



Citizen Access: Public Permit Portal Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated July 19, 2021

Construction and development permitting services provided by the City of Fremont are now available online via Citizen Access, the City's public permit portal located at www.Fremont.gov/CitizenAccess.

The City understands the public may have questions about these new online services and how to use [Citizen Access](#). Please see a list of common questions and answers on the following pages. This document will be updated regularly as updates are available.

Q1. What is Citizen Access and how can I use it?

[Citizen Access](#), available at www.Fremont.gov/CitizenAccess, is the City's online, permit portal. Users can create a [Citizen Access](#) account by selecting "Register" at the top of the page. Once an account is created, users can log in to their account and perform the following actions.

- *Search Records*: Search for permits by address, record number, and/or date range.
- *Apply for a Permit*: Submit a new permit request for [Building Permits \(includes Fire Permits and Solar Permits\)](#), [Planning Permits](#), and [Engineering Permits](#).
- *Check Record Status*: Track the status of a permit.
- *Make Payments*: Pay fees up to \$5,000.
- *Schedule an Inspection*: Schedule building inspections.

Q2. Who can I contact for help with Citizen Access?

For help or questions about [Citizen Access](#), please contact City staff via email at developmentsservices@fremont.gov.

Q3. What are the benefits of submitting my permit request online?

Using [Citizen Access](#) to submit a permit request is quick and convenient. Users can submit their request any time of the day. Every step of the permit process can be

completed online including payment of fees, retrieving plan review comments and plan corrections, resubmittal of plans/documents, accessing issued/approved permit documents, and scheduling of building inspections. Applicants can see all of their permit requests in one place (under “My Records”) and track the status of each record as it progresses through the permit review process.

Q4. Does the City have any COVID-19 related rules for visiting the Development Services Center in person?

Yes. All visitors to the [Development Services Center](#), located at 39550 Liberty Street, are required to wear a face covering, even if they are fully vaccinated. If a visitor does not have a mask, one will be provided. A limited number of visitors are allowed to wait inside. If the limited seating capacity is filled with visitors, any additional visitors will be required to wait outside until a seat becomes available. Lastly, all visitors must be scanned for their temperature when they enter to verify that they do not have a fever. Visitors with a fever will be asked to leave.

Q5. Do I have to submit my permit request online?

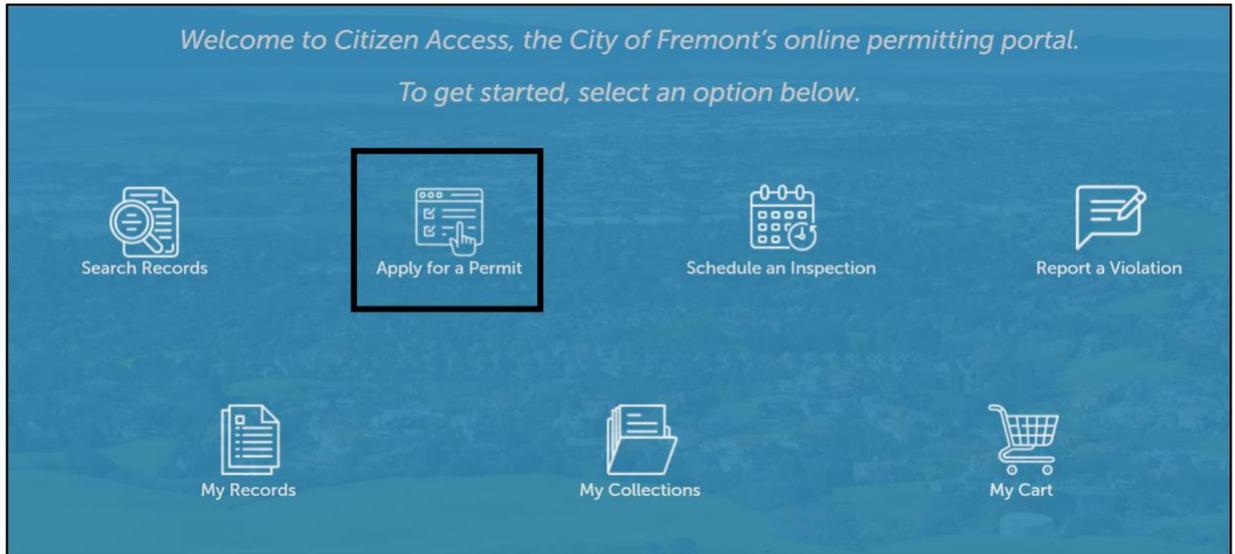
No. Permit requests do not need to be submitted online, although it is encouraged and provides a simplified format to do so. The [Development Services Center](#) is open Monday and Wednesday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. On Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, the Center is closed while staff focuses on processing online permit requests. The City has implemented an all-electronic plan/document review process. Because of this, if you would like to submit a new permit request in-person at the [Development Services Center](#), you must bring all of the submittal documents on a USB flash drive, including the permit application. If a permit request is submitted online, the permit application does not need to be uploaded.

