

# Denver's Green Roof Initiative

*On November 7, Denver voters passed the Green Roof Initiative ("Initiative 300").*

The initiative has an effective date of January 1, 2018. The green roof requirement will apply to projects that submit a site development plan on or after January 1, 2018, for any new building with a gross floor area of 25,000 square feet or more or a building addition that causes the building to become 25,000 square feet or more, and any existing building over 25,000 square feet that is seeking to do a roof replacement.

Community Planning and Development is presently working to harmonize existing laws and policies with this new law, and to build its requirements into our permitting and contractor licensing procedures.

## **Submitting a formal site development plan (SDP) for review before December 29**

Per the terms of the green roof ordinance, projects over 25,000 square feet that require a [site development plan review](#) or "SDP" (new commercial construction, major additions, new construction of three or more residential units, and some tenant-finish/remodel projects undergoing change of occupancy) must have submitted a complete, **formal phase** site plan and paid the associated review fees by December 29<sup>th</sup> in order to be exempt from the green roof requirement.

Submit the formal site plan no later than December 22<sup>nd</sup> to guarantee that it can be logged in, and an invoice issued and paid, before the deadline.

## **A concept plan is not sufficient for exemption from the green roof requirement**

Please note that the SDP review process begins with a **required concept phase**, which entails submitting a conceptual site plan and application and attending a concept meeting to determine feasibility of the project, among other items. The concept site plan is not as detailed as the formal site plan submitted later in the process, has no review fees associated with its review, and is not sufficient to exempt a project from the green roof requirement. Projects that have not yet begun the concept phase will not be able to meet the December 29<sup>th</sup> deadline for exemption from the initiative.

## **Applying for a roof permit before December 31**

Roof permits can be applied for [online](#) at any time of day or night through December 31 to be exempt from the green roof requirement. For all permits, work must commence within 60 days from the date of permit issuance.

Make sure to request an extension of a roof permit if your construction schedule will extend the roof work out beyond 60 days. Extensions of valid permits will not require a project to meet the green roof standards.

## **What to submit for new and replacement roofs after January 1**

Buildings over 25,000 square feet will not be able to obtain roof permits online or as a quick permit issued by email or fax after January 1. These roofs, whether believed to be eligible for an exemption or not, must be logged in for review.

- Download the Green Roof Declaration Form (*coming soon*)
- Download the [Commercial Building Permit Guide](#) (contains instructions, checklists, and forms for Log In)

- Make sure to include the following in your submittal:
  - Drawings as applicable for all architectural, structural, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems serving the roof
  - Energy code drawings/analysis
  - A landscape plan for the green roof vegetation
  - A green roof maintenance plan
  - All other plans and details to show compliance with the Denver Green Roof Construction Standard as outlined in the initiative's text
  
- Make a [Log In appointment](#) to submit the above information

## Exemptions

At this time, only the following projects are exempt from the green roof requirement:

- Projects that have submitted a complete building permit application or complete site plan application prior to January 1, 2018,
- Residential buildings that are 4 stories or less or have a height of 50 feet or less (whichever is greater), and
- Commercial greenhouses at grade, temporary structures, and air-supported structures.

The green roof ordinance allows applicants who are unable to provide the required green roof coverage to make a cash-in-lieu payment, contingent on approval of an exemption request made to the Planning Board. [The ordinance](#) (PDF) specifies the amount and terms of the payment. Your project must be logged in for plan review before you can request an exemption.

## Potential For Amendments and Modifications to the Green Roof Initiative

The Denver Department of Public Health and Environment (DPHE) will lead a formal stakeholder engagement and public input process to review the ordinance. This collaborative, consensus-based process could lead to modifications, clarifications, and improvements to the initiative. We are committed to implementing the will of the voters by meeting or exceeding the benefits that the green roofs ordinance would have for our climate, reduced heat island effect, and storm water management.

To receive updates on the stakeholder engagement process and opportunities for public input, [sign up for the DPHE's Green Roofs Stakeholder Process email newsletter](#).

Any changes to the initiative would require a super-majority of 10 City Council votes, which could not happen until mid-2018 at the earliest.

<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denver-development-services/commercial-projects/green-roof-initiative.html>