

Accessory Building Permitting Process How-To-Guide

With building season and warmer weather upon us, we're all ready to exchange our winter coats for a shovel to implement our 2016 project list. Whether you've just moved into a brand new home (the City of Lincoln congratulates you!), or looking to improve your current home and property, the city asks that you first pause and read this brief how-to-guide to get your project permit before you drive the shovel into the ground.

Accessory buildings can be called many terms such as tool sheds, garages, shops, storage buildings, and other similar structures. The *Code of Ordinances of Lincoln, North Dakota* describes an accessory building as "a subordinate building, the use of which is customarily incidental to that of a principal building on the same lot" (page I2-3).

Is your accessory building plans larger than 120 square feet (SF)? If you're shaking your head yes, then you'll need to stop in to Lincoln City Hall and fill out a permit application. The city requires that any building over 120 square feet be permitted.

How Large Can My Accessory Building Be?

Local zoning ordinance has guidelines on how large the structure can be. Each residential zoning district (RR-1, R-1, R-2, R-5, R-7, R-9) has an allowable lot coverage (% based). This lot coverage is not the same for each residential zoning. If you do not know your zoning, contact city staff to determine your zoning and allowable lot coverage. To determine your allowable square footage for an accessory building, take your lot square footage multiplied by your lot coverage percentage, and subtract your house square footage.

Here's an example:

$$(9,375 * 30\%) - 2,200 = 612.5 \text{ SF}$$

Where Can I Build It?

Ordinance 9-03-05.5 explains that all accessory buildings in any residential district shall be located in the rear yard and shall be a minimum of two feet from the rear or side lot line. The accessory building should be placed ten feet from the principal building. It's also important to know your subdivision covenants that regulate your subdivision.

Permitting Process

If your structure is larger than 120 square feet (SF), a permit is required. You can pick up a permit at city hall or online at cityoflincolnnd.com. The accessory building application asks for:

- Description of your project
- Property address
- Building dimensions/size (sf)
- Lot size
- House square footage
- Side yard setback
- Setback from principal building
- Zoning of the property
- Contact information

We ask that you share as much as possible about your project to help us determine that code has indeed been met. It's always helpful when a property exhibit depicting your project is attached to your application. Review times vary, but you can assume that a couple weeks after dropping off your application, you'll have a shiny permit in your hands.

Inspection Process

The City of Lincoln now issues all permits at the city hall building. When you pick up your permit from city hall, you will be contacted by Burleigh County who handles all inspection services for the City of Lincoln.

Accessory buildings often times spark numerous questions. Know that city staff is always here to assist you with this process. Should you have questions about your proposal, do not hesitate to contact us or drop in to city hall. Page through the newsletter to view the *How to Get an Accessory Building Permit* handout which shows an illustration of the process. We thank you in advance for getting your project permitted!

