Navigating Denver’s Residential Permitting Process
March 2020
I. Intro to residential codes & permits
II. Zoning
III. Common building projects
IV. DIY or hire a contractor?
V. Inspections
VI. Q&A
Learn about your site:

DenverGov.org/maps
PLAN REVIEW & PERMITS
How to submit plans

• At the Permit Counter

• Online

• Quick Permits
Permits and Approvals

- Landmark preservation
- Zoning permits
- Building permits
- SUDP
- Trade permits
- Special situations
ZONING
Denver Zoning Code

DenverGov.org/Zoning
Zone Lots vs “Tax Lots”

• Zone lot = “buildable” land

• Assessor parcels (“tax lots”) may not be buildable under zoning codes
What can be built and where?

- Find your zone district
- Confirm the building form standards
- Confirm the allowed “uses”
### URBAN HOUSE

#### HEIGHT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A/B</th>
<th>U-SU-A</th>
<th>U-SU-B</th>
<th>U-SU-C</th>
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<tr>
<td>U-SU-A1</td>
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<tr>
<td>U-SU-C1</td>
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<td>3/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>U-SU-E1</td>
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<tr>
<td>U-SU-H1</td>
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<td>U-TU-B</td>
<td>30'/17'</td>
<td>30'/17'</td>
<td>30'/17'</td>
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<td>U-TU-C</td>
<td>30'/17'</td>
<td>30'/17'</td>
<td>30'/17'</td>
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<tr>
<td>U-RH-2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>U-RH-3A</td>
<td>30'/17'</td>
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</table>

- Stories, front 65% / rear 35% of zone lot depth (max)
- Feet, front 65% / rear 35% of zone lot depth (max)
- Feet, front 65% of zone lot depth, permitted height increase
- Feet, rear 35% of zone lot depth, permitted height increase
- 1’ for every 5’ increase in lot width over 50’ up to a maximum height of 35’
- 1’ for every 3’ increase in side setback up to a maximum height of 19’
- Bulk Plane Vertical Height at Side Interior and Side Street zone lot line in front 65% / rear 35% of Zone Lot Depth
- Bulk Plane Slope from Side Interior and Side Street zone lot line
- 17'/10’
- 17'/10’
- 17'/10’
- 17'/10’
- 17'/10’
- 17'/10’
- 17'/10’
- 17'/10’
- 45°
- 45°
- 45°
- 45°
- 45°
- 45°
- 45°
- 45°

#### SITING

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zone Lot Size (min)</td>
<td>3,000 sf</td>
<td>4,500 sf</td>
<td>5,500 sf</td>
<td>7,000 sf</td>
<td>10,000 sf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone Lot Width (min)</td>
<td>25’</td>
<td>35’</td>
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<td>75’</td>
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<td>50’</td>
<td>25’</td>
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#### SETBACKS AND BUILDING COVERAGE BY ZONE LOT WIDTH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F</th>
<th>All U-SU, TU, RH Districts</th>
<th>Greater than 40’ and less than 75’</th>
<th>75’ or Greater</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Street, block sensitive setback required</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
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</table>
COMMON BUILDING PROJECTS
Denver Building and Fire Code

DenverGov.org/BuildingCode
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

- Allowed in many neighborhoods
- Has its own address
- Owner lives onsite
- Shares utilities with primary unit
- Not sold separately from main house
- Cannot DIY – use a contractor
Detached Garages

Apply for permits online at:

DenverGov.org/epermits
Fences

• Fences 4’ or less do not require a permit except if located in a landmark/historic district:
  • All other fences need zoning permits
Decks

• Decks 12” or less off the ground do **not** require a permit

• Decks 12” or more off the ground require a zoning permit

• Uncovered decks 30” or more off the ground require a building permit
Sheds

All sheds need zoning permits
Basement Finish

- Requires permits
- Smoke/carbon monoxide alarms
- Emergency escape in bedroom
- Projects that require structural work can’t be permitted at the counter
Demolition Permits

• Removal of a structure 200 square feet or larger

• Removal of a structure over 8 feet in height
HIRE A CONTRACTOR or DIY?
Pulling Permits as a Homeowner

- Must live at the home now and for 1 year after work is complete

- Home cannot be owned by an LLC or Trust
Homeowner Permits Cont.
Using a Licensed Contractor

Verify the person/firm is licensed to do that work in Denver at:

DenverGov.org/epermits
Structure Your Contract Wisely

Payment schedule:

• Plans produced
• Materials delivered and permits obtained
• AFTER final inspection is approved
INSPECTIONS
Building and Zoning Inspections

• All building inspections and zoning inspections can be scheduled online.

• Building inspections occur in 1 business day
Neighborhood Inspections (Z/NIS)

- ~20 inspectors with specific assigned areas
- Z/NIS inspectors use city vehicles, Construction inspectors do not
Common Issues
Why does the city get involved in these issues?

To protect the health, safety, and welfare of all residents.
Things we cannot do:

- Access a private home
- Take sides in neighbor disputes or civil matters, like property lines
Learn more about Z/NIS:

DenverGov.org/NeighborhoodInspections
Thank you!

Contact us:
denvergov.org/DS

Single-family/duplex questions:
720-865-2710
ResidentialPermits@denvergov.org
## 2020 Q1 Review Times

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Major residential projects</th>
<th>Intermediate residential projects</th>
<th>Major commercial projects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major residential projects</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex: New homes, additions 400 square feet or larger, landmark projects</td>
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<td>Intermediate residential projects</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
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<td>Ex: type approved submittals, additions of 400 square feet or smaller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major commercial projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex: new commercial buildings, large additions, change of occupancy &amp; projects with a valuation $1 million or more</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate commercial projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex: small additions and projects with a valuation between $500,000 - $1 million</td>
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<td>Fire logs</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex: fire alarm and fire suppression</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoning Code Interpretations, Use Determinations</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex: Zoning Verification &amp; Compliance Letters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoning Permits</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
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<td>Ex: Commercial Logged-In Zoning Permits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zone Lot Amendments</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
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Pro Tip: Right-of-Way Construction Inspection

Public Works’ ROWS team inspects wastewater and right-of-way improvements (sewers, drainage, alleys, and sidewalks).

• For major remodels, additions, and new home construction, ROWS will need to check the existing conditions of sidewalks.
  ➢ Sidewalks may need repairs
  ➢ Email: PWpermits@denvergov.org
  ➢ Phone: 303-446-3469

Learn more at Denvergov.org/sidewalkrepair