

Items that require a permit:

1. Construction of or alterations to walls/ floors/ roofs/ foundations
2. Construction or repair of a fire wall or fire separation
3. Altering windows, doors or skylights that are of different size than the original
4. Layout changes to home, incl. kitchen cabinets
5. Structural changes & repairs
6. Rewiring and additions to electrical systems
7. Replacement of water heaters
8. Replacement of piping or addition of plumbing fixtures
9. Replacement of furnace, boiler, heat pump, or air-conditioning system
10. Decks, porches, and balconies

Items that do not require a permit:

1. One-story detached accessory structures <100SF
2. Retaining walls <4ft from bottom of footing to top of wall
3. Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, flooring, cabinets, countertops, and similar finish work
4. Residential window awnings <54" projection
5. Private sidewalks and driveways <30" above grade (a driveway apron permit may be required for installation of a new driveway, zoning approval required)
6. Prefabricated pools <24" deep
7. Repairs to electrical, plumbing, mechanical systems that do not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe

The purpose of a permit is to make sure the project meets minimum safety requirements and complies with the Code of the City of Hagerstown.

In addition, the following restrictions apply:

Any and all electrical or plumbing work must be performed by a City registered contractor. Any mechanical work must be performed by a Maryland State licensed Mechanical contractor. Trade permits must be obtained and inspection approvals are required.

Zoning Regulations: Setbacks, easements, and historic district design review requirements may exist on a property, for site specific information please contact the Planning Office at (301) 739-8577 x138.

The Permit Office is open Monday through Friday from 8:00am - 4:00pm for any additional questions or concerns. Appointments are highly recommended.

Permit Applications are accepted Monday through Friday from 8:00am - 3:30pm.

Dec 2025



One East Franklin Street • Hagerstown, MD 21740

301.739.8577 Ext 123 (Permits)

www.hagerstowncode.org



*Guidelines for
Renovating an
Existing 1 or 2
Family
 Dwelling*



These guidelines pertain to all permitted projects with the City of Hagerstown. Some properties may have characteristics which require more extensive review and additional analysis. These guidelines are for convenience purposes only and may not apply in every case. Here are some items to consider when renovating a home:

- **Electrical Service:** A minimum 100 A electrical service is required for each home, unless otherwise approved by the Electrical Inspector.
- **Comfort of occupants:** Adequate light, heat, and ventilation must be provided to all areas of the home.
- **Ceiling Heights:** All areas to be occupied must have a 7 ft. minimum ceiling height, finished floor to finished ceiling.
- **Fencing Installation/ Repair/ Replacement:** When you repair or alter or install a new fence, it's important to consider height restrictions, historic district restrictions, and setback restrictions for the property.
- **Window/ Door Installations:** When you install new windows, skylights or doors that are larger than the old, a permit is required to provide framing for the new window, skylight or door.
- **Structural Changes:** When you make any kind of structural support change/repair to load-bearing walls, balconies, decks, porches, roofs, or foundations, a building permit will be required.
- **Alteration of rooms or spaces:** When you change the floorplan or layout of rooms or provide additional rooms or closets in a home, you are changing the flow pattern of the occupants using the home. A building permit will be required.
- **Plumbing or Electrical Work:** When you alter, replace or install new piping, wiring, fixtures, or systems, a permit will be required. All plumbing and electrical work must be completed by City licensed contractors.
- **Heating, Air-conditioning, and Ventilation:** When you alter, replace or install new heating, air-conditioning, or ventilation systems, a permit will be required. All mechanical work must be completed by a Maryland State licensed contractor.
- **Insulation:** When you alter or open a wall, the level of insulation in the wall may not be energy efficient. If the renovations require a building permit, the insulation levels must comply with the International Energy Conservation Code.
- **Fire Separations/ Sprinklers/ Fire alarm systems:** All existing fire separations, Sprinkler systems, Fire alarm systems, Interconnected or hard-wired smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors must be maintained. *Please note that any alterations made to the home that require a building permit will require the upgrade of smoke and/or carbon monoxide alarms to the current minimum code requirements.*
- **Re-Roofing:** When replacing or recovering an existing roof, the replacement, repair, or alteration of the sheathing or structure will require a building permit. Roofs without insulation in the cavity and where the sheathing or insulation is exposed during reroofing shall be insulated either above or below the sheathing, per the International Energy Conservation Code.
- **Swimming Pools:** An existing swimming pool is required to have a 48" high barrier around the pool or yard, self-closing, self-latching gates, and a GFCI protected receptacle for the pump equipment.
- **Address Identification:** The property is required by City Code to be identified from the public way and from the alley to the rear of the property, as applicable.



STEP 1: Building Analysis

Once you have chosen a location for your proposed project, the Home should be evaluated to see what it might have to offer.

- What is the structural condition of the Home? Are any of the floors, foundations, walls, roof or stairs damaged or in need of repairs?
- Are there any hazardous materials in the Home? (Asbestos, Lead, Mold)
- What is the condition of the existing utilities and systems in the Home? (Electrical wiring and fixtures, Plumbing pipes and fixtures, HVAC/ heating/ventilation)
- Is there a sprinkler system or fire alarm system? Is the system functional?
- Is the building in a historic district or covered by a Maryland Historic Trust easement?
- Will the Home remain a 1 or 2 Family dwelling?
- Will the home be converted into a rental property or other alternate use?
- Do the number of units meet the zoning requirements?

Consultation with a design professional and the zoning administrator is highly recommended for larger projects.

STEP 2: Use of the Home

This proposed use will determine any code related changes that may be required for the protection of the life, health and safety of the occupants. Each has specific set of rules and regulations.

Also, the proposed use will determine if the project will comply with the Land Management Code. Any and all zoning restrictions or special use circumstances can be determined for the project site or building.

STEP 3: Level of Alteration

Essentially, how much work will be required for the project. The Maryland Building Rehabilitation Code (MBRC) encourages private investment in existing buildings and communities through a new construction code that streamlines and harmonizes the code requirements for rehabilitation work. Defining the specific Level of Alteration requires identifying how much of a space shall be altered or changed to meet the proposed use that is determined for the project.

STEP 4: Codes and Requirements

The proposed use and level of alteration will determine the specific codes and requirements that will be necessary for the building alterations.