



# Building Permit Review

September 26, 2016

# Purpose

---

In response to Council inquiries, staff is providing the results of an analysis of the building permit process as it relates to:

- What types of residential permits are required
- How is this communicated
- Identified improvements within these aspects of the process partly based on survey of peer cities in the front range area
- Additional future presentation will be provided related to land use cases



# Background

- What is a Building Permit
  - Building, plumbing, gas, HVAC and electrical permits give you legal permission to start construction of a building project in accordance with approved drawings and specifications
- Why require Building Permits
  - To protect the public by reducing the potential hazards of unsafe construction and ensuring public health and safety
- 10-day or less turnaround reviews
  - 10 days for building permit reviews
  - 4 days for reviews on home improvement projects.
  - Over-the-counter same-day permits, Monday-Friday, that require no plan review.
  - Weekend Warrior same-day permits for small home improvement projects



# What Requires a Building Permit

- Within accessory residential projects, a permit is required for:

Type	Specifics
Fences	Yes, over 42"
Sheds	Yes
Driveways	Yes
Fire pits	Yes, if gas
Patios	Yes
Hot Tubs	Yes
Above Ground Swimming Pools	Yes
Decks	Yes



# What Does NOT Requires a Building Permit

---

Examples:

- Certain Water Tanks
- Fences less than 42 inches
- Landscaping
- Painting, papering, tiling and similar
- Cabinetry
- Limited interior wall finishes (drywall)
- Playground equipment
- Retaining walls less than 4 ft
- Temporary wiring in labs
- Replacement of fixtures
- Portable appliances
- Stopping leaks and clearing of lines in plumbing
- Certain cosmetic repairs



# How is this Communicated?

---

## 1. Forms

- *Builder Guides* – Primarily for residents, aides with simple DIY projects
- *Topical Information Guides* – More complex projects often performed by contractors
- *Facts to Know for LDC processes* – Usually for Land Use Cases, such as Rezoning or Variances



# How is this Communicated?

- Builder Guides example:

## CITY OF COMMERCE CITY BUILDING SAFETY DIVISION

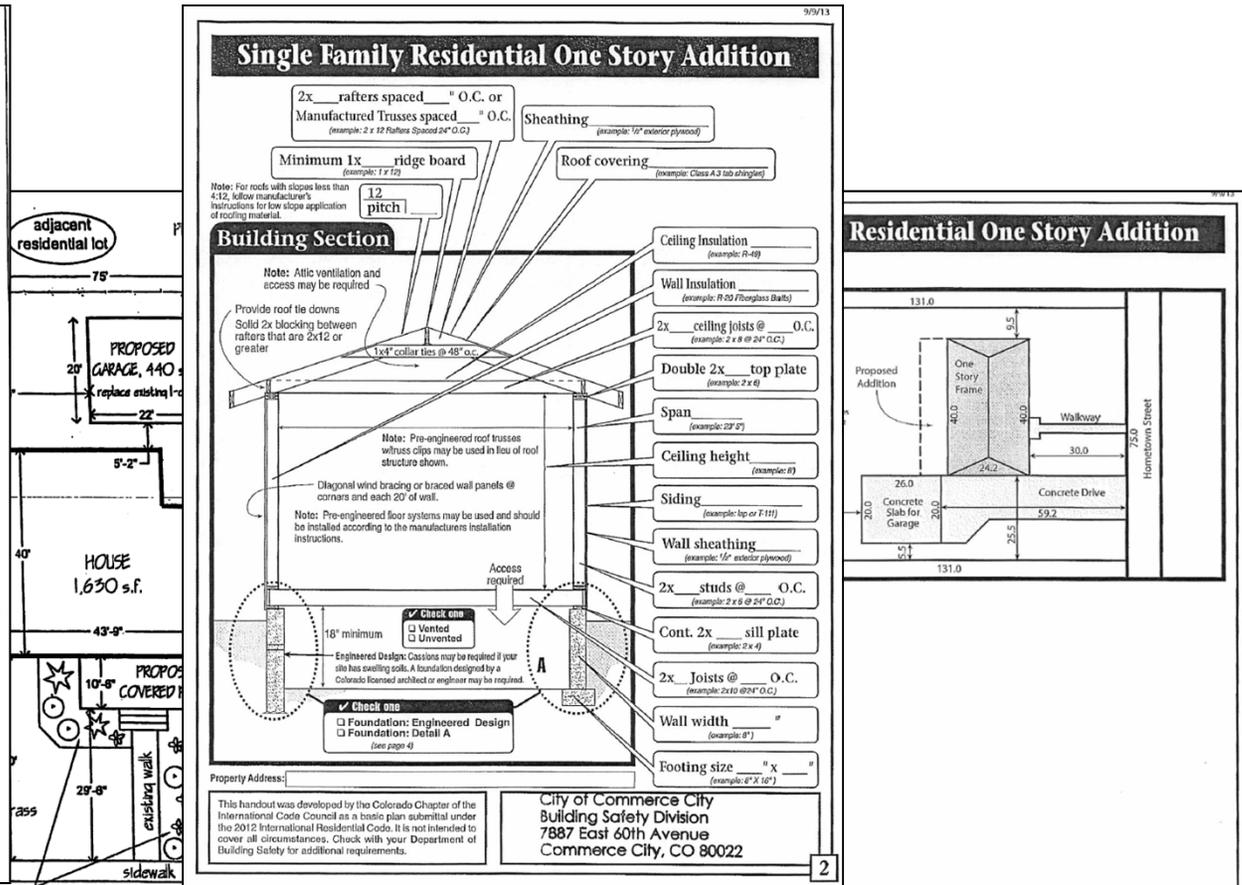
### ACCESSORY STRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR SHEDS

