



# Subdivision and Land Development FAQs

## **What is the procedure for subdividing property?**

The ultimate goal is to have an approved plan recorded at the Lehigh County Courthouse so the new deeds can be prepared. The applicant is to file the appropriate Subdivision Review Application together with fees, an escrow, and plans drawn in accordance with the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Fees are required for every submission that requires a public meeting. The plans are then distributed to the various reviewing personnel and agencies for their review and comment in time for the Planning Commission's consideration. All zoning issues must be resolved before the plan can advance beyond the Planning Commission. Therefore, it is recommended that the applicant meet with the Community Development staff to identify possible zoning and planning issues prior to submitting the plans. Should the Planning Commission find the plan to be substantially compliant, a favorable recommendation is forwarded to the Board of Commissioners. The plans are usually revised to address any remaining comments prior to the Board of Commissioners reviewing them. Once the plans are "clean" for final approval by the Board of Commissioners, staff will prepare a resolution for the Board to consider. Once the plan is approved, the applicant has 90 days to address any conditions of approval and record the plan. The timeframe to go through process depends on the complexity of the plan. However, minor residential subdivision (5 lots or less) and resubdivisions generally take 3 to 6 months on average. Major subdivisions generally take longer. No building permits can be issued until the plan is recorded.

## **What do I have to consider or consult in preparing a plan for submission to the Planning Commission?**

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance: Plan Drawing and Submission Requirements  
 Required Public Improvements to be Constructed  
 Required Agreements  
 Construction Standards for Improvements.

Zoning Ordinance: Setbacks, use, driveway separation distance, clear sight triangle, setbacks for parking lots and buildings, property size, screening and buffer, parking lot design and size, signs

Engineering: Storm water control, wetlands preservation, impervious surface, traffic impact, property survey, right-of-way dedication, erosion and sedimentation controls, availability of water and sewer

Legal Deeds, Improvements Agreements, financial security

Offsite Impact, Comments from the neighboring public

## **May I meet with the planning staff to discuss my ideas? Is there a fee?**

The planning staff is always available to meet with those interested in subdividing or developing property and encourages potential applicants to discuss their concepts with staff before proceeding with expensive engineering. Presenting a concept sketch to staff generally results in the potential applicant having a greater understanding of the options available and possible issues ahead. Meeting with Township staff is free of charge. Contact the Community Development Department for an appointment. If the developer is interested in having the Township Engineer and/or Solicitor sit in on the meeting, a completed Professional Staff Consultation application, with fee and escrow is required.