

Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

Temporary Use Permits in Seattle

Updated August 1, 2016

There are several types of temporary use permits allowed under the Seattle Land Use Code. These permits allow you to conduct temporary activities (i.e., uses) on your property that are not already approved by permit. Temporary use permits can be approved for activities not normally allowed in your zone. Under the Land Use Code, “use” means “the purpose for which land or a structure is designed, built, arranged, intended, occupied, maintained, or leased,” including uses without a structure, such as open storage.

If your project involves a temporary use that needs a temporary structure, please read Tip 306, *Temporary Structures in Seattle*.

TYPES OF TEMPORARY USE PERMITS

Our temporary use permit decisions are classified into different categories based on the amount of discretion allowed under the Land Use Code (Section 23.42.040) and the level of impact associated with each decision. “Type I” decisions require discretion, but are non-appealable. “Type II” decisions also require discretion and are appealable to the City Hearing Examiner.

For some uses and some structures you will need Fire Department review, environmental review (SEPA), or Special Events Committee review. If your property is within 200 feet of a shoreline, you need to be aware that we do not allow temporary uses in the Shoreline District.

Examples of Type I and Type II projects are:

Type I

- Temporary uses for four weeks or less
- Renewal of most types of temporary use permits for up to six months

- Temporary relocation of police and fire stations for 12 months or less
- Temporary uses that occur intermittently (e.g., weekly farmers markets) for up to one year, as long as they occur no more than two days per week and do not build a permanent structure

Type II

- Temporary uses for more than four weeks, up to six months
- A boat-building shelter, with no permanent structure, for up to one year
- Uses and facilities to construct a light rail transit system for so long as is necessary to support construction of the system

DECISION CRITERIA

Seattle DCI can make a decision on a Type I temporary use up to four weeks or a Type II temporary use up to six months for a use not otherwise allowed if all of the following are met:

- The proposal meets the intent of the Land Use Code
- There is no permanent structure
- The use does not pose a life, safety, or property threat

For boat building shelters, the following regulations also apply:

- The boat shelter is for personal (noncommercial) use
- The revocable permit is for one year; Seattle DCI may grant one-year extensions for up to four years (for a total of five years);
- The structure must be sturdy enough to withstand difficult weather conditions
- Seattle DCI may limit height, size, location, and external structural to reduce possible adverse impacts



If you need a temporary use permit for a light rail transit facility, read Section 23.42.040 in the Land Use Code.

APPLY FOR YOUR PERMIT

You may want to get coaching to better understand our permit application process. (Note: You may need an appointment and a fee may apply.) For assistance, visit our Applicant Services Center (ASC) on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 Fifth Ave.

To begin the application process, submit a Preliminary Application request through your Project Portal at <http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/eplan> or download the form from www.seattle.gov/dpd/permits/forms/default.htm.

Your complete application should include:

- **Plan sets**
- **Coversheet**
- **Site plan:** Show the location of the temporary use, including dimensions, on the property and in the building (if applicable); the site plan must also show proposed parking areas, the legal description, and the assessors parcel number
- **Elevations**
- **Fees:** Pay all outstanding fees before we issue your permit; fees are established by the Fee Subtitle posted at www.seattle.gov/dpd/codesrules/codes/fees/default.htm

REVIEW AND ISSUANCE

Type I

We usually make a decision on Type 1 permits in less than 30 days. We issue the permit on line. Please check the Seattle DCI Project Portal for updates to your application.

Type II

We usually make a decision on Type II permits, except for light rail temporary uses, in approximately 90 days. We issue the permit on line. Please check the Seattle DCI Project Portal for updates to your application.

CLOSING OUT YOUR TEMPORARY PERMIT

You must return your site to pre-existing conditions. A Seattle DCI inspector will confirm whether you have met this criteria.

FURTHER INFORMATION

To learn more about the environmental (SEPA) review process, contact a land use planner in the ASC or use our Q&A service (<http://web6.seattle.gov/dpd/LUQnA/?Type=1>).

Access to Information

Links to electronic versions of Seattle DCI publications are available on the "Tools & Resources" page of our website at www.seattle.gov/sdci. Paper copies are available from our Public Resource Center, located on the 20th floor of Seattle Municipal Tower at 700 Fifth Ave. in downtown Seattle, (206) 684-8467.