City of Hamilton
Planning & Economic Development Department
Building Division

Applicant User Guide

Online Building Permit Application Submissions
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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS ePLANS?

ePLANS is a web-based service allowing customers to initiate a building permit application and submit associated digital design drawings and documents online. ePLANS provides a convenient and enhanced online environment that allows customers to complete payment of fees, review their application, communicate with City staff, and retrieve the approved building permit in the comfort of their home or office. ePLANS eliminates the need for you to produce the costly, bulky, and often heavy set of paper design drawings, and allows the City to move one step closer to being paperless.

HOW DOES ePLANS WORK?

ePLANS is the integration of three primary systems: the Planning & Economic Development (PED) online Portal system, a digital review and markup software (ProjectDox), and a back-office database system (AMANDA) used by City Staff. The ePLANS system receives, administers, reviews, approves, and issues building permit applications. Once an application is submitted in ePLANS, it follows a convenient sequential step-by-step process that is described and illustrated below.

1. Create a PED Online Service portal account:
   An existing and active PED Online Service portal account is required to use the online service.

2. Initiate the building permit application:
   A building permit application is initiated and created using the ePLANS wizard or directly for advance users.

3. Submit Minimum Building Permit Fee Payment:
   Payment of the mandatory minimum online permit fee completes the application submission and allows upload of electronic drawings and documents.

4. Upload Electronic Drawings and Documents:
   Applicant will be emailed by ePLANS to upload design drawings and all relevant documents into the digital review and markup ProjectDox software.
5. **Pre-screening of application:**
   City of Hamilton Building division staff pre-screen the application submission and communicates back with the applicant via email for completeness and accuracy.

6. **Building Code Compliance Review:**
   City staff review the electronic design drawings for compliance with the Ontario Building Code. Any deficiencies will be digitally noted and marked-up directly on the submitted design plans. The applicant will be automatically notified via email when corrections are needed. Updated and revised plans can be resubmitted online to the City for re-review.

7. **Approval and Issuance of Building Permit:**
   When the design plans are approved, and all applicable fees are paid, the applicant will be automatically notified via email and have access to download the approved building permit and plans at the ePLANS portal website.

**BROWSER REQUIREMENTS**

1. **Web Browser Requirements**
   - You will need Internet Explorer (IE) version 10 or later. ePLANS (ProjectDox) runs on other browsers (Chrome, Firefox, etc.), however, you can only view city staff reviewer drawing changemarks in IE.

2. **Disable Pop-Up Blockers**
   - Disable the browser’s pop-up blockers. If ePLANS (ProjectDox) does not open after logging in, a pop-up blocker has prevented the main window from opening.
CREATING AN ACCOUNT

1. To create a PED Online Service (ePLANS-Portal) portal account you must have a unique email that not already registered with ePLANS-Portal.

2. Visit the City of Hamilton ePLANS-Portal website at https://eplans.hamilton.ca and click the Login/Register button.

3. Click the Create an Account button.

4. Fill and complete all mandatory information fields. You must have an email to create an account. Click Submit to continue.

Account Types:

**Individual:** An account used for personal and individual use and does not include organizational or company accounts.

**Organization Contact:** An account used for an Organization/Corporate/Company entity. The contact information of an individual that will administer the account is required to create the account. Organization Contact accounts allows administrators to manage multiple members of an Organization Contact account. These members would be able apply on behalf of the Organization including internal staff or external agents. All members must have an existing ePLANS-Portal account.
5. Once completed an email will be sent to you with your verification code.

```
City of Hamilton - Planning and Economic Development - New Customer Sign Up Verification

noreply@hamilton.com

Thank you for registering for City of Hamilton - Planning and Economic Development online services.

To complete the setup of your account click on [this link](https://example.com) and provide the following verification code: [Redacted].

If you will be submitting a building application you can visit [hamilton.ca/building](https://hamilton.ca/building) for more information or call 905-548-8720.

If you will be submitting a Festival and Event application you can visit [hamilton.ca/artist](https://hamilton.ca/artist) for more information or call 905-546-4666.

Please do not reply to this email. If you have any issues please email eplans@hamilton.ca.
```
6. After retrieving your verification code, fill and complete the remaining required information. Click **Submit** to continue.

