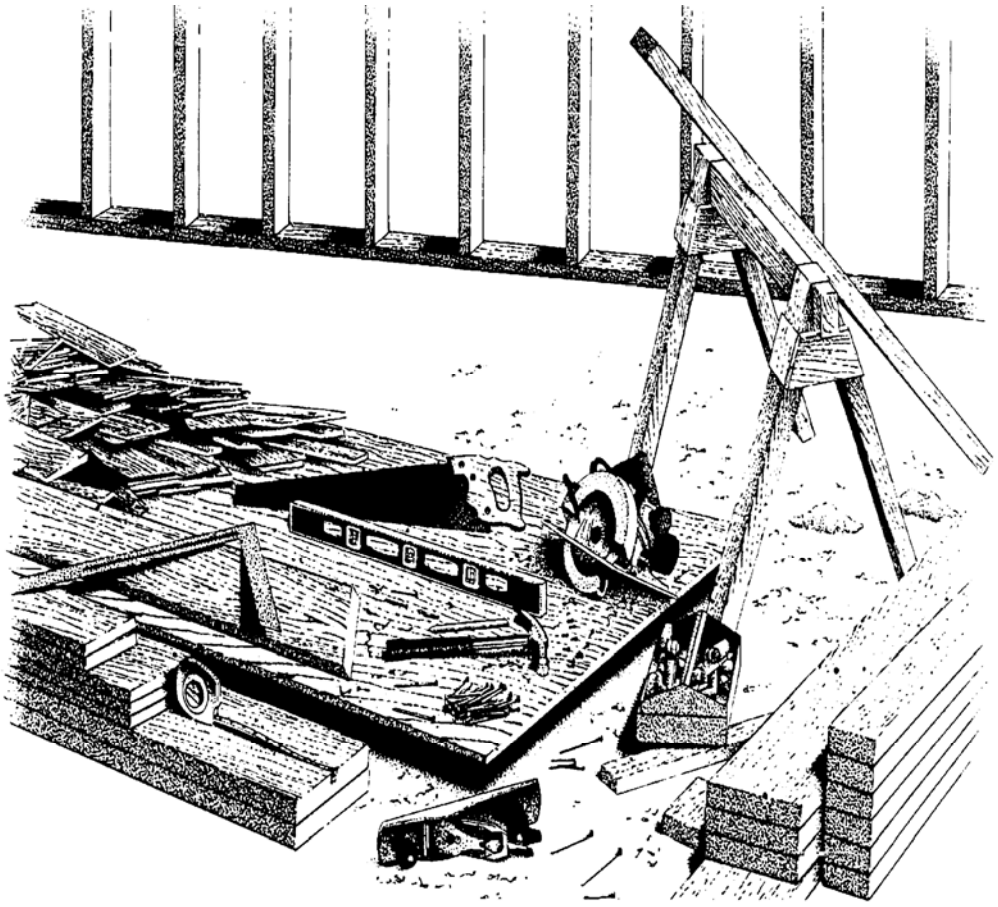
CITY OF Guelph

Making a Difference



A Guide to Building Permits for Home Owners / Renovators

Address:

1 Carden Street
Guelph, Ontario
N1H 3A1

Oct 2009

Telephone:	519-837-5615
Committee of Adjustment	519-837-5615 option #5 email: cofa@guelph.ca
Inspections	519-837-5614
Plans Examination/Permits	519-837-5615 email: building@guelph.ca
Zoning	519-837-5615 email: zoning@guelph.ca
Fax:	519-822-4632
email:	building@guelph.ca
Internet:	guelph.ca
Office Hours:	Monday to Friday (except public holidays) 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Summer Hours* (July 1 to Labour Day) 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Community Design and Development Services	519-837-5663
Engineering Services	519-837-5604
City Clerk's Office	519-837-5603
Planning Services	519-837-5616
Tax Division	519-837-5605
Finance Department	519-837-5610
Call Before you Dig:	1-800-400-2255 www.on1call.com
Electrical Safety Authority	1-877-372-7233
Grand River Conservation Authority	519-621-2761
Ministry of Transportation Corridor Control	519-873-4200
Ontario Building Code, to order a copy	1-888-361-0003
Ontario Property Assessment Corporation	1-866-296-6722

