

# **Notice of the Office of the Leading Group for the Pilot Reform of the Construction Project Review and Approval System in Guangzhou on the Optimization of Construction Permit Procedures for Building Construction Projects (Version 2.0)**

To all parties concerned:

To implement the requirements of the State Council and the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development on reforms to the review and approval system for construction projects, improve the business environment in Guangzhou, enhance the speed at which construction projects are launched, and based upon the implementation of integrated online processing of building project construction permits and quality and safety oversight registrations through vertically-integrated systems in 2018, it is hereby decided that the processing of building construction permits for building projects will be further optimized (version 2.0). Relevant matters are hereby notified as follows:

## **1. Matters Regarding the Application of Building Construction Permits in Separate Project Phases**

In order to optimize the review and approval process for housing construction projects in Guangzhou, a project developer may independently opt to apply for building construction permits in separate phases based on their construction schedule after confirming their general construction contractor.

1.1 Division into three phases: A project developer may apply for separate construction permits in three phases (“foundation pit support and excavation,” “basement,” “above  $\pm 0.000$ ”);

1.2 Division into two phases: The first two phases of the above-mentioned three phases (“foundation pit support and earthworks” and “basement”) may be incorporated into one phase (“below  $\pm 0.000$ ”), i.e. construction permit applications may be separately carried out in two phases (“below  $\pm 0.000$ ” and “above  $\pm 0.000$ ”);

1.3 One phase: A project developer may directly apply for the construction permit for the project as a whole.

## **2. Planning Procedures for Phased Construction Permit Applications**

2.1 The building construction permit for the “foundation pit support and earthworks” phase may be processed first after a project developer obtains the planning requirements issued by the relevant planning department (planning procedures are hereby considered to have been completed), the project design company issues a commitment (affixed with the dedicated official seal of a registrar) that design plans are in line with state regulations and construction quality and safety standards, and the project developer makes a commitment that the design plan is stable.

2.2 After obtaining approval documents issued by the relevant planning department with regards to the design plans, planning procedures are considered to have been completed, and the project developer may apply for the building construction permit for the “basement” or “below  $\pm 0.000$ ” phase.

2.3 After obtaining the *Construction Project Planning Permit*, official planning procedures are considered to have been completed, and the project developer may apply for the building construction permit for the “above  $\pm 0.000$ ” phase or the overall project.

### **3. Regarding Site Procedures for Building Construction Permits**

A notice of consent to land use, a land allocation decision document, an agreement on the transfer of use rights to state-owned construction land, an approval document for construction land, a real estate ownership certificate, a construction site planning permit (issued after February 1, 2020), a declaration that land rights for government investment projects are clear and free of disputes (including a commitment by the project developer and meeting minutes from the district-level government), or formal documents on the conversion of agricultural land for use by government investment projects may each be used as a formal site document for the processing of a building construction permit.

### **4. Scope of Projects Eligible for Building Construction Permits**

Pursuant to the *Notice on Adjusting Quotas for Processing of Construction Permits for Building and Municipal Infrastructure Engineering Projects* issued by Guangdong Provincial Housing and Urban-Rural Development Department, building projects and municipal infrastructure engineering projects with an investment of CNY 1 million or below or that have a constructed area of 500 square meters or below (hereinafter referred to as “small projects under the quota”) may be exempt from the requirement to apply for a building construction permit. Small projects under the quota should instead perform construction commencement information logging procedures before works are commenced at the subdistrict or town where they are located in accordance with relevant regulations.

### **5. Regarding the Optimization of Matters Related to Construction Permits for Renovations to Existing Buildings**

5.1 *The review of construction drawings and design documents is not required.* Provided that the project developer makes a commitment that renovations will not involve increases to the constructed area, total building height, or the number of floors, modifications to the building exterior, works that lower structural safety standard, or changes to the building function, and the project design company makes a commitment that drawings meet state regulations and construction quality and safety specifications, construction permit applications for renovations to existing buildings will not require the submission of the construction drawing and design documents review certificate.

5.2 *Reducing required documents and processing time.* Application documents required for building construction permits for renovations to existing buildings have been reduced to six categories, while the review and approval timeframe has been reduced to within two working days.

5.3 *Non-mandatory application for “joint completion acceptance”.* With respect to renovations to existing buildings that do not involve review and approval procedures related to planning or civil air defense, and are not required to perform real estate registration procedures, project developers may opt not to apply for “joint completion acceptance” at the project completion phase. Projects may be put into operation after the project developer organizes and completes quality completion acceptance of the various responsible project participating companies and procedures required by relevant laws and regulations.

## **6. Regarding Matters Related to Works Commencement Procedures for Multi-Purpose Utility Tunnels**

After the relevant reform and development authority issues a reply regarding the feasibility study for a multi-purpose utility tunnel project, the project developer shall apply for a construction commencement approval from the relevant housing and urban-rural development authority. The project developer may perform quality and safety oversight registration procedures upon meeting construction commencement requirements (see service guidelines for more details).

