

CONTRACTOR BUCKET (Updated 03/12/20210

[\(Master link to ALL FAQs\)](#)

GENERAL/MAPS:

What could happen on this property? (Permit/General/Zoning) – Seek the Advice of a Professional)

The property would need to comply with all City of Boulder regulations in effect at the time of a proposed modification. The regulations include Land Use code, which can be found in [Title 9 of the Boulder Revised Code](#) and Building and Energy code regulations that are in [Title 10 of the Boulder Revised Code](#). We recommend working with a professional (for example, a designer, architect and/or engineer, attorney) who can help you consider your options for this specific property and determine how regulatory requirements could impact these options.

If you have questions about the application of a specific regulation, we can answer that. But we are not able to prepare a complete review of a property to identify all applicable regulations, or how those limitations would apply.

The city's pre application process can provide a more detailed and comprehensive means of exploring questions about how development regulations apply to a specific property. Please review the [pre application materials](#) to determine whether a pre application review may be applicable.

How can I see the development history for a property? (General/Maps)

Visit [emaplink](#). In the upper right-hand side of the screen find the search bar that defaults to “Enter Address” and type in the property address, then hit *Enter* on your keyboard.

Once the property has been identified on the map, click on the property and a pop-up window will appear with more information. Click on the “Property Report” link, then click on *Download PDF Report*.

How can I see the enforcement history for a property? (General/Maps)

Please refer to the city's [Enforcement Activity Summary webpage](#) for information about the enforcement history of a property.

How can I get copies of the permit history from a property, planned unit development documents or a copy of a survey? (General)

Through the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) anyone can request information on a property. Our records department can share any files that can be legally distributed to the public. If you are looking for general information on a property, surveys, previous reviews, planned unit development documents, permit history, certificates of occupancy, etc. please submit a request to P&DSRecordRequest@bouldercolorado.gov.

Is the property in the floodplain? (General/Maps/Permits)

Visit the [Flood Hazard Zones Map](#). Enter the address in the upper right-hand corner of the screen and hit *enter* on your keyboard. Refer to sections [9-3-3](#), [9-3-4](#), [9-3-5](#), and [9-3-6, B.R.C. 1981](#) for regulations governing the zones of the floodplain including floodplain development permitting requirements.

Is the property in a wetland? (General/Maps/Permits)

Visit the [stream, wetland and water body map](#). Enter the address in the upper right-hand corner of the screen and hit *enter* on your keyboard. Refer to section [9-3-9, B.R.C. 1981](#) for regulations governing streams, wetlands and water bodies within the city, on city owned or managed land or impacted by city activities.

Is the property in a historic district? (General/Maps)

Visit [emaplink](#). Once on this page, click the gray box next to the “*Local Historic Districts*” layer in the legend on the left-hand side of the page. Next, in the upper right-hand side of the screen find the search bar that defaults to “*Enter Address*” and type in the property address and hit *enter* on your keyboard. This will zoom to the property displaying the historic information, if available. You may click on the property a pop-up window will appear with more information. Visit the [Historic Preservation webpage](#) for information including [FAQ’s](#) and [Design Guidelines](#). Any proposal for an exterior modification of a building in a Historic District or an Individual Landmark must first go through a [Landmarks Alteration Certificate](#) (LAC) review. The LAC must be approved **prior** to submitting for building permit. The reviews cannot be performed concurrently.

Does this structure require a historic demolition review? (General/Permits)

Demolition of a structure that is not historically designated, but is over 50 years old requires [Historic Preservation Demolition Review](#). This review is separate from the [Demolition Permit Application](#) to streamline the application and reduce confusion around the two processes. Refer to the [Boulder County Assessor’s Property Search](#) to determine the year of construction.

Demolition means an act or process which removes one or more of the following.

- (1) Fifty percent or more of the roof area as measured in plan view;
- (2) Fifty percent or more of the exterior walls of a building as measured contiguously around the "building coverage" as defined in this section; or
- (3) Any exterior wall facing a public street, but not an act or process which removes an exterior wall facing an alley.

Refer to the definition in [section 9-16\(c\) of the B.R.C. 1981](#) for example exhibits.

Is the property in the wildland urban interface? (General/Permits)

Please review the [Structure Protection Plan](#) on the [Wildland Fire webpage](#) to determine if the property is located within the urban interface zone and is subject to the ignition-resistant construction and material requirements of the [International Wildland-Urban Interface Code](#).

Can the City of Boulder survey/mark my property line? (General)

Surveys/property lines need to be surveyed by a private contractor. The City of Boulder does not provide this service.

PERMIT:

Do I need a building permit? (Permit)

[Section 10-5-2\(j\), BRC 1981](#), provides a list of all work exempt from building permit. Please note that while a project may be exempt from building permitting it must still meet all relevant building, zoning, and engineering code requirements. Additional approvals may be required if the property is located within a floodplain, wetland, [historic district or has been designated as an individual landmark](#).