THIS PUBLICATION IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE GENERAL INFORMATION ONLY

We are committed to promoting and assisting a safe, functional environment in buildings and properties through sustaining internal and external partnerships in the areas of development, construction and maintenance. We are focused on serving the established and emerging needs of residential and corporate citizens through continuing improvement and effective and efficient administration of all policies, procedures and regulations. We will be supported by superior educational, informational and consultative processes along with timely, appropriate reinforcement and recognition.

A GUIDE TO BUILDING PERMITS FOR HOME OWNERS/RENOVATORS

As a homeowner, you may find that you have outgrown your present home. Renovation is today's answer to moving and can include everything from adding a room, fixing up the basement, building a garage, to remodeling the interior of your house. You may wish to create an accessory apartment for a family member or for rental income.

If you are planning home improvements, this guide will provide you with the information required to apply for a building permit.

- Building permits are necessary to ensure that zoning requirements, fire and structural safety standards and other building standards are met, primarily for safety reasons.
- One benefit of obtaining a permit is receiving assistance from Building Services staff.
- Another benefit is to ensure that you or the person you have hired produces a product that meets the minimum standards as set out in the Ontario Building Code and other relevant Codes and City of Guelph By-laws.
- Whether you do the work yourself or hire a contractor, it is the homeowner's responsibility to ensure that a building permit is obtained, when required, and that the required inspections are called for and any infractions are corrected.
- **Starting construction without a permit is illegal and is a Provincial Offence under the Ontario Building Code Act so we advise homeowners to ensure that the permit has been issued prior to starting any work.**

Brochures and/or sample drawings are available. These brochures contain specific zoning and building information and identify specific drawing requirements. Please contact our office or visit our web site for further information.

A building permit is generally required for, but is not limited to, the following:

EXTERIOR

- Building a deck, porch, sunroom, solarium
- Building an addition
- Installing a pool or hot tub
- Building a garage/carport (either attached or detached)
- Sheds * [greater than 10 square metres (107 square feet)]
- Replacement of brick veneer/Installation of exterior cladding
- Altering a roof structure
- Altering a foundation (under pinning)
- Adding or altering exterior stairs.

INTERIOR

- Finishing your basement
- Creating an accessory apartment/in-law suite/basement apartment
- Dormers or finishing attic space
- New or enlarging existing windows or doors
- Interior structural alterations
- Adding or removing walls (different room sizes and/or uses)
- Adding or altering a chimney, woodstove or fireplace
- Adding a kitchen or bathroom
- Change of use (i.e. establishing a home occupation/home-based business*, lodging house*, bed and breakfast, or changing any part of a building from one use to another (for example changing a store to a residential unit, or vice versa).

PLUMBING
- Installing/altering plumbing
- New septic system or repairs to existing
- Installation, repair of storm sanitary and water service
- Installation of irrigation systems

Note--Plumbing may be done by a homeowner on their single, semi-detached or townhouse dwelling unit in which they reside. Persons, other than the homeowner (like plumbers, contractors, home renovation companies) doing plumbing shall possess a Certificate of Qualification issued by the Province of Ontario.

HEATING
- Major duct work
- New heating system
- Furnace replacements when changing fuel source (i.e. electric to gas)

DEMOLITION/REMOVAL
- Demolition of a building or a portion of a building

ELECTRICAL
- The Building Division **does not** issue electrical permits or carry out electrical inspections. Please contact the Electrical Safety Authority for information (1-877-372-7233).

