pre-Submittal meeting.
- [Tips for Faster and Easier Plan Review and Building Permit Issuance.](#)
- **Key Building Considerations:** New/Expanded Commercial/Industrial Building Construction.
  - **Registered Design Professional:** The services of a professional Architect/Engineer may be required, if the project is larger than 4,000 square feet or over 20' in height. If required, the design professional must submit and stamp the documents for permit and declare they are the Design professional of Record
  - **Construction Type and Use:** The size and type of building is a function of it's use and construction type. These factors are important to determine early in the projects since they determine the Building Code requirements for your building. Your design professional and the County Plans Examiner can assist in this determination.
  - **Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Requirements:** Because of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) most commercial projects require specific design criteria to accommodate the physically disabled. Your design professional and County Plans Examiner can assist in providing information concerning these considerations.
  - **Fire and Life Safety:** Several considerations affect the type and size of building. These include the availability of water supply for fire fighting and sprinkler system operation, fire department access, adequate exiting from the building. Information regarding these issues can be found by contacting the local Fire Marshal or the Land Development Services Department Building Division.(see [Section VI Contact Directory for Business Development](#)).
  - **Pre-fabricated Structures:** The use of Pre-Fabricated Structures may save money, but will require special considerations. The State of Oregon, Building Codes Division requires that all Pre-fabricated structures be certified by the state. Make sure the pre-fabricated structures you plan to use are state certified.
  - **Liquid Storage Tanks:** Liquid Storage Tanks, both above and below



ground require additional approvals from the [Oregon State Fire Marshals Office](#) (if hazardous or farmable liquids) in addition to County permit is required for all tanks over 400 gallons. Some tanks require engineering.

- **Building Permit Application**

After you have had a Pre-Submittal meeting and prepared a your building permit application and building plans you may submit your building application package to Land Development Services. If your project has an Architect, Engineer, or General Contractor, it is likely that they will be submitting the plans and other documents for permit. If the plans are complete and in conformance with land use requirements including conditions on any prior land use approvals, the Planning Department will sign your building permit application and refer you to the Building Division for review. When the project has been signed off by the Planner, the Commercial Plans Examiner will do a preliminary review of the documents to insure they are complete. This will save time during the plan review process. If all plans and documents are complete, the permit review process for permit will begin. You will be kept informed of the project progress if you indicated on the application that you want direct communications. You may elect to delegate this to your design professional or contractor.

- **Building Plans Review**

When all plans and documents are complete and ready for review, a Plans Examiner will be assigned to review and check documents for compliance with all applicable codes. Often times, the review process raises questions that need to be addressed by the design person or contractor. The Plans Examiner will contact them directly by phone or email. If you wish to be notified of communications, please let the Plans Examiner know when the plans are submitted. When plan review is complete, you will be notified to pick up and pay for the permits.

- **Building Inspection**

When the building permit is issued, work may begin on the project. Most Contractors are familiar with the required inspections, however with the actual permit there will be a field inspection log. This shows the required inspections and will have a space for the inspector to sign each time an inspection is done. If there is a problem with any inspection, a correction noticed is issued. In this event, a reinspection may need to be requested.

- **Certificate of Occupancy**

At the completion of the project and upon successful final inspection, the Building Official will sign and issue a **Certificate of Occupancy**. Sometimes, at the discretion of the Building Official, a temporary or conditional occupancy may be granted. This may occur if some minor none-safety items are not completed. If it is necessary to obtain a temporary occupancy, there is a fee required.

### 3. On-Site Wastewater Treatment Consideration, Permits and Process.

- **Key On-Site Considerations: New/Expanded Commercial/Industrial Building Construction**

- **Adequate Area Available.** Depending on wastewater flows, the area needed for a properly sited On-site wastewater system can vary. There needs to be enough space available to accommodate both an initial and

replacement system. Physical characteristics (slope, topography, etc.)of the site can affect this.