Do I need a permit for a fence? (Permit)

Fences not over 7 feet tall are exempt from building permit requirements. However, if the fence will be located in a floodplain, wetland, will be constructed in an [historic district or on a property designated as an individual landmark](#), other processes are required before the fence can be built.

- A [floodplain development permit](#) is required for new and replacement fences in the floodplain.
- A [wetland permit](#) is required for new and replacement fences in a wetland
- A [landmark alteration certificate](#) is required to build or alter fences constructed in an [Historic District or on a property designated as an individual landmark](#).

Regardless of whether a permit is required, fences must be a minimum of 18” from public sidewalks and cannot obstruct [site triangles](#). Please refer to [section 9-9-15, BRC 1981](#) for fencing regulations.

Do I need to hire an architect or engineer? (Permit)

A professional engineer or architect registered in the State of Colorado shall prepare the plans and specifications for and observe the construction of all buildings except for the following:

- Detached dwellings intended solely for private use, occupancy, or resale, including accessory buildings commonly associated with the same;
- Farm buildings and buildings for the marketing, storage, or processing of farm products;
- Minor additions, alterations, or repairs to the foregoing buildings that do not cause the completed buildings to exceed the applicable limitations herein set forth; or
- Nonstructural alterations of any nature to any building if such alterations do not affect the safety of the building.

Drawings and specifications for footings and foundations shall bear the seal and signature of a professional engineer or architect registered in Colorado and be designed as specified in Chapter 18 of the building code for all occupancies.

Exceptions:

- Detached structures not intended for human occupancy;
- Additions to existing detached dwellings not exceeding 150 square feet.
- Any structural modification to any building in the City of Boulder will require plans to be prepared by a structural engineer licensed in the state of Colorado.

How much does a building permit cost? (Permit)

We cannot provide a fee estimate, but fees can be estimated using the [Schedule of Fees](#). A typical residential interior remodel will include the following fees:

- Building Plan Check Fee
- Building Permit Fee
- Electrical Permit fee
- Mechanical Permit Fee
- Plumbing Permit Fee
- City and County Sales and Use Taxes

Please note that this is not an all-inclusive list, and if the scope includes additional work then additional fees will be assessed.

Does the city accept credit cards for payment? (Permit)

Yes, the city accepts VISA, Discover and MasterCard. There is a 2.85% service charge.

How do I prepare an application for building permit (single family, residential)? (Permit)

Use the checklists found on the city's [Applications and Forms Database](#); select the form that most closely addresses the proposed scope of work.

- [Residential - New Construction and Additions Requirements Checklist](#) Permit application requirements for new construction or additions to one and two-Family dwellings, detached garages or accessory buildings
- [Residential - Alterations Requirements Checklist](#) Permit application requirements for alterations to a one and two-Family dwelling or townhome
- [Residential - Decks Requirements Checklist](#) Permit application requirements for an attached or free-standing deck on one and two-Family dwellings or townhomes
- [Residential - Sheds and Pergolas Requirements Checklist and Guide](#) Permit application requirements for a shed or pergola with no utilities or electrical service

- [Residential- Detailed Building Permit Requirements Attachment](#) General residential building permit requirements for one and two-Family dwellings and townhouses, including attached and detached accessory buildings, garages, sheds, pergolas and decks. This document is intended to provide a more detailed description of materials required for permit applications and is for reference purposes only. This is not intended to be submitted with the permit application.

Within these checklists are links to the required forms and guidelines on how to prepare an application submittal package.

How do I prepare an application for building permit (commercial/multi-family)? (Permit)

Use the checklist found in the city's [Applications and Forms Database](#) titled "[Multi-family and Non-residential Building Permit Checklist](#)" to prepare your application package.

How do I submit a permit application? (Permit)

It depends on the type of permit required. The following permit types may be submitted online through the [Customer Self-Service Portal](#):

- Electrical/Photovoltaic Solar
- Electrical Temporary Construction Power
- Fence and Wall
- Fire
- Floodplain Information Request
- Groundwater Discharge
- Mechanical HVAC (Residential Only)/Solar Water Heater/Wood Burning
- Mobile Home Installation
- Plumbing
- Roofing Replacement
- Sign
- For all other application types refer to the [Online Permit Application Guide](#) for information about the permit application process.

How do I know the status of an application? (Permit)

Your permit status can be found on the [Customer Self-Service \(CSS\) Portal](#). To view your permit status:

1. Log in to your account
2. Open the Dashboard and click on "View My Permits" or "View My Plans"
3. Click on the case number
4. The case status will be displayed as either "Received," "Pending at Applicant," "Payment Pending," "In Review," "Revisions – Resubmit," "On Hold," or "Issued" (See definitions below for what each status indicates)

Case Status Definitions:

Received - the application case has been created but has not yet been processed by city staff.