Plan Your Project

If you have a good working knowledge of home construction you can consider designing your own project. Many publications are available in book shops, libraries and at lumber dealers that may assist you. If you feel that your project is too complicated to handle yourself, we recommend that you retain the services of a qualified person such as a draftsperson to prepare your plans and specifications. Some unique features or structures may need to be designed by an Architect or Professional Engineer. All work indicated on your drawings must conform to the Ontario Building Code, City of Guelph Zoning By-law and all other applicable law. If your proposal does not comply with the Zoning By-law, you may seek permission from the Committee of Adjustment for a minor variance.

Visit our Office for Preliminary Information

To determine if a permit, is required or if other approvals may be required, please visit our office. We suggest that you bring:

- a site plan drawn to a recognized scale or survey of your property showing the location of all existing structures and indicating (to a recognized scale) the location of your proposed addition, garage, shed, pool, deck, hot tub, etc. and the dimensions from property lines. A sample site plan follows later in this guide.
- a rough floor plan of your proposed basement renovation, addition, new bathroom, etc.
- the specifications for your woodstove, the pool manufacturer's brochure, etc.

During this preliminary visit we can advise what further information is required in order for us to accept an application for building permit. It may be determined that approvals from other agencies are required prior to permit issuance. Some examples are City Council, Committee of Adjustment, Electrical Safety Authority, Site Plan Control, Ministry of Transportation, Grand River Conservation Authority, Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, Environment and Transportation Group. Should approvals be required, please contact the appropriate approval authority concerning timing, application forms, fees and procedures.

Depending on the nature of your proposal and the information and drawings you provide during this preliminary visit, it may be possible to submit your application at this time.

Submit your Application for Building Permit

The following items are required in order to submit your proposal for review:

- A completed permit application form.
- Two sets of building plans drawn to a recognized scale. Only one set is required if your drawings are 11" x 17" or smaller in size. (Single line drawings are not acceptable.)
- Two copies of a site plan drawn to a recognized scale or survey of your property showing the location of all existing structures and indicating (to a recognized scale) the location of your proposed addition, garage, shed, pool, deck, hot tub, etc. and the dimensions from property lines. A sample site plan follows later in this guide.
- The building permit fee in cash, Interac Direct Payment, cheque or money order, payable to the "City of Guelph". Please see our staff at the Building Division Counter to assist you in determining the correct fee for your construction project or visit online at www.guelph.ca for the most current fee schedule.
- A Damage Deposit may be required depending on your project.

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS OR PLANS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Upon submission of your application at the Building Services Counter, a Plans Examiner will check your application to ensure that everything is in order. If the submission is complete, you will be given a ***receipt** that will have a permit/folder number for your reference.

***THIS RECEIPT IS NOT YOUR BUILDING PERMIT.**

The approximate time to process your building permit application is 10 business days.

YOUR BUILDING PERMIT (and any attachments)
WILL BE MAILED TO YOU WHEN ISSUED.

The Approval Process

Your application will be reviewed in order of submission.

During this review process a Plans Examiner may identify deficiencies on the drawings or determine that additional information is required in which case the designer and/or applicant will be notified. Please ensure that this requested information is submitted promptly as no further processing will occur until the information is received. Any delays on your part will affect our permit processing time.

When the review is complete the building permit will be issued and mailed to the applicant and owner.

IN ORDER FOR US TO PROVIDE QUICKER PROCESSING OF PERMITS, WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO AVOID UNNECESSARY TELEPHONE CALLS OR UNSCHEDULED MEETINGS.

Permit Issued

Construction may commence upon issuance of the building permit. Please review the conditions which have been noted on your permit and drawings. The permit and attachments must be available on the site.

Construction must be in compliance with the approved plans and documents issued with your permit. Any deviation from the approved drawings must be reported to the Building Division. Revised drawings may be required.

Several mandatory inspections are required to ensure that all work is completed according to the approved plans, including changes noted by the Plans Examiner. Your permit will include a list of mandatory inspections specific to your project.