- **On-Site System Setbacks:** Setbacks that may apply such as those required from property lines and structures should be considered and carefully depicted on the project site plan.
  - **Conflicts With Existing or Replacement Systems:** No conflicting uses with the initial and replacement systems- will the proposed expansion or uses work without conflict in the space available?
  - **State Approval of Certain On-Site Systems:** Projects that are determined to produce wastewater flows that are greater than 2,500 gallons per day or greater than residential strength require a State issued Water Pollution Control Facilities Permit (WPCF). The Sanitarian will advise you of this.
  - **Who May Perform Work:** Only the Property Owner or a Licensed Septic Installer may perform the site work.
- 
- **On-Site Wastewater System Applications**
    - **New site Requirements:**
      - Lot Evaluation- to determine what type of system the site is suitable for.
      - New Construction Permit- required to site the type of system approved in the Lot Evaluation.
    - **Use or Modification of An Existing System:**
      - Authorization Notice- required to address if the existing system can meet the needs of the proposed change. An accurate plot plan is essential. A site visit may be necessary.
      - Major Repair or Alteration Permit- may be required if the Authorization Notice determines that the existing system is not adequate.

## SECTION III REMODELS/TENANT IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE CHANGE IN USE OF AN EXISTING BUILDING

This section of the Guide is for those businesses and industries who have an existing building or are considering buying or leasing an existing building which is located on a site which is properly zoned for the establishment of the proposed new business/industrial use and want to change the current use of the building and need to make physical improvements to the building to accommodate the new use(remodel/tenant improvements).

### 1. PLANNING: Land Use Considerations, Permits and Processes

- **FIRST STEP In The Planning Review Process:** Contact the Planner on Duty to discuss your project and schedule a [Pre-Application Conference](#) if necessary to confirm all planning requirements for what you want to do.
- **Key Planning Considerations:** Remodels/Tenant Improvements/Change in Use of An Existing Building
  - **Land Use Approval:** Before you purchase or lease an existing building for a proposed use, you will need to verify that the proposed use is allowed in the zoning district where the existing building is located and if any other planning approvals are required.
  - **Prior Land Use Actions:** If there has been prior land use actions on the property such as re-zoning, conditional use permits etc you will need to make sure that your proposed project complies with any conditions placed on prior approvals. Your Project Representative assigned in your Pre-Application Conference can help you determine if prior conditions apply.
  -
- **Site Design Review**

When your site is properly zoned and has all other necessary land use approvals and before you are eligible to submit a building permit application, you will need to apply for and obtain Site Design Review approval. To do this you will prepare a preliminary site plan and supporting information consistent with standards contained in the zoning district in which your use is located and site design standards contained in Chapter 1550 of the [Zoning Ordinance](#).
- **Services**
  - **Water**

You will need to identify your water source and quantity during the Site Design Review process. Your water source will need to be adequate to provide service pressure to the proposed use and provide minimum fire flow pressure from hydrants or fire sprinkler systems, if required for your use.
  - **On Site Wastewater:**(See On Site Wastewater Information below).
- **Road Access**

**Road Access Permits:**  
Prior to issuance of a building permit for your project you will need to obtain a [Road Access Permit](#). This permit gives permission to access the County road system and specifies what improvements to your point of access may be required.

**Road Improvement Requirements**  
In order to accommodate new development in the County, certain public road improvements may be required. The specific road

improvements required will be determined by the Public Works Director during the review of your site plan based on [County Road Standards](#).

- **Signs**

A [Sign Permit](#) approved by a Planner and a companion building permit approved by the Building Plans Examiner is required prior to the placement, erection, reconstruction, alteration or display of any sign. Regulations regarding the size, type, and placement vary based on the zoning of the parcel and the type of business. Chapter 1300 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies provisions for exempt signs, permitted signs, advertising banners, prohibited signs (including A-frames and portable signs), special sign permits, and non conforming signs/limited sign permits. The property owner must sign and approve all requests for sign permits directly on the plans to be submitted. Most signs also require a building permit. Larger signs and free-standing signs may require engineering. Lighted signs and/or moving signs require an electrical permit as well.

## 2. BUILDING: Construction Considerations, Permits and Processes.

- **FIRST STEP In Building Permit and Certificate of Occupancy Process for Remodels/Tenant Improvements/Change in Use of An Existing Building.**

### **Building Pre-Submittal Meeting**

Once you have received land use approval, Your first step in obtaining a building permit and/or a Certificate of Occupancy for physical changes or changes in use of your existing building is to schedule a Pre-Submittal Meeting with your Planner/Project Representative and a Commercial Plans Examiner. To schedule a Pre-Submittal Meeting contact [Jackie Welter](#) by e-mail or by phone at 503-397-1501 x 2. If your project has an Architect, Engineer, or General Contractor, it is likely that they will be submitting the plans and other documents for permit and they should attend the Pre-Submittal Meeting.