Pending at Applicant – the application case has been created but requires action on the part of the applicant to move the review process forward. You should have received an automated email, from a "noreply" address that includes next steps; be sure to check your spam/junk inbox for this email. If you have uploaded the requested materials, the case status will not change until the files have been processed. We have been automatically notified by the system and will process the materials in the order which they were received.

Payment Pending – the permit case has an invoiced fee that must be paid in order to move the process forward.

In Review – the application case has been routed for review by city staff. The application will remain in this status until all reviews and administrative processing have been completed. Refer to the “Reviews” tab within the permit for the anticipated review completion date. If any of the reviews indicate “Revisions-Resubmit”, comments will be released and the email address(es) on the case will be notified, once all reviews are completed. Please allow 3 business days beyond the listed date for administrative permit processing.

Revisions -Resubmit – the application review has been completed and revisions are required. Whenever a permit is changed to this status, an email is sent to the email address on file, and a comment(s) letter is added to the case under the “Attachments” tab within the permit case in the CSS Portal.

On Hold – the applicant or city staff has placed a hold on the permit process.

Issued – the permit has been issued and electronic files and final approved plans are available under the “Attachments” tab within the permit case in the CSS Portal.

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How do I add a contact to my application?

Contacts may be added to permits through the [Customer Self Service portal](#) using the instructions below.

Steps for adding contacts through CSS:

- 1) Open permit in CSS portal, this will open the permit with a row of tabs
- 2) Click on the “Contacts” tab
- 3) Click on the “Add Contact” button on left side of screen
- 4) Select contact type in the drop down labeled “Add Contact As”
- 5) Search by “Last name” or “Company name” or “Email”
- 6) Click “Add”

How can I withdraw my permit? (Permit)

Please reach out to PDSPermtAdmin@bouldercolorado.gov and submit a written (email) request along with the reasoning for withdrawal.

How do I request and receive a refund? (Permit)

Please reach out to Plandevelop@bouldercolorado.gov and submit a written (email) request along with the reasoning for refund.

What are the design requirements in the City of Boulder? (Permit)

Please visit the [Codes and Regulations webpage](#) for a list of all currently adopted codes in the City of Boulder.

Local amendments to the adopted building codes can be found in [Title 10](#) of the Boulder Revised Code. Specifically, the climatic and geographic design criteria applicable to Table R301.2(1) of the 2018 IRC are as follows:

- *Ground Snow Load = 40 pounds per square foot*
- *Three-second wind gust velocity = 150 mph east of Broadway, 165 mph west of Broadway*
- *Topographic effects = Yes*
- *Special wind region = Yes*
- *Windborne debris zone = No*
- *Seismic Design Category = B*

- *Weathering = severe*
- *Frost line depth = 32 inches*
- *Termite = slight*
- *Decay = none to slight*
- *Winter Design Temp = 2 degrees Fahrenheit*
- *Ice barrier underlayment required = NO*
- *Flood Hazards = See Sections 9-3-3 through 9-3-9, B.R.C. 1981*
- *Air freezing index = 459*
- *Mean annual temp = 52.1*

When is a test for asbestos required? (Permit)

Asbestos testing triggers are as follows:

- Residential Projects – 32 sf of disturbed surfaces (walls, ceilings, floor), 50 linear feet of disturbed pipes, or 55-gallon drum in volume of waste produced;
- Commercial Projects – 160 sf of disturbed surfaces (walls, ceilings, floors), 260 linear feet of disturbed pipes, or 55-gallon drum in volume of waste produced.

Previously the Boulder County Health Department regulated asbestos testing. The regulation of testing is now part of the building permitting process.

What if asbestos containing materials (ACM) are identified through asbestos testing? (Permit)

If testing reflects that there are no asbestos containing materials present, please provide a copy of the test report with the building permit application.

If testing reflects that there are asbestos containing materials that need to be removed, we will need a copy of the state issued asbestos mitigation permit or a copy of the state issued demolition approval notice (which tells us that the asbestos has been removed).

Will the project trigger the water meter to be upsized? (Permit)

If a project proposes the addition plumbing fixtures, it may be necessary to increase the size of the water meter in order to handle the additional demand on the infrastructure associated with this addition. The [Water and Wastewater PIF Worksheet](#) can help determine whether or not a project will trigger a water meter to be upsized. Follow the instructions in Step 2 on page 1 of the worksheet to complete page 4 of the worksheet. The sum from column G on page 4 corresponds with the Maximum Fixture Unit Count values in the middle column of the table on page 3. The required meter size is listed in the left-hand column titled Water Meter Size.