Q6. How do I submit a new permit request online?

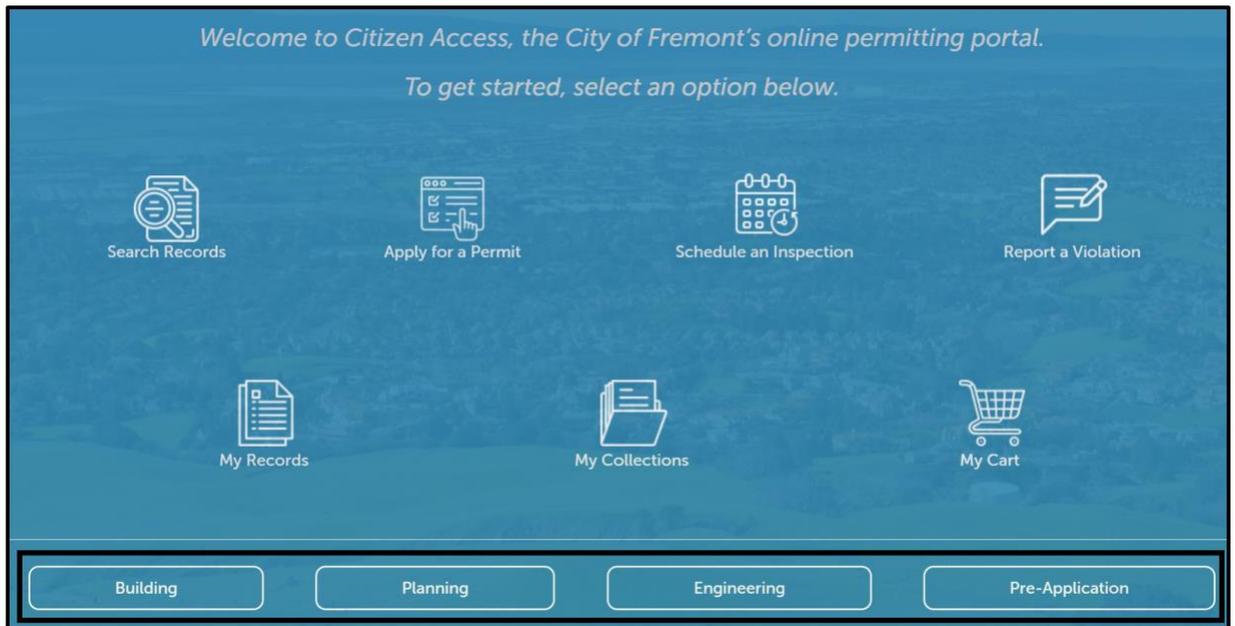
For new permit requests, log in to your [Citizen Access](#) account, select "Apply for a Permit," and then select the type of permit you need to apply for (i.e., Building, Planning, or Engineering). For help determining what permit/record type to select based on your project, visit www.Fremont.gov/CitizenAccessRecordTypes. For online permit requests, the permit application form is completed online and no longer needs to be uploaded. To submit a new permit request, do the following:

- Register for a Citizen Access account at www.Fremont.gov/CitizenAccess.
- Log in to your account.

- Select “Apply for a Permit.”



- Select the type of permit you need (i.e., Building, Planning, or Engineering). For help determining what permit/record type to select based on your project, visit www.Fremont.gov/CitizenAccessRecordTypes.



- Review the Project Requirements. If you understand the requirements and have selected the correct record type, you should check the Acknowledgment box at the bottom of the page and then select “Continue Application.”