Inspections

Inspections do not happen automatically. It is the **homeowner's responsibility** to ensure that you or your contractor contacts the Building Inspection Office to book an inspection. Failure to have inspections performed may result in having to uncover and expose work for inspection.

To book your inspection, please call 519-837-5614. If booked by 3:00 p.m. one business day, the inspection can be done the next business day.

The Inspector will perform an inspection and a field report will be left on site. If infractions are noted, these items must be corrected and a re-inspection booked to ensure that the infractions have been remedied. Once all mandatory inspections have been passed, the permit will be considered complete.

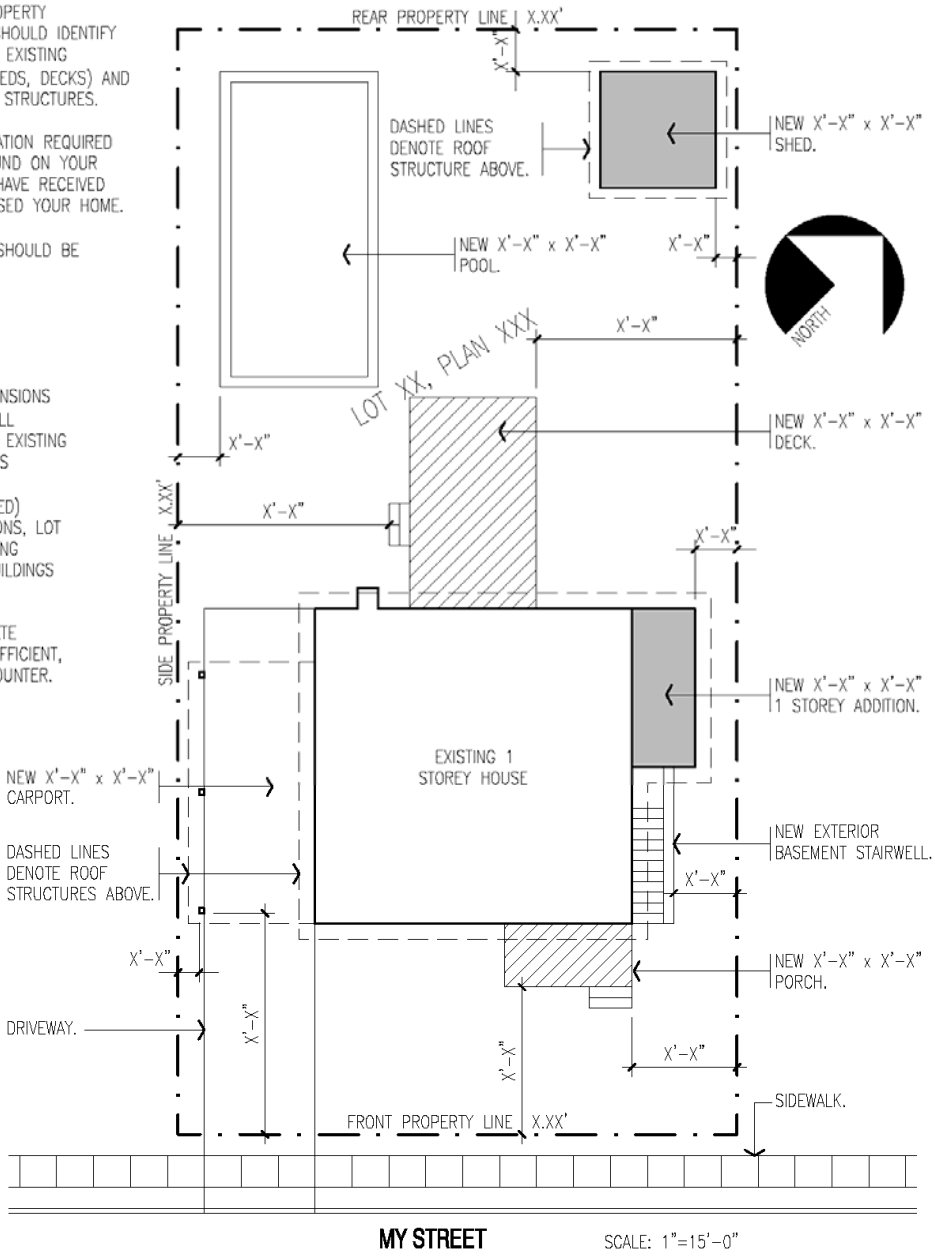
A SITE PLAN IDENTIFIES BUILDINGS AND OTHER FEATURES IN RELATION TO PROPERTY BOUNDARIES. THE SITE PLAN SHOULD IDENTIFY YOUR EXISTING HOUSE, OTHER EXISTING STRUCTURES (IE. GARAGES, SHEDS, DECKS) AND PROPOSED ADDITIONS OR NEW STRUCTURES.

