

Pella “Two Mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction”

If you live or have a business within two miles of the city limits of Pella, you may be in an area where building permits and zoning through the City apply. State law permits cities throughout Iowa to exercise subdivision review in areas located outside but within two miles of the city limits, commonly referred to as a “Two Mile Extraterritorial Jurisdiction.” In addition to subdivision review, the City also has building and zoning jurisdiction in unincorporated Marion and Mahaska counties within two miles of the City limits. In the case of Marion County, an agreement exists where the County agreed to relinquish zoning and building permit review for a portion of the Pella two mile jurisdiction. Since Mahaska County has no zoning ordinances state law permits the City to extend its zoning two miles into the county. Each county has two representatives that serve on Pella’s Planning & Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment. The intent of extraterritorial jurisdiction is to provide consistent planned land use as well as protecting property and property owners.

The map below shows the approximate areas within the Pella two mile jurisdiction which are included in the building and zoning review of the City. If you are located within the affected area check with the City for building permits and permitted uses based on your zoning district classification. Agricultural uses need to obtain building permits for new structures in order to demonstrate and confirm agricultural use. Building permit fees are not applied to agricultural building permits. Only zoning and subdivision ordinances apply in the jurisdiction area of each County. If you have any questions about Pella’s two mile extraterritorial jurisdiction and what it means to you, please contact George Wesselhoft, Director of Planning & Zoning, at 628-1601.