- Complete the online form. Use the **Directions** to better understand what is required for each section. If any steps or required information are missing, error messages will pop up at the top of the screen to inform you of what needs to be fixed.
- Upload the required plans/documents.
- Continue the form to the payment screens. Online payments are currently limited to \$5,000. If your project requires a larger initial payment than this, you will be emailed an invoice and provided directions on where to mail or drop off the payment. If your payment is less than \$5,000, and you would like to pay online, make the payment. Only Mastercard and Visa are accepted. If you would like to make the payment in person, you can do so at the Cashier counter at the [Development Services Center](#) when it is open to the public. Depending on the type of record, there may be more than one-time fees. Once a payment is made, the receipt will be emailed to the applicant of the record.
- After the payment is made, an on-screen confirmation will verify that the submittal was successful.

Q7. Do I have to create a Citizen Access account?

Yes. Throughout the permit review process, the applicant will be directed to log in to their Citizen Access account to do a number of things (e.g., retrieve plan review comments; access the issued permit, inspection job card, and approved plans; resubmit plans/documents requiring corrections; and make payments). The applicant will be prompted to log in to their account via email when it is required to move the request along.

Q8. Do I have to have an email address to submit an online or in-person permit request?

Yes. All correspondence with the applicant will occur via email and, at most steps in the processing of the record, the emails will automatically be sent to the applicant listed on the record.

Q9. What happens after I submit my online permit request?

After the new request is submitted, the applicant will see the new record number in their [Citizen Access](#) account under “My Records.” The new request will be reviewed by staff to determine if enough information has been provided/uploaded to route it for review. If necessary information is missing to enable routing of the request for plan review, the

applicant will be contacted via email with a list of information that is necessary in order to initiate the review. This is a minimal list of items that only enables the City to calculate plan review fees and verify exactly what type(s) of review is required for the particular permit request. It is possible that after the request is routed for plan review, the City reviews will request additional information when the Cycle 1 review is complete. View a complete list of submittal items for [Building Permits](#), [Planning Permits](#), and [Engineering Permits](#). After the requested information is provided, the plan review fees (for Building Permit requests) will be invoiced. The applicant will be notified if invoiced fees need to be paid. Once all invoiced fees are paid, the request will be processed for review.

Q10. Why were my plans rejected and deleted from the record?

In 2020 (during the COVID-19 closure), the City changed all plan review services to an electronic plan review (ePR) software. In order for the ePR software to work correctly, plans/documents sent for review need to be formatted in a specific format. If the plans/documents do not comply with the ePR submittal requirements, they will be rejected and the applicant will be contact via email with a list of what needs to be corrected. The ePR document submittal requirements are available at www.Fremont.gov/EPRDocumentRequirements.

Q11. I submitted my online permit request. When will I be contacted?

The City is experiencing a very high level of permit requests at this time with constrained staffing resources to move requests along. Staff is moving requests in the queue as quickly as possible, but it is taking longer to process requests than it was prior to the COVID-19 closure in early 2020. You can check the status of your request at any time by logging in to your Citizen Access account and selecting “My Records.” Once the record is routed for review, a Team Lead will be assigned. The applicant will receive an email when the plan review is routed that will identify the staff person who is the Team Lead on the record. The Team Lead will be your contact through the plan review until the request is issued/approved.

Q12. Will online permits be processed in the same timeframe as those submitted in-person at the Development Services Center?

All permit requests are processed in the same permitting system. As such, the due dates for review cycles are the same regardless if a request is submitted online or in-person the [Development Services Center](#). However, the City’s extended COVID-19 shutdown necessitated that the City quickly adapt its paper intensive, in-person permit processing format to an online all electronic processing format. Modifications to make this online, all electronic process function well have been ongoing and are still in

transition. Because of this, staff is still adapting to all of the new processing tools, as well as continuing to process permit requests in the old, paper-intensive format that were submitted prior to the COVID-19 shutdown in 2020. Because of all of these changes, processing permit requests is taking longer than it did prior to the shutdown. The City apologizes for these delays and is working to implement more efficient ways to process online requests.

Q13. Can I pay for my permit online?

Yes. Permit fees can be paid by an applicant by either: 1) logging in to their [Citizen Access](#) account and selecting “My Cart” and selecting the record(s) that fees will be paid for; or 2) completing a general record search without logging in to a [Citizen Access](#) account and selecting “Pay Fees Due” at the far right of the record number (under the “Actions” column). Applicants are encouraged to log in to their [Citizen Access](#) account and select “My Cart” at the top of the screen to make a fee payment. The maximum credit card transaction amount is \$5,000. Visa and MasterCard credit cards are accepted for payment. Payments of more than \$5,000 need to be made by check in the [Development Services Center](#). Applicants who log in to their Citizen Access account to make a payment will receive a confirmation email with the receipt after the payment transaction is completed.

