

Forms of Payment Accepted for Plans Review and Permits Survey

UT MTAS | September 2015



Summary

We sent out survey invitations via email to ten cities that are similar in size to Knoxville. Several reminder emails were sent and a follow-up phone call was made to each city that did not respond 3 days before the deadline of September 25, 2015.

These are the cities included in the survey.

- Bartlett
- Chattanooga
- Clarksville
- Franklin
- Hendersonville
- Jackson
- Johnson City
- Kingsport
- Shelby County-Memphis
- Murfreesboro

Overall, 10 responses were received of the total of 10 sent out to the selected group. One response was partial with no contact information.

Some highlights of the results are provided here. A summary of responses to each question is provided in Appendix A. Responses of each participant are available as well.

Plans Review

Cities reported that the same forms of payment are accepted from general contractors and subcontractors. Comments revealed that one city does not charge for plans review and one other only takes credit card payments online (not in office or by phone) but they are hoping to change that soon.

Forms of Payment Accepted	Gen Cont.	Subcontr.
Credit card	50%	50%
Check	90%	90%
Cash	80%	80%
Declining balance account	20%	22%
Other	20%	10%
<i>Total responses</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10</i>

In the cities that accept credit card payments, most take these payments in the office or by phone. Fewer accept credit card payments by fax. One city uses a third party vendor to process transactions (Franklin).

Credit Card Processing	Gen Cont.	Subcontr.
In office payments only by credit card	80%	75%
Payments accepted over phone by credit card	60%	50%
Payments accepted by fax with credit card information	40%	25%
Other	40%	25%
<i>Total responses</i>	5	4

Building Permits

Again, the same policies apply to general and subcontractors for payments accepted. It is interesting to note the higher rate of acceptance of checks and cash for permits versus plans review.






Forms of Payment Accepted	Gen Cont.	Subcontr.
Credit card	78%	78%
Check	100%	100%
Cash	89%	78%
Declining balance account	22%	22%
Other	11%	11%
<i>Total Responses</i>	9	9

Credit Card Processing	Gen Cont.	Subcontr.
In office payments only by credit card	57%	57%
Payments accepted over phone by credit card	57%	57%
Payments accepted by fax with credit card information	29%	29%
Other	29%	29%
<i>Total Responses</i>	7	7

APPENDIX A. Summary of All Responses

PLANS REVIEW

1. What forms of payment do you accept for plans review?





#	Answer		Response	%
1	Credit card		5	50%
2	Check		9	90%
3	Cash		8	80%
4	Declining balance account*		2	20%
5	Other		2	20%

Other

No Plan review Fee

Currently we can only accept credit cards online, not in person. Looking to change that in the near future.

2. How do you process credit card payments from general contractors for plans review?






#	Answer		Response	%
1	In office payments only by credit card		4	80%
2	Payments accepted over phone by credit card		3	60%
3	Payments accepted by fax with credit card information		2	40%
4	Other		2	40%

Other

3rd Party website that handles the transactions





The only way credit card payments are allowed at the moment are as an online payment; that applies for anything where a payment is required.

3. What forms of payment do you accept from subcontractors and others for plans review in general?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Credit card		5	50%
2	Check		9	90%
3	Cash		8	80%
4	Declining balance account*		2	20%
5	Other		1	10%

Other
No Plan review fee

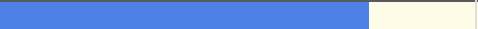




4. How do you process credit card payments from subcontractors or others needing a plan reviewed?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	In office payments only by credit card		3	75%
2	Payments accepted over phone by credit card		2	50%
3	Payments accepted by fax with credit card information		1	25%
4	Other		1	25%

Other
See comments to previous questions.

BUILDING PERMITS

5. What forms of payment do you accept from general contractors or others needing a building permit?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Credit card		7	78%
2	Check		9	100%
3	Cash		8	89%
4	Declining balance account*		2	22%
5	Other		1	11%

Other

Same answers applies for permits that applied for plan review.

6. How do you process credit card payments from general contractor or others needing a building permit?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	In office payments only by credit card	4	57%
2	Payments accepted over phone by credit card	4	57%
3	Payments accepted by fax with credit card information	2	29%
4	Other	2	29%

Other

We accept credit cards in the office or over the phone. Cash and check must be brought into the office

Same answers applies for permits that applied for plan review.





7. What forms of payment do you accept from subcontractors or others needing a permit (gas, mechanical, plumbing, electrical)?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Credit card	7	78%
2	Check	9	100%
3	Cash	7	78%
4	Declining balance account*	2	22%
5	Other	1	11%

Other

Same answers applies for permits that applied for plan review.

8. How do you process credit card payments from subcontractors or others needing a building permit (gas, mechanical, plumbing, electrical)?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	In office payments only by credit card		4	57%
2	Payments accepted over phone by credit card		4	57%
3	Payments accepted by fax with credit card information		2	29%
4	Other		2	29%

Other
Same as for general contractors
Same answers applies for permits that applied for plan review.

9. Please provide your contact information below.

First and Last Name	City	Title	Email address
Gary Hilbert	Chattanooga	Director, Land Development Office	ghilbert@chattanooga.gov
Robert Holtz	Murfreesboro	Building Official	rholtz@murfreesborotn.gov
Chris Bridgewater	City of Franklin	Director of Building and Neighborhood Services	chris.bridgewater@franklintn.gov
Jim Brown	Bartlett	Director of Code Enforcement	Jbrown@cityofbartlett.org
Kristen Hodgson	Kingsport	Secretary/Building Dept	KristenHodgson@KingsportTN.gov
Steve Mills	Hendersonville	Director of Building & Codes	smills@hvilletn.org
Felicia Gaines	Memphis	Accountant B	felicia.gaines@shelbycountyttn.gov
Kim Lester	Johnson City	Codes Enforcement Officer	klester@johnsoncitytn.org
Michael S. Baker	Clarksville	Director	mbaker@cityofclarksville.com