### **Change of Use(Occupancy) Only**

If your project is a change in use (occupancy) of an existing building and there is no construction work to be done, a simple "Change of Occupancy" permit may be all that is required. This still requires a Commercial Plans Examiner to review the code restrictions on the building for life safety and ADA accessibility requirements.

If the change in use also includes building modifications or other construction, additional permits may need to be taken out. The Plans Examiner can assist you in determining the permit requirements. You can contact a Plans Examiner by coming in to the Land Development Services Department in the County Courthouse in St. Helens or by calling 503-397-1501 x2 between the hours of 8:30am-10am and 3pm and 4:30pm Monday thru Friday.

- **Key Building Considerations: Remodels/Tenant Improvements/Change in Use of An Existing Building**

- **Registered Design Professional:** If your project is in a building that requires a design professional, you may need to employ the services of an Architect or Engineer to make any modifications to the building. Generally, if the building is over 4,000 square feet, or over 20' in height, it requires a design professional. If no structural changes are being made this may not be required.
- **Remodel or fixtures only:** Minor remodeling and installation of fixtures such as shelving and counters may not require permits. It is best to detail changes needed when discussing the project with the

- Plans Examiner. Permits may not be necessary.
  - **Americans with Disability Act (ADA) Requirements:** If alterations or modifications are done to the building to accommodate the new use, it may be necessary to include ADA accessibility improvements. This generally does not require full compliance, but rather a portion of the project to include such changes. Again, the Plans Examiner can best assist you in making this determination.
- **Building Permit Application**  
If your project has an Architect, Engineer, or General Contractor, it is likely that they will be submitting the plans and other documents for permit. If the plans are complete and in conformance with land use requirements, the Planning Department will sign the plan submittal application and refer you to the Building Division for review. When the project has been approved by the Planner, the Commercial Plans Examiner will do a preliminary review of the documents to insure they are complete. This will save time during the plan review process. If all plans and documents are complete, the permit review process for permit will begin. You will be kept informed of the project progress if you indicated on the application that you want direct communications. You may elect to delegate this to your design professional or contractor.
- **Building Plans Review**  
When all plans and documents are complete and ready for review, a Plans Examiner will be assigned to review and check documents for compliance with all applicable codes. Often times, the review process raises questions that need to be addressed by the design person or contractor. The Plans Examiner will contact them directly by phone or email. If you wish to be notified of communications, please let the Plans Examiner know when the plans are submitted. When plan review is complete, you will be notified to pick up and pay for the permits.
- **Building Inspection**  
When the building permit is issued, work may begin on the project. Most Contractors are familiar with the required inspection, however with the actual permit there will be a field inspection log. This shows the required inspections and will have a space for the inspector to sign each time an inspection is done. If there is a problem with any inspection, a correction noticed is issued. In this event, a reinspection may need to be ordered.
- **Certificate of Occupancy**  
At the completion of the project and upon successful final inspection, the Building Official will sign and issue a **Certificate of Occupancy**. Sometimes, at the discretion of the Building Official, a temporary or conditional occupancy may be granted. This may occur if some minor or non-safety items are not completed. If it is necessary to obtain a temporary occupancy, there is a fee required.

### 3. On-Site Wastewater Treatment Consideration, Permits and Process.

- **Key On-Site Considerations:** Remodels/Tenant Improvements/Change in Use of An Existing Building
  - **Changes To Wastewater Treatment Requirements:** Consideration should be given to how the proposed change in use will change the wastewater characteristics and related on-site system requirements.
  - **State Approval of Certain On-Site Systems:** Projects that are determined to produce wastewater flows that are greater than 2,500 gallons per day or greater than residential strength require a State

issued Water Pollution Control Facilities Permit (WPCF). The Sanitarian will advise you of this.

- **Who May Perform Work:** Only the Property Owner or a Licensed Septic Installer may perform the site work.
  
- **On-Site Wastewater System Applications**
  - **Change in Use:**
    - **Authorization Notice-** required to address if the existing system can meet the needs of the proposed change. An accurate plot plan is essential. A site visit may be necessary.
    - **Major Repair or Alteration Permit-** may be required if the Authorization Notice determines that the existing system is not adequate.

## SECTION IV HOME OCCUPATIONS

This section of the Guide is for home owners who want to establish a businesses to be operated as an accessory use to single family home in a residential zoning district.