To pay fees without logging in to a [Citizen Access](#) account, applicants enter a partial record number, then select “Search.” For example, if the record number is BLD2021-12345, it can be searched as BLD2021-1234_. This will provide a list of records with these numbers. Once the applicant locates their record number in the list, they can select “Pay Fees Due” at the far right of the record number under “Action.” This will take the applicant to the payment screens. Applicants can submit payment for permit fees using a Visa or MasterCard credit card. The maximum payment transaction allowed is \$5,000. Payments of more than \$5,000 need to be made by check in the [Development Services Center](#). The receipt can be printed from the online screen after the payment.

Q14. How do I search my address in Citizen Access?

To get the best address search results, it is recommended that an abbreviated street name be searched. For example, if the address to be searched is 39550 Liberty Street, it should be searched as 39550 Lib, then select “Search.” For permit requests, searching for the address in this manner will ensure a valid result with the City’s parcel database, as well as will auto populate the parcel number and owner information. If multiple addresses are available, the applicant should select the correct address for their project.

Some address searches may be a little tricky if there is a direction in the street name (e.g., South Grimmer) or it is a new street name that may not yet be in the City's parcel database. If an applicant gets stuck with one of these searches, they should contact City staff at developmentservices@fremont.gov. Staff will then access the record from the backend of the system to find a solution to enable the online request to be submitted.

If the parcel number or owner has recently changed, applicants should leave them as is so they can submit the online request. Staff will make changes to parcel and owner information in the backend of the system prior to issuing/approving the permit request.

Q15. How do I enter my parcel number in the permit application form?

The best and easiest way to receive an accurate parcel number result is by querying a valid address search result. If a parcel does not have an address, please contact staff at developmentservices@fremont.gov for assistance in getting the request submitted.

Q16. Why do I still need to fill out the permit application and then upload it to the permit application?

A permit application is only required by applicants who choose to submit their permit request in-person at the [Development Services Center](#). Applicants who choose to submit their permit request online in Citizen Access are no longer required to upload a completed permit application. Each permit request has required documents that must be uploaded to the request in order for it to be processed. For online permit requests, the required documents are listed on the Project Summary page for each record type. For permit requests made in-person at the [Development Services Center](#), the documents required for submittal are available by visiting the following links: [Building Permits](#), [Planning Permits](#), and [Engineering Permits](#).

Q17. How do I find out who the Team Lead is for my permit request?

The Team Lead on any permit request can be found in [Citizen Access](#) by looking up the record number (either logged in to a [Citizen Access](#) account or doing a general search) and reviewing the information under "Record Details." The Team Lead is not assigned to a project until it is routed for plan review.

Q18. How can I find out the status of my permit request?

An applicant can check the status of a record at any time by logging in to their Citizen Access account and selecting "My Records." Find the record number in the list of your

records (sorted by Building, Engineering, and Planning records). The status of the record is listed under the “Status” column.

Q19. I really want to talk with someone about my permit request. Who can I contact?

If a project has been routed for plan review (which means an applicant has paid the plan review fees), the Team Lead is the applicant’s contact for all questions/issues related to the permit request. The Team Lead on any project can be found in [Citizen Access](#) by looking up the record number (either logged in to a [Citizen Access](#) account or doing a general search) and reviewing the information under “Record Details.”

If an applicant’s project has not yet been routed for review, the applicant should contact processing staff as listed below:

- [Planning Permits](#): 510-494-4455; planinfo@fremont.gov
- [Building/Fire Permits](#): 510-494-4460; bldinfo@fremont.gov
- [Engineering Permits](#): 510-494-4700; engineering@fremont.gov

Q20. How do I resubmit plans/documents for an existing project under review?