![Verify Your Email Address](image1)

7. Your PED Online services account has been successfully created and you are ready to use the ePLANS service.

![Your Email Address Has Been Verified](image2)
APPLYING FOR A BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION

LOGIN TO EPLANS

1. Visit the City of Hamilton ePLANS-Portal website at https://eplans.hamilton.ca and click the Login/Register button.

2. Enter your PED Online Services account login information and click the Login button.
3. The ePLANS-Portal “My Dashboard” window displays all of your PED Online Service applications. Click Submit new application to begin creating a new ePLANS building permit application submission.

![My Dashboard screenshot]

4. Select Building/Sign Permits from the application type drop list. Click Submit an Application.

![Select application type screenshot]

**USING THE START WIZARD**

5. ePLANS-Portal has a Wizard tool for your convenience. To get started click the Start Wizard button for the easy-to-use method of selecting the type of permit application you will need. A progress bar will be shown at the top of the page to show your progression when using the Wizard tool.

![Start Wizard screenshot]
6. Select the type of building permit application.

*indicates a mandatory field

What type of permit are you applying for?

- Construction permit
- Demolition permit
- Agricultural / Farm permit
- Protective plumbing
- Sewage system permit
- Sign permit
- Tent permit
- Water sewer permit

Construction Permit: Construction of new buildings & structures, and additions or alterations to existing buildings & structures.

Demolition Permit: Demolition or partial demolition of existing buildings and structures.

Agricultural/Farm Permit: Erection, repair or alteration of agricultural and farm buildings.

Protective Pluming: A stand-alone permit for the installation, repair or modification of backflow preventors or backwater valves.

Septic System Permit: A stand-alone permit for the installation, repair or modification of septic sewage system.

Tent Permit: Erection of temporary fabric tent structures.

Water Sewer Permit: A stand-alone permit for the installation of new water lines, storm and sanitary sewers, and well connections within the boundaries of a private property.

7. Select the “Primary Proposed Use” of the building or tenant space you are applying the building permit for. Hovering over the selections will give you typical examples for each use.

What is the primary proposed use of building or tenant space?

- Residential
- Commercial
- Institutional / Government

8. Enter the height of the building based on the number of stories/floors. “Storey” is a technical term. It can be generally described as a floor level in a building including the levels underground.

How many stories does the building have?

Enter the number of floors:

2 floors
9. Enter the “building area” of the building (footprint) in metres squared.

“Building Area” is a technical term. It can be generally described as the total horizontal area of a building measured from the exterior walls.

10. Select the category of the “proposed use” of the building. The available options will vary according to the type of building selected in the previous step.

11. Select the type of work proposed that best fits your construction project.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>New Construction</td>
<td>Construction of a new building or structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>Construction that physically increases the gross floor area or building envelope of an existing building or structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alteration</td>
<td>Interior or exterior construction for the alternation or renovation of an existing building, structure, or building system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>Construction of the foundation system only for a new building or structure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Retrofit</td>
<td>Work associated to the repair or alteration an existing building required under a fire report, notice or order issued under the Ontario Fire Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Improvement</td>
<td>Work associated with the finishing or renovation of a space for a tenant unit or suite.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Retrofit</td>
<td>Work associated to the repair or alteration an existing building required under a fire report, notice or order issued under the Ontario Fire Act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert Single to Multiple</td>
<td>Conversion of an existing single family dwelling building to multiple dwellings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert Multiple to Multiple</td>
<td>Conversion of an existing multi-family dwelling building to a greater number of multiple dwellings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convert Non-residential to Residential</td>
<td>Conversion of an existing non-residential building to a residential building.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deconvert Multiple to Multiple/Single</td>
<td>De-conversion of an existing multi-family dwelling to a lesser number of dwellings.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

12. Review and verify the application type selection and the information entered. Click **Continue** to proceed to the remaining 5-Step process to create an ePLANS application submission.
STEP 1: CHOOSE PROPERTY

13. Fill in the information for the location of the Property where the construction or demolition is to occur. ePLANS will search the system to confirm the property is valid and legally exists in the City of Hamilton. Only valid properties will be displayed in the drop down list. Review and verify the application information entered and click Next to proceed.