## **7. Matters Regarding the Optimization of Applications for Building Construction Permits for Simple and Low-Risk Construction Projects Led by Private Investment**

Joint processing of construction planning permits and building construction permits shall be implemented for simple and low-risk construction projects led by private investment. When enterprises make a one-stop online application, the system will automatically forward relevant documents to authorities overseeing planning and housing and urban-rural development for their review and approval (see relevant supporting documents issued by the Municipal Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau for the scope of application and procedural guidelines). Such projects should indicate “simple and low-risk construction project led by private investment” in the “remarks” column of their building construction permit to facilitate inspections by relevant authorities.

## **8. Implementation of “Instantaneous Processing” for Changes to Building Construction Permits**

In order to further streamline procedures for changes to building construction permits, “instantaneous processing” is implemented for changes to non-key information such as changes to the names of the various responsible project participating companies, contract prices, and construction schedules specified in the contract. Project developers may directly register such changes on the building construction permit processing system without the need for prior application or review and approval. Immediate online processing will be implemented for applications to make changes to the three types of key information, i.e. changes to the

construction supervision company, project design company, or project surveying company, changes to the persons in charge of project development, construction works, supervision, design, or surveying, and changes to project scale. The time required for review and approval shall be shortened to within one working day.

## **9. Strengthening the Commitment System and the System of Accountability by Registration Personnel**

9.1 *Phased review of construction drawings.* When applying for building construction permits for the “basement” or “below  $\pm 0.000$ ” phase, a project developer may first submit the construction drawing technical review opinion for the “below  $\pm 0.000$ ” phase. Documents showing that construction drawings for the project as a whole have passed review and approval should be in order before applying for a building construction permit for the “above  $\pm 0.000$ ” phase (a commitment to supplement required documents within a specified period may be made when applying for the building construction permit).

9.2 *Conditional acceptance of construction drawing review appraisals.* Where the project design company makes a commitment that construction drawings and design documents meet state regulations and construction quality and safety specifications (affixed with the dedicated official seal of a registrar), and the project developer makes a commitment that project development plans are stable and review appraisals will be supplemented within a specified period, municipal and district-level housing and urban-rural development authorities may permit the construction drawing review opinion to be supplemented within a specified period when processing the building construction permit. For over-limit high-rise buildings that have completed technical reviews as required, government review and approval documents will no longer be a pre-requirement for issuing a construction drawing review opinion.

## **10. Strengthening Interim and Post-Works Oversight and Administration**

During routine oversight inspections, should municipal or district-level housing and urban-rural development authorities and quality and safety oversight agencies discover that any project developer, project design company, construction contractor, construction supervision company, or registration personnel has failed to fulfill the commitment or has acted in violation of relevant laws and regulations, such authorities or agencies shall adopt measures such as public disclosure of such actions, deduction of credibility points, suspension of works for rectifications, administrative penalties, revocation of building construction permits, or requesting that higher-level authorities revoke the professional certification of relevant personnel, based on the severity of the circumstances.

## **11. Full Online Processing and Online Issuance of Licenses**

Project developers may make one-stop applications on the Guangzhou Joint Construction Project Review and Approval Platform. Applications will be processed entirely online. Upon approval of the application, enterprises may retrieve electronic licenses for their building construction permits and quality and safety oversight notifications online, with no need to collect hardcopy documents at service counters. Before the commencement of construction works, the project developer should timely

contact construction quality and safety oversight agencies to conduct the first on-site quality and safety inspection and related technical clarifications

## **12. Other Matters**

12.1 Projects applying for building construction permits in separate phases should complete joint completion acceptance procedures for all phases together after completing main structural works.

12.2 After completion of foundation pit works, the project developer should fulfill its primary responsibility for construction quality and safety if it is unable to timely obtain a building construction permit for the next phase. Where foundation pit supports exceed their designed period of use, the project developer should adopt effective measures to ensure the safety of foundation pits, including the backfilling thereof.

12.3 Where construction projects fall outside the scope of Article 16 of the *Guangdong Provincial Construction Project Supervision Regulations*, municipal and district-level housing and urban-rural development authorities shall not set a mandatory requirement that the project developers provide documents related to construction supervision when processing the applications for building construction permits. Project developers are encouraged to safeguard their rights and interests and strengthen quality control either by purchasing construction quality and safety insurance or hiring in-house accredited professionals.

12.4 This Notice shall be implemented with effect from June 1, 2020. Authorities overseeing transportation, water supply, and forestry and landscaping may refer to this Notice in further optimizing the operational guidelines regarding construction permits for projects within their respective specialized fields. Problems encountered during the course of implementation should be reported to the Office of the Leading Group for the Pilot Reform of the Construction Project Review and Approval System in Guangzhou, which will timely optimize and adjust matters related to the processing of applications for construction permits based on the latest state and provincial requirements regarding the reform of the construction project review and approval system, and in conjunction with the realities of relevant work.

The points above are hereby notified.

Office of the Leading Group for the Pilot Reform of the Construction  
Project Review and Approval System in Guangzhou

May 20, 2020