### 1. PLANNING: Land Use Considerations, Permits and Processes

- **Home Occupation Conditional Use Permits.** Before you can establish a home occupation in your home or on your residential property you must obtain a Home Occupation Conditional Use Permit. To apply for a Home Occupation Conditional Use Permit contact the Planner On Duty by calling 503-397-1501 x2 or leave a message for a return call. You will need to complete and submit a [Home Occupation Conditional Use Permit\(CUP\) application](#). If your home occupation is low impact and not visable by the neighborhood, it is a Type I home occupation and is reviewed and approved by the Planning Director. If your home occupation requires outside storage, signage, has employees not living at the home or requires a sign, it is a Type II home occupation and requires a public hearing and approval by the Planning Commission. For more information see Section 1507 of the [Zoning Ordinance](#)

### 2. Building Construction Considerations, Permits and Processes.

After a Home Occupation Conditional Use Permit has been obtained, it will be necessary to obtain a building permit to do any modifications or additions to the residence or accessory buildings to accommodate the new use. In addition, any plumbing or electrical changes or additions require permits. It is not wise to assume that Planning approval is all that is needed, be sure to ask about the need for additional permits. Based upon the nature of your business, further Building Code and Fire Safety Code modifications may be required to accommodate a commercial use and to insure the safety of the building and it's occupants. In many cases, construction permits are not required because there are no physical changes, plumbing or electrical work being contemplated. The Commercial Plans Examiner can assist in making this determination at the pre-submittal meeting.

### 3. On-Site Wastewater Treatment Consideration, Permits and Process

- **Key On-Site Considerations**
  - Home Occupations involve commercial uses which are sited differently than residential uses. Wastewater flows are determined according to the use for a home business, while residential flows are determined by the number of bedrooms. Production of these two types of flows from the same property must be reconciled and in many scenarios, minimum flows are established. You may need to provide additional documentation to aide in the determination of flows for your proposal. Depending on the wastewater generated by your home business, you may need to make changes to your existing system.
- **On-Site Wastewater System Applications**
  - **Change in Use and/or Increase in flows:**
    - **Authorization Notice-** required to address if the existing system can meet the needs of the proposed change. An accurate plot plan is essential. A site visit may be necessary.
    - **Major Repair** or Alteration Permit- may be required if the Authorization Notice determines that the existing system is not adequate

**SECTION V LAND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**  
**DEPARTMENT FEES/CHARGES**

The following are links to the various current fee schedules for Planning, Building and System Development Charges that may apply to your project.

**PLANNING, BUILDING AND ON-SITE SYSTEM FEE SCHEDULES**

**SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT CHARGES(SDCs)**

System Development charges are charges payable at the time building permits are issued for new development. The amount of the charge is based on the use, density and intensity of use and is designed to offset the actual cost of providing public facilities commensurate with the needs of the use. System Development Charges are payable for transportation facilities and for park facilities. Charges vary based on whether the proposed new development is to located within the Urban Growth Boundaries of Cities of St. Helens and Scappoose or within the remaining unincorporated County area as follows.

**SDCs Within the Urban Growth Boundaries(UGBs) of the City of St. Helens and the City of Scappoose.**

**1. Within the St. Helens UGB**

SERVICE	SDC	BASIS
Transportation Facilities	\$322	Per Avg. Trip Per Day SF Dwelling= \$3,081.54 Other Uses: Trips x \$322
Parks	\$814	Per Single Family Unit
	\$657	Per Multi-Family Unit
	No SDC for Non-Residential Use	

**2. Within the Scappoose UGB**

SERVICE	SDC	BASIS
Transportation Facilities	\$2769	Per Single Family Dwelling Unit
	Other Uses	Based on Chart of Uses/Fees Check w/Land Development Services for SDC.
Parks	\$1539	Per Single Family Dwelling Unit
	\$1132	Per Multi-Family Dwelling Unit
	\$1206	Per Manufactured Dwelling Unit



**SDCs Outside of the St. Helens and Scappoose UGBs and Within the Unincorporated Portions of Columbia County**

SERVICE	SDC	BASIS
Transportation Facilities	\$2250	Per Peak Hour Trip SF Dwelling = \$2295
Parks	\$750	Per SF Dwelling Unit
	\$650.77	Per MF Dwelling Unit