14. Select the address from the list of address that matches the information provided. Click Next.

15. A summary screen is displayed for your review. Click Next to proceed to the “Enter Details” Step.
STEP 2: ENTER DETAILS

16. Fill in the information to describe the scope of work for your construction project. Click **Next**.

17. Fill in the various required information fields. The type and amount of information required will vary with the type of building permit application selected. Click **Next** to proceed to the “Fees” Step.
STEP 3: FEES

18. ePLANS will indicate the amount of Building Permit fees required at the time of application. A minimum non-refundable building permit fee will be required to complete a submission. The balance of the full fees will be required after the first review cycle. Select the fees you wish to pay. Note, the Minimum Building Permit Fee cannot be unselected. Click **Pay Selected Fees Now** to proceed with payment.

19. You will be directed to a third-party payment provider where a payment can be made using INTERAC, Credit Card, or Credit Card Debit. Click **Submit Payment** to pay the required fee(s).
20. ePLANS will display your confirmed payment transaction and send an email receipt to your registered email account. Click **Next** to proceed to the “Documents” Step.

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**STEP 4: DOCUMENTS**

21. Electronic drawings and documents are required to be submitted to complete the application submission. After the required fees have been paid, ePLANS will send email instructions on how to upload the required plans and documents. You can choose to upload your files now or at a later date. Refer to the E-PLAN UPLOADING section for more detail instructions on how to upload drawings and documents. Click **Next** to proceed to the “Summary” Step.
STEP 5: SUMMARY

22. Congratulations you have completed submitting an ePLANS online application. The summary screen provides all of the information related to your building permit application. Be sure to record your permit application number for future reference and when making enquiries.
E-PLAN UPLOAD (PROJECTDOX)

1. After the required fees have been paid the required electronic drawings and documents must be submitted to make a complete the application submission. ePLANS will send an email with instructions on how to upload the required plans and documents.

Uploading electronic files can be completed either during when you are creating an application or at a later time. The required electronic files are necessary to make a formal and “complete” building permit application submission. Uploading of digital documents and drawings are completed through the ePLANS digital markup and review ProjectDox software.

2. Uploading During Application Creation: “Step 4 – Documents”

Click on the E-PLAN UPLOAD/REVIEW button to open the ePLANS-ProjectDox interface in a new browser tab.
3. Uploading at a Later Date:
   Log in to the PED online service portal. Locate the application file on your “My Dashboard” and click the DETAILS button.

Click the E-PLAN UPLOAD/REVIEW button to open the ePLANS-ProjectDox interface in a separate browser tab.
4. You will be directed to the ePLANS digital markup and review ePLANS-ProjectDox software. The screen interface is different to the ePLANS-Portal and your application will be presented in a summary project information window. Click on the **Drawings** folder link to upload your electronic drawings to the drawings folder.

5. Click on the **Upload Files** button to submit the electronic design drawings. To avoid delays in the acceptance of your application, electronic drawings must be submitted in the format and standard required by the City of Hamilton. Single page and vector-based PDF files is the preferred format. Refer to the ePLANS Submission Standard and ePLANS File Naming Standard documents.
6. Either drag-and-drop or browse to the selected electronic drawing files to upload. Click **Upload Files** to start uploading.

   ![Upload Files](image)

   Click **Close** to complete uploading and return to the project window.

