

Parcel/Lot Consolidation FAQ

I. Why do I have to have combine my parcels of land?

Construction, both new construction or even rehabilitation work, cannot be permitted by statewide building codes when a building is not contained within a single parcel of land. The distance from property lines affects requirements of how buildings must be constructed, particularly for fire safety. The building code requires certainty of property lines when analyzing building permit submissions.

Additionally, zoning codes often require minimum setbacks from property lines and minimum lot areas for a structure to be established within. These are important considerations to maintain the health, safety and character of our neighborhoods. Many of our neighborhoods were originally subdivided on small parcels. However, in some areas, development patterns and neighborhood intentions have caused us to often choose larger structures and larger lot development. Thus, proposed projects must now be made compliant with our modern codes and development sites must have conforming legal Lots of Record.

II. My parcel is “consolidated” according to the Hamilton County Auditor. Isn’t this the same thing?

While your tax parcels can be consolidated to receive one tax bill with the Hamilton County Auditor, this is a convenience for tax bill purposes only. Tax Bill Consolidation process does not eliminate the interior boundary lines or create new boundary lines of the affected parcels. It does not legally join the parcels into one legal Lot of Record. Only by resurveying the property and the plat containing the I, We Clause with all the exact ownership of parcels can the city and county permanently change multiple parcels to a legally conforming Lot of Record.

III. So how can I combine my tax parcels? What is a Consolidation Plat?

In cases where a landowner wants to combine several adjacent pieces of property into one larger parcel of land removing all interior lines, there is only one method. However, Hamilton County Engineer and Auditor recognize one method and drawing defined as a **Consolidation Plat**. A consolidation plat is essentially a re-mapping of two or more adjacent lots or parcels of land, combining them into one larger parcel removing the interior lines between the adjacent parcels. Additionally, it requires specific language (I, we Clause) on the drawing signed by the property owner in front of a notary, permitting the Engineer and Auditor to merge the parcel into a new parcel of record.

IV. What should I know about obtaining a Consolidation Plat?

The first step is to contact a Licensed Ohio Land Surveyor and ensure that you specifically request a Consolidation Plat, not merely a survey. The Land Surveyor often performs deed research, and field review to determine the exact location and boundaries of your proposed new lot of record. The research results in a **Consolidation Plat** that indicates both the original parcels and “new” combined parcel of land and creates a new legal description of the property. It also contains specific language and signature block for the property owners to sign in front of a notary.

Additionally, it is often encouraged by the Building & Inspections Department, to locate existing structures and easements and their distances from property lines. Remember the purpose of the Consolidation Plat is to know precisely where buildings are located for building permit and zoning compliance. Property owners are strongly encouraged to have Zoning Administration review Consolidation Plats prior to submitting final documentation to Hamilton County

This new **Consolidation Plat** is then submitted to the Hamilton County Engineer's Office. You will need 1 original and 1 copy of the Consolidation plat or 2 Originals. The plat will be walked down to the Auditor's office by the submitter and pay the \$0.50 fee to the Auditor to submit the Consolidation plat. The Auditor will take the submitter's contact information and the plat will stay 7 to 10 business days for processing by the Engineer and Auditor's office. After the plat is completed, you will receive a phone call from the Auditor's office to pick the plat up for recording. You will pick the plat up from the Auditor and walk it down to the Recorder's Office to record. You will pay the appropriate fees to the Hamilton County Recorder's Office and they will enter in the Recording information. You will be handed back 1 copy of the plat to return to the Auditor's office. Please contact the Hamilton County Recorder's Office for any fees (the fees depend on the size of the plat) or standards required for a new Consolidation Plat submission.

Hamilton County Engineer's Office

138 E Court St Rm 700, Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

513-946-4250

<https://www.hamiltoncountyohio.gov/government/departments/engineer>

Hamilton County Recorder

138 E Court St #205, Cincinnati, OH 45202

513-946-4600

<https://recordersoffice.hamilton-co.org/index.html>

The City of Cincinnati cannot recommend a surveyor, but you can find a list of surveyors from the Professional Land Surveyors of Ohio. <http://ohiosurveyor.org/find-surveyor/>

V. How do I let you know our new plat has been completed and recorded?

The process can take a number of days for review and recording. Afterwards, there is also a delay from the time the plat is 'recorded' and the time that the Hamilton County property record maps are amended in the CAGIS online records for viewing by City Officials. It is encouraged that you photocopy and scan or digitally photograph your "date stamped and approved" Consolidation Plat at the time of recording. The Buildings & Inspections Department will consider such as proof of new legal lot of record as a means to expedite building permits or zoning approvals. If not expediting the process, provide a copy of your recorded Consolidation Plat drawing when you submit for your building permits.