**SDCs Within the St. Helens School District**

SERVICE	SDC	BASIS
School Facilities	New Non-Residential Structures Not to exceed \$25,000 per building permit or structure,	\$0.50 per square foot
	New Residential Structures	\$1.00 per square foot

## SECTION VI CONTACT DIRECTORY FOR BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**Listing of contacts for business services and agencies related to business development**

### COLUMBIA COUNTY

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION/PHONE	WEB
<b>COUNTY DEPARTMENTS</b>		
Land Development Services	503-397-1501 Oversees development process. Issues land use, building, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, grading, on-site wastewater permits; assigns rural addressing.	<a href="http://www.co.columbia.or.us/lds/">www.co.columbia.or.us/lds/</a>
Road Department	503-397-5090 Reviews plans for road access. Issues road access permits; determines road improvement requirements for new development	<a href="http://www.co.columbia.or.us/roads/">www.co.columbia.or.us/roads/</a>
County Assessor	Maintains tax parcel records. Maintains GIS mapping.	<a href="#">County Assessor</a>
County Surveyor	Reviews, maintains records on surveys, partition and subdivision plats.	
<b>CITIES</b>		
Clatskanie	503-728-2622 Issues all development permits within the City limits.	<a href="http://www.clatskanieor.gov/office2.com/">http://www.clatskanieor.gov/office2.com/</a>
Columbia City	503-397-4010 Issues all development permits within the City limits.	<a href="http://www.columbia-city.org/">http://www.columbia-city.org/</a>
Prescott	503-556-2135 Issues all development permits within the City limits.	
Rainier	503-556-7301 Issues all development permits within the City limits.	<a href="http://www.cityofrainier.com/">http://www.cityofrainier.com/</a>
St. Helens	503-397-6272 Issues all development permits within the City limits.	<a href="http://www.ci.st-helens.or.us/">http://www.ci.st-helens.or.us/</a>
Scappoose	503-543-7146 Issues all development permits within the City limits.	<a href="http://www.ci.scappoose.or.us/">http://www.ci.scappoose.or.us/</a>
Vernonia	503-429-5291 Issues all development permits within the City limits.	<a href="http://www.vernonia-or.gov/">http://www.vernonia-or.gov/</a>

<b>FIRE DISTRICTS</b>	Fire Districts may provide review and advice concerning emergency access, plans for fire life safety requirements, and sprinkler plans as a part of the County review process.	
<b>Columbia River Fire and Rescue</b>	Administrative Office: (503) 397-2990 Burn Day Info: (503) 397-4800 Fairgrounds Station: (503) 397-4711 Maintenance Station: (503) 397-7761 Rainier Station: (503) 556-0406 St. Helens Station: (503) 397-1014	<a href="http://www.crfr.com">www.crfr.com</a>
<b>Clatskanie Fire District</b>	(503) 728-2131	
<b>Mist-Birkenfeld Fire District</b>	(503) 755-2710	<a href="http://www.mbfpd.org">www.mbfpd.org</a>
<b>Vernonia Fire District</b>	(503) 429-8252	
<b>Scappoose Rural Fire District</b>	General Info: (503) 543-5026 Burn Info: (503) 543-3590	<a href="http://www.srfd.us">www.srfd.us</a>
<b>State Fire Marshall</b>	Tad Pedersen (503) 325-5515 x24	<a href="mailto:tad.pedersen@state.or.us">tad.pedersen@state.or.us</a>
<b>OTHER SERVICE DISTRICTS</b>		
<b>Columbia County Public Health</b>	(503) 397-4651 or (800) 244-4870	<a href="http://www.chdpublichealth.com">www.chdpublichealth.com</a>

## **STATE AGENCIES**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION/PHONE</b>	<b>WEB</b>
<b>Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)</b>	Phone: (503) 373-0050 Northwest Regional Rep. (541) 663-1393	<a href="http://www.lcd.state.or.us">www.lcd.state.or.us</a>
<b>Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)</b>	Phone: (503) 229-5696 Phone: (800) 452-4011	<a href="http://www.oregon.gov/DEQ/">www.oregon.gov/DEQ/</a>
<b>Department of State Lands (DSL)</b>	Phone: (503) 986-5200 Senior Resource Coord. (503) 986-5255	<a href="http://www.oregon.gov/DSL/">www.oregon.gov/DSL/</a>