MOST OR ALL OF THE INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR A SITE PLAN CAN BE FOUND ON YOUR PROPERTY SURVEY. YOU MAY HAVE RECEIVED A SURVEY WHEN YOU PURCHASED YOUR HOME.

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION SHOULD BE SHOWN ON A SITE PLAN:

- TITLE AND SCALE
- LEGAL DESCRIPTION
- STREET NAME
- NORTH ARROW
- PROPERTY LINES WITH DIMENSIONS
- SETBACKS (DISTANCE) TO ALL PROPERTY LINES FROM ALL EXISTING AND PROPOSED STRUCTURES
- PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION (SHADED OR CROSS HATCHED)
- OVERALL BUILDING DIMENSIONS, LOT COVERAGE, NEW AND EXISTING BUILDING AREAS OF ALL BUILDINGS
- RIGHT-OF-WAY EASEMENTS

IN SOME INSTANCES A COMPLETE PROPERTY SURVEY MAY BE SUFFICIENT, CHECK WITH STAFF AT OUR COUNTER.



NOTES:

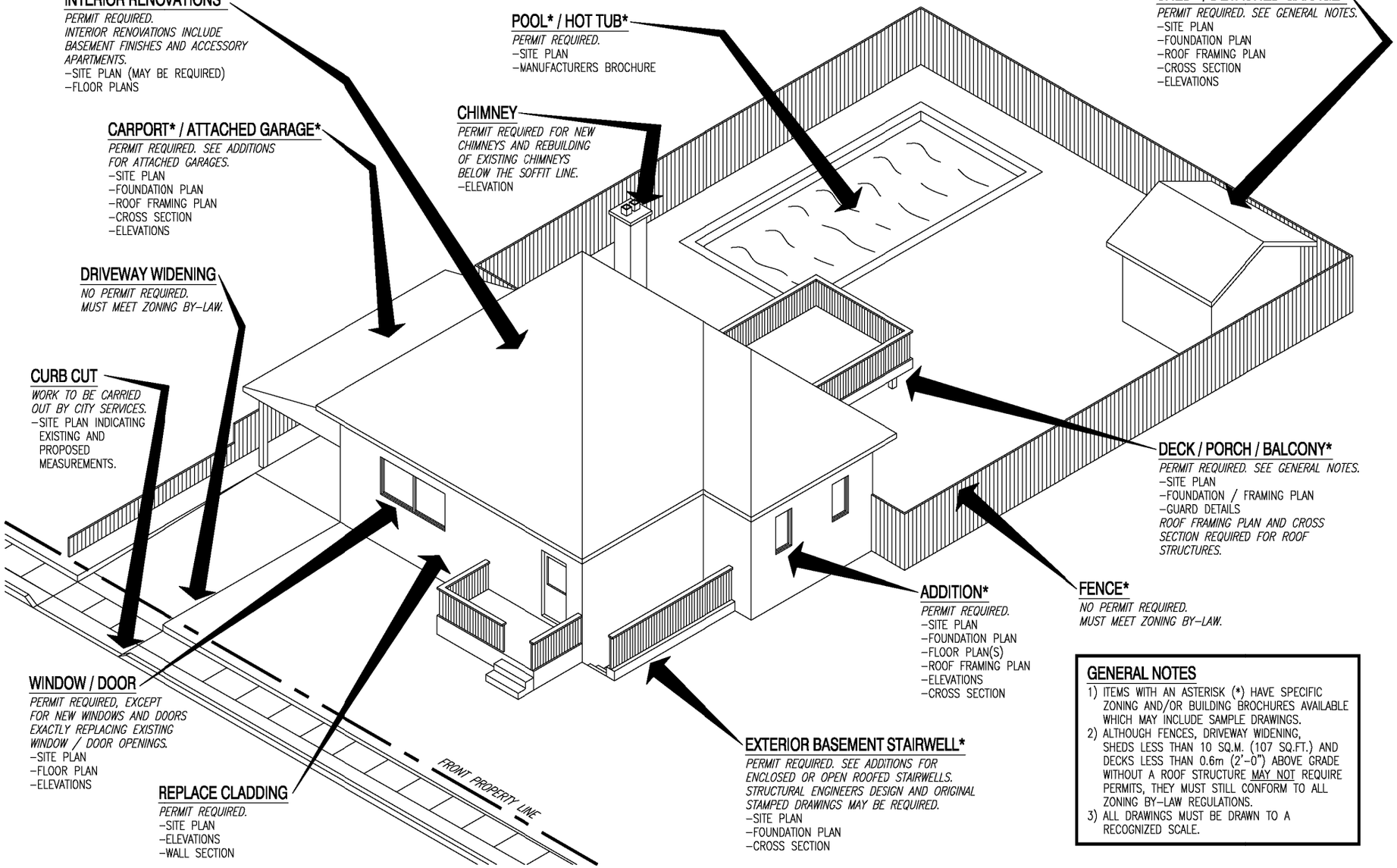
1. DO NOT SUBMIT THIS SAMPLE DRAWING AS PART OF YOUR DRAWING PACKAGE.
2. PLANS SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW ARE TO BE DRAWN AT A RECOGNIZED SCALE. FOR EXAMPLE 1"=10' OR 1:100 (METRIC).