7. Click the **View Folders** button to return to the project folders window.

   ![View Folders](image)

   Click on **Documents** to upload your electronic documents to the documents folder.
8. Click the **Upload Files** button to submit the electronic documents. To avoid delays in the acceptance of your application, electronic documents must be submitted in the format and standard required by the City of Hamilton. Refer to the ePLANS Submission Standard document.

9. Either drag-and-drop or browse to the selected electronic document files to upload. Click **Upload Files** to start uploading.

Click **Close** to complete uploading and return to the project window.

10. Refer to the APPLICANT UPLOAD TASK section to complete the ePLANS application submission.
APPLICANT UPLOAD TASK (PROJECTDOX)

1. To complete the ePLANS application submission, you will need to notify City staff that all required drawings and files have been uploaded and ready for review. Notification is done through completion of the ePLANS-ProjectDox task called ** Applicant Upload Task.**

2. To access ePLANS-ProjectDox, log in to ePLANS-Portal.
   
   Click **Details** to select the application from your My Dashboard

   ![My Dashboard Image]

   Click **E-PLAN UPLOAD/REVIEW** to enter ePLANS-ProjectDox.

   ![Application Info Image]

3. Click on the **Workflow Portals** button to display the “ProjectFlow Task List”.

   ![ePLANS Image]
4. To complete the application submission, applicants must “accept” and “complete” assigned tasks. Click on the Applicant Upload Task link to accept the task.

5. Click OK to accept the task and continue. Click on the Applicant Upload Task to open the Applicant Upload task e-form.

6. Click on the checkbox to confirm all documents and drawings have been uploaded. Click Upload Complete – Notify City of Hamilton.
7. Click **OK** to complete the task and return to ProjectDox project window.

   ![ProjectDox window](image)

8. Click the **Logout** to close the online session for the ePLANS digital markup and review software. Select the screen/tab on your browser to return to the ePLANS portal application details screen.

   ![ePLANS portal](image)

9. You have successfully completed the submission of an ePLANS building permit application. You will receive an email to confirm receipt of the application by the City of Hamilton and your application will now go through a pre-screen review by City Staff for acceptance.

   ![Email notification](image)
PRE-SCREEN CORRECTIONS TASK (PROJECTDOX)

1. If corrections are identified by City staff during the pre-screening of your application, ePLANS will notify you via email. Follow the instructions on the email to return to the ePLANS-ProjectDox digital markup and review software.

10. To access ePLANS-ProjectDox, log in to ePLANS-Portal.

   Click Details to select the application from your My Dashboard

   Click E-PLAN UPLOAD/REVIEW to enter ePLANS-ProjectDox.
11. Click on the **Workflow Portals** button to display the project task list.

12. Click **Pre-Screen Corrections Task** to accept the task and then **OK** to open the Prescreen Corrections task e-form.

13. Click the button to view checklist items required to correct your building permit application submission.
14. Double-click in Applicant Response field to provide any comments to the checklist item(s). Click the green Save button for each checklist item comment. Click the lower-left Save then Close buttons to complete review of checklist items and return to the task e-form.

15. Close the e-task form and proceed to upload any required revisions, and missing drawings or documents.

16. Once you have reviewed the checklist of items requiring corrections and uploaded revisions or missing drawings or documents, return to the ProjectDox Workflow Portals window and select the Prescreen Corrections Task.

17. Scroll down to the bottom of the task e-form and click in the Applicant Comments field to provide any comments directly to City staff. Click on checkbox to confirm submission of outstanding required items. Click Return to City of Hamilton to “complete” the Applicant Pre-Screen Corrections Task.
18. Click **LOGOUT** to close the online session for the ePLANS-ProjectDox. Select the screen/tab on your browser to return to the ePLANS-Portal application details screen.

19. You have successfully completed the corrections identified under the Pre-Screening e-form task. ePLANS will send an email confirming acceptance of your ePLANS building permit application when City staff have completed pre-screening of your application.