## **FEDERAL AGENCIES**

<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION/PHONE</b>	<b>WEB</b>
<b>Internal Revenue Services</b>	(800) 829-1040	<a href="http://www.irs.gov/">www.irs.gov/</a>

Consumer Product Safety Commission	Consumer product safety information, lists of recalled products.	<a href="http://www.cpsc.gov/">www.cpsc.gov/</a>
Department of Commerce	Statistical data on foreign and domestic economy	<a href="http://www.doc.gov/">www.doc.gov/</a>
Department of Labor	Information on labor laws, trends, grants and government labor contracts.	<a href="http://www.dol.gov/">www.dol.gov/</a>
Environmental Protection Agency		<a href="http://www.epa.gov/">www.epa.gov/</a>
Federal Communication Commission	Current legislation/forms for FCC issues	<a href="http://www.fcc.gov/">www.fcc.gov/</a>
Immigration and Naturalization Service	Employment Eligibility Verification of I-9	<a href="http://www.dhs.gov/">www.dhs.gov/</a>
OSHA	Statistics and Requirements for Workplace Safety	<a href="http://www.osha.gov/">www.osha.gov/</a>
Patent and Trademark Office	List of patented devices. Order papers and materials for legal protection.	<a href="http://www.uspto.gov/">www.uspto.gov/</a>
Small Business Administration	On-line library. Offers management and technical assistance, major role in financial assistance for employers to start/maintain a business.	<a href="http://www.sba.gov/">www.sba.gov/</a>

## NEWSPAPERS

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION/PHONE	WEB
South County Spotlight	Main telephone: 503-543-6387 Darryl Swan, Publisher	<a href="http://www.spotlightnews.net">www.spotlightnews.net</a> <a href="mailto:dswan@commnewspapers.com">dswan@commnewspapers.com</a>
The Chronicle & Sentinel Mist	(503) 397-0116	
Clatskanie Chief	(503) 728-3350	<a href="http://www.clatskaniechiefnews.com/">http://www.clatskaniechiefnews.com/</a>
Vernonia's Voice	News Editor/Publisher/Editor Phone:( 503) 367-0098	<a href="http://vernoniasvoice.com/">http://vernoniasvoice.com/</a>

## UTILITIES    [“Call Before You Dig”](#): 811

AGENCY	DESCRIPTION/PHONE	WEB
ELECTRIC POWER		
Columbia River Public Utilities District	General Info: (503) 397-1844 24 Hour Outages & Emergencies: (same) Customer Accounts: (503) 397-0590 Energy Services: (503) 366-5470 Engineering: (503) 397-0760 Locates: (800) 332-2344	<a href="http://www.crpud.net">www.crpud.net</a>

West Oregon Electric Co-op, Inc.	(503) 429-3021	<a href="http://www.westoregon.org/">http://www.westoregon.org/</a>
Clatskanie Public Utilities District	(503) 728-2163	<a href="http://www.clatskaniepub.com">www.clatskaniepub.com</a>
NATURAL GAS		
NW Natural	Residential & Commercial Customers: (800) 422-4012  Large Commercial & Industrial Customers: (503) 721-2512	<a href="http://www.nwnatural.com">www.nwnatural.com</a>
WATER		
Warren Water Association	(503) 397-3280	
McNulty Water PUD	(503) 397-1301	
Quincy Water Association	(503) 308-2019	
Columbia Hills HOA	(503) 543-8525	
Deer Island Waterworks	(503) 543-6326	
Marshland Water Association	(503) 728-0998	
Lost Creek Heights Water Association	(503) 728-3053	
Goble Water Association	(503) 556-8582	
Columbia Acres Water Association	(503) 543-3998	
Swedetown Water Association	(503) 728-7428	
West Rainier Water Association	(503) 556-1147	
Westland Water Association	(503) 728-4318	
TELEPHONE		
CenturyLink	(866) 768-1847 Coverage area: Scappoose, Vernonia, Clatskanie	<a href="http://www.centurylink.com">www.centurylink.com</a>
Qwest	Billing and general customer service (800) 491-0118 Coverage area: St. Helens, Rainier, Columbia City	<a href="http://www.qwest.com">www.qwest.com</a>

### Accuracy

This publication is a public service of the Columbia County and every attempt has been made to assure the accuracy of the checklists and information. Columbia County assumes no responsibility for errors or omissions. Your constructive comments and suggestions are welcome by calling Land Development Services at (503) 397-1501.