3. REFER TO THE GUELPH ZONING BY-LAW FOR ZONING REQUIREMENTS.

LEGEND:

X'-X", X", X.XX', XX' DENOTES INFORMATION THAT IS REQUIRED ON YOUR SITE PLAN. THIS INFORMATION CONSISTS OF SETBACKS, DIMENSIONS AND OTHER ELEMENTS.

CITY OF GUELPH	SITE PLAN - SAMPLE	1 OF 1

GENERAL INFORMATION / DRAWING REQUIREMENTS



INTERIOR RENOVATIONS*

PERMIT REQUIRED.
INTERIOR RENOVATIONS INCLUDE BASEMENT FINISHES AND ACCESSORY APARTMENTS.
–SITE PLAN (MAY BE REQUIRED)
–FLOOR PLANS

POOL* / HOT TUB*

PERMIT REQUIRED.
–SITE PLAN
–MANUFACTURERS BROCHURE

SHED* / DETACHED GARAGE*

PERMIT REQUIRED. SEE GENERAL NOTES.
–SITE PLAN
–FOUNDATION PLAN
–ROOF FRAMING PLAN
–CROSS SECTION
–ELEVATIONS

CHIMNEY

PERMIT REQUIRED FOR NEW CHIMNEYS AND REBUILDING OF EXISTING CHIMNEYS BELOW THE SOFFIT LINE.
–ELEVATION

CARPORT* / ATTACHED GARAGE*

PERMIT REQUIRED. SEE ADDITIONS FOR ATTACHED GARAGES.
–SITE PLAN
–FOUNDATION PLAN
–ROOF FRAMING PLAN
–CROSS SECTION
–ELEVATIONS

DRIVEWAY WIDENING

NO PERMIT REQUIRED.
MUST MEET ZONING BY–LAW.