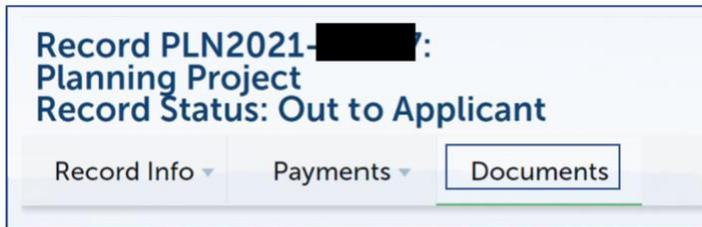
If an applicant already has a project in process and needs to resubmit plans/documents, the resubmittal will need to be made via [Citizen Access](#). Existing records created at the [Development Services Center](#) will need to be linked to an applicant’s [Citizen Access](#) account. Once the record is linked to the [Citizen Access](#) account, the applicant will be able to resubmit electronically.

To get an existing record linked to a [Citizen Access](#) account, an applicant should email their Team Lead to make this request, providing the email address on the account to be linked and the record number(s) to be linked to it. An applicant can also send this request to developmentservices@fremont.gov. Once the record(s) is linked with the [Citizen Access](#) account, they will be found in the account under “My Records.”

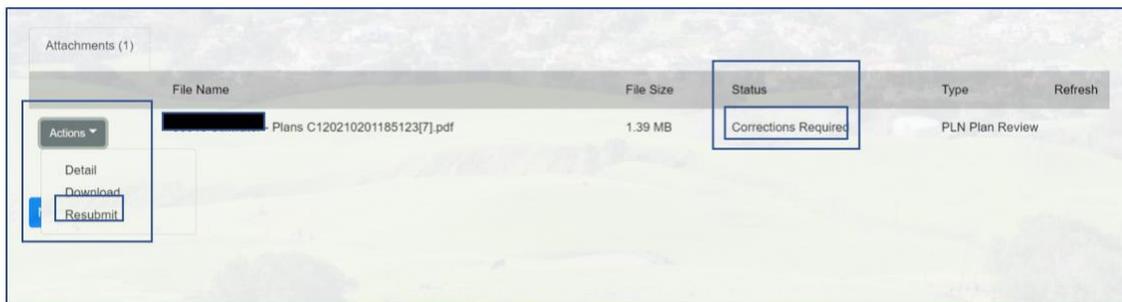
Once the record is linked with a [Citizen Access](#) account, the resubmittal process is as follows:

- Visit www.Fremont.gov/CitizenAccess.
- Log in to account.

- Select “Home.”
- Select “My Records.”
- Select the record that needs to be resubmitted.
- Select “Record Info.”
- Select “Documents.”



- Select “Resubmit” under Actions.



- Upload the resubmittal document.
- If it is a new type of document that has not been reviewed, Select “New.”
- Upload the new documents.
- Select “Save.”

Q21. How do I submit a revision on an issued permit?

To submit a revision on an issued permit, the process is as follows:

- Visit www.Fremont.gov/CitizenAccess.
- Log in to account.
- Select “Home.”
- Select “My Records.”

- Select the issued record that a revision needs to be reviewed.
- Select “Amendment” under actions.
- Select “Revision,” and complete the online application.
- Upload the revision documents when prompted, including a statement explaining why the revision to the issued permit is necessary, as well as the proposed revision plans/documents to the issued permit.
- Pay the revision plan check fee.

Q22. Who do I contact if I do not understand the submittal requirements?

For questions about submittal requirements or the status of a record's review, please contact the project Team Lead (for existing projects), visit the webpages below, or use the contact information below to connect with staff.

- [Planning Permits](#): 510-494-4455; planinfo@fremont.gov
- [Building/Fire Permits](#): 510-494-4460; permitprocessing@fremont.gov
- [Engineering Permits](#): 510-494-4700; engineering@fremont.gov

Q23. What other City departments/divisions or outside agencies may be involved in my online permit request?

Coordination with other City departments/divisions and outside agencies may be necessary to obtain a City permit. View contact information below.

- [Environmental Services Division](#): Waste Handling Plan, Stormwater Permits
phone: 510-494-4570; email: environment@fremont.gov
- [Transportation Engineering Division](#): Traffic Control Plan
phone: 510-494-4745; email: transportationengineering@fremont.gov
- [Revenue Division](#): Business Tax
phone: 510-494-4790; email: revenue@fremont.gov
- [Alameda County Water District](#): Water Supply
phone: 510-668-4200
- [Republic Services](#): Garbage, Refuse Collection, and Disposal
phone: 510-657-3500

- [PG&E](#): Natural Gas and Electric Service
Residential Service Center: 1-877-660-6789
Business Service Center: 1-800-468-4743
- [Union Sanitary](#): Wastewater/Sewer Services
phone: 510-477-7500