- All drawings must be drawn to scale, dimensioned, and drawn on a minimum sheet size of 8 1/2" x 11".
- Complete permit application – 1 copy
- Include square footage amount on the permit application
- Site Plan – 2 copies
- Show the accessory structure and existing/new landscaping per city ordinance.
- Floor Plans must include – 2 copies
- Include architectural, structural and electrical. Give height of the accessory structure.
- Construction drawings (only for sheds over 200 square feet) – 2 copies
- Any specialty details, e.g., foundation, wall, roof, anchoring system and engineer stamped truss drawings.
- All building elevation must include – 2 copies
- Include a drawing of what the accessory structure looks like from all directions.
- Landscaping plan must include (including sheds over 120 sft) all new and existing landscaping, per city ordinance.

Plans will be reviewed to the City of Commerce City adopted codes and amendments at the time of building permit application (this information is available at the building department or on our website: [www.c3gov.com](http://www.c3gov.com)). Electrical and plumbing plans will be reviewed to Colorado Electrical Board and Colorado Examining Board of Plumbers adopted codes when the more restrictive than the City of Commerce City adopted codes.



CITY OF COMMERCE CITY BUILDING SAFETY DIVISION  
7887 E 60<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE COMMERCE CITY, COLORADO 80022  
PHONE 303-289-3790 FAX 303-289-3731



Landscaping to be installed:  
4 deciduous shrubs  
3 evergreen shrubs  
9 #1 containers of ornamental grass

**Sample Corner Lot**

street

This handout was developed by the Colorado Chapter of the International Code Council as a basic plan submitted under the 2012 International Residential Code. It is not intended to cover all circumstances. Check with your Department of Building Safety for additional requirements.

City of Commerce City Building Safety Division  
7887 East 60th Avenue  
Commerce City, CO 80022

# How is this Communicated?

- Topical Information Guide example:



**Commerce CITY**  
7887 East 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Commerce City, Colorado 80022  
Phone (303) 289-3683 / Fax (303) 289-3731  
www.ci.commerce.co.us

**CITY OF COMMERCE CITY**  
*Community Development*  
*Building Safety Division*

---

**REFERRAL SHEET**  
**REPLACE / REPAIR WATER SERVICE OR SEWER LINE**

Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_

Building: OK

Public Works: Work in the public right of way requires a separate right of way permit

Check appropriate box(s):  Water service repair / replacement

Building sewer repair / replacement

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Approval with Comments

X = Required City Inspections	
Plumbing Underground	X

Comments: 2009 IRC / 2009 IPC as applicable

**Water service notes:**  
When using copper tubing for underground potable water piping, Type K tubing is required. Tubing other than copper must comply with 2009 IRC, Table P2905.4 or 2009 IPC, Table 605.3 as applicable. Tubing identification marking must be visible for inspection. Piping must be under working pressure during inspection. Tubing passing through concrete walls must be sleeved or wrapped. Dielectric fittings required if connecting dissimilar metal tubing. Any work in the meter pit or from the meter pit to the water main must be approved by South Adams County Water & Sanitation District (SACWSD) or serving district if other than SACWSD.

**Building sewer notes:**  
Building sewer piping materials must comply with 2009 IRC, Table P3002.2 or 2009 IPC, Table 702.3 as applicable. Pipe identification marking must be visible for inspection. Piping shall be sloped at no less than 1/8" per foot.

**General notes:**

- If work extends into the public right of way, a separate right of way permit is required.
- If work extends into the public right of way or water meter pit, you must first contact South Adams County Water & Sanitation District (or serving district if other than SACWSD) for their specific requirements prior to the work.
- No work shall be concealed prior to inspection and approval.

---

*Russell Wonders* \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

11/30/2012





# How is this Communicated?

---

## 2. Website Analysis

- Currently, some forms are not available
- Some actions are available online, such as requesting inspections and limited online permits



# How is this Communicated?

---

3. Staff communication to customers
  - Staff provides information directly to customers via phone, permit counter, and email
  - Provided by Permit Techs, admin staff, Planners, and engineering staff
  - Often utilizes handouts as a supplement



---

# Analysis and Improvements





# Analysis and Changes

---

- When a permit is required – Changes
  - No longer require a permit for flatwork on single family or duplex lots
  - No longer require a permit for sheds under 200 sq. ft.
  - Change to the landscaping triggers – Remove the requirement that landscaping upgrades are required for accessory structures, and only requiring landscaping upgrades for substantial additions to the primary structure



# Analysis and Changes

---

1. How is this communicated – Forms
  - Builder Guides and FTK are helpful
  - Topical Information Guides can be improved
  - Begin a process to add Spanish versions
2. How is this communicated – Website
  - Work is underway with communications to provide additional information and forms on the website
  - Long term goal is to make more electronic submittals available, both for building permits and Land Use cases



# Analysis and Changes

---

3. How is this communicated – Staff
  - Interviews showed that staff is providing consistent and correct information about when a permit is required for all categories except paving
  - Staff training has already commenced to address the consistency issue on all of these topics, especially given the changes in what requires a permit



# Conclusions

---

- The interviews and analysis showed that building permit information which is communicated is overall strong
- Select items emerged that need training for consistency
- A reduction in permits required is possible and recommended in light of increased permit activity and as it relates to what peer cities require
- Enhance customer feedback





**QUESTIONS?**