CURB CUT

WORK TO BE CARRIED OUT BY CITY SERVICES.
–SITE PLAN INDICATING EXISTING AND PROPOSED MEASUREMENTS.

DECK / PORCH / BALCONY*

PERMIT REQUIRED. SEE GENERAL NOTES.
–SITE PLAN
–FOUNDATION / FRAMING PLAN
–GUARD DETAILS
ROOF FRAMING PLAN AND CROSS SECTION REQUIRED FOR ROOF STRUCTURES.

FENCE*

NO PERMIT REQUIRED.
MUST MEET ZONING BY–LAW.

ADDITION*

PERMIT REQUIRED.
–SITE PLAN
–FOUNDATION PLAN
–FLOOR PLAN(S)
–ROOF FRAMING PLAN
–ELEVATIONS
–CROSS SECTION

WINDOW / DOOR

PERMIT REQUIRED, EXCEPT FOR NEW WINDOWS AND DOORS EXACTLY REPLACING EXISTING WINDOW / DOOR OPENINGS.
–SITE PLAN
–FLOOR PLAN
–ELEVATIONS

REPLACE CLADDING

PERMIT REQUIRED.
–SITE PLAN
–ELEVATIONS
–WALL SECTION

EXTERIOR BASEMENT STAIRWELL*

PERMIT REQUIRED. SEE ADDITIONS FOR ENCLOSED OR OPEN ROOFED STAIRWELLS. STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS DESIGN AND ORIGINAL STAMPED DRAWINGS MAY BE REQUIRED.
–SITE PLAN
–FOUNDATION PLAN
–CROSS SECTION

GENERAL NOTES

1) ITEMS WITH AN ASTERISK (*) HAVE SPECIFIC ZONING AND/OR BUILDING BROCHURES AVAILABLE WHICH MAY INCLUDE SAMPLE DRAWINGS.
2) ALTHOUGH FENCES, DRIVEWAY WIDENING, SHEDS LESS THAN 10 SQ.M. (107 SQ.FT.) AND DECKS LESS THAN 0.6m (2'–0") ABOVE GRADE WITHOUT A ROOF STRUCTURE MAY NOT REQUIRE PERMITS, THEY MUST STILL CONFORM TO ALL ZONING BY–LAW REGULATIONS.
3) ALL DRAWINGS MUST BE DRAWN TO A RECOGNIZED SCALE.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **How much does a permit cost? What does the fee include?**

   Permit fees vary depending on the type of construction proposed. Some fees are a flat rate while others are based on the floor area of the construction. This fee includes plans review and required inspections and is not subject to GST or PST. If you need assistance in calculating the permit fee please call Permit Services (519) 837-5615.

2. **Will my taxes go up?**

   Taxes are based on the assessed value of a property. For more information, please contact the Ontario Property Assessment Corporation at 1-866-296-6722.

3. **Do you notify my neighbours about the building permit?**

   Your neighbours are not notified about your building permit if your proposed work meets all current zoning regulations.

4. **Who is responsible for getting a building permit and calling to have the required inspections done?**

   While many contractors include these items as part of the job the ultimate responsibility rests with the homeowner. If a permit is required for the work being undertaken no work is to commence and no inspections will be carried out until the permit is issued.

5. **How long does it take to get a permit**?

   The approximate time to process your building permit application is 10 business days.

6. **How much time do I have to finish the work before the permit expires?**

   Once your permit is issued construction must start within one year and be continuous and on-going.

7. **What happens if construction is carried out without a permit?**

   Construction without a permit is illegal and subject to legal action under the Ontario Building Code Act.

8. **When can I get my damage deposit back?**

   You may request a refund of the damage deposit after the final inspection.