Most single-family homes have 3/4" taps and some older properties have 5/8" meters. To check meter size, refer to the property's water utility bill.

What are the City's roofing requirements? (Permit)

Refer to the [Roofing Inspection and Insulation Guidelines for New & Existing Residential and Commercial Structures](#) for information about to prepare a solar shading analysis.

Do I need a ROW/Utility Permit? (Permit)

You will need a ROW Permit, if you are working in the public Right of Way's or easement. Dumpster/POD's also require a ROW Permit, if placed in the right of way. Utility Permits are required for new sewer, water, storm, sewer, pole replacements, and all appurtenances related to wet and dry utilities.

Do I need a ROW License? (Permit)

You need a ROW License if you plan to work in the right of way or easement. You need a ROW License for POD/Dumpster placement. Lastly, you need a ROW License for in property work, for example a sewer or water repair.

How much does a ROW/Utility Permit cost? (Permit)

Please refer to the 2021 Schedule of Fees for a cost estimate of the permit related to your project.

Does my Building License allow me to apply for a ROW Permit? (Permit)

The Building License does not cover work within the right of way or easements. You would need to apply for a Right of Way License. Right of Way Licenses can be applied for by emailing COBContractorLicense@bouldercolorado.gov. The 2021 Schedule of Fees will outline specific fees related to the Right of Way License.

Can I setup my own Traffic Control? (Permit)

Traffic Control setups, including the plan draw up, will need to be done by a certified Traffic Control Supervisor. If your company does not have this credential, you are unable to setup your own traffic control.

What is the City of Boulder construction work hours? (Permit)

Standard hours are 7am to 5am, however these hours can vary depending on the scope of work, and the area where the work is occurring. Please refer to your permit conditions for further instruction on specific hours.

How do I setup sewer and water taps? (Permit)

Please contact the Municipal Service Center to setup taps. They can be reached at 303-441-3200. From there, they will walk you through the process and setup your tap.

How much longer will my water be shutoff for? (Permit)

For information related to water shutoffs, contact the Municipal Service Center at 303-441-3200

Does the project require a grading and drainage plan? (Permit)

For properties with significant slope concerns or soils with mass movement, a grading and drainage plan designed by a Colorado licensed Professional Engineer must be provided for all new structures, horizontal expansions of existing structures and proposals that modify the existing grade of the property. A grading plan may also be required to ensure that the proposed development will not pose a hazard to persons, surrounding property, the public right of way or other public improvements.

To determine if the property has soils with mass movement potential, as designated by the City of Boulder, visit [emaplink](#). Once on this page, click the gray box next to the "Geologic Development Constraints" layer in the legend on the left-hand side of the page. Next, in the upper right-hand side of the screen find the search bar that defaults to "Enter Address" and type in the property address and hit *enter* on your keyboard. This will zoom to the property.

If a grading and drainage plan is required, a soils report may also be necessary. Please refer to "Does the project require a soils report?" below.

Does the project require a soils report? (Permit)

A soils report is required for all new structures and for work on buildings that include additions to, or significant alterations of, existing foundations for properties with steep slope concerns, soils with mass movement or shrink/swell potential.

To determine if the property has soils with mass movement or shrink/swell potential, as designated by the City of Boulder, visit [emaplink](#). Once on this page, click the gray box next to the "Geologic Development Constraints" layer in the

legend on the left-hand side of the page. Next, in the upper right-hand side of the screen find the search bar that defaults to “Enter Address” and type in the property address and hit *enter* on your keyboard. This will zoom to the property.

If a soils report is required, a grading and drainage plan may also be necessary. Please refer to “Does the project require a grading and drainage plan?” above.

LICENSING:

Is a licensed contractor required?

Please refer to the city’s [Contractor Licensing website](#) for additional information about when a licensed contractor is required.

A homeowner contractor permit may be issued to a property owner who personally performs work on his or her own residence that is not intended for rent or resale and is not generally open to the public. If the homeowner does not intend to perform all of the work, licensed subcontractors are required. A list of licensed contractors in the City of Boulder can be found online [here](#).

What do I need for a license? Is my license current?

See our [Contractor Licensing website](#) for further details and links.

ZONING:

What could happen on this property? (Permit/General/Zoning) – Seek advice from a Professional)

The property would need to comply with all City of Boulder regulations in effect at the time of a proposed modification. The regulations include Land Use code, which can be found in [Title 9 of the Boulder Revised Code](#) and Building and Energy code regulations that are in [Title 10 of the Boulder Revised Code](#). We recommend working with a professional (for example, a designer, architect and/or engineer, attorney) who can help you consider your options for this specific property and determine how regulatory requirements could impact these options.

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The city’s pre application process can provide a more detailed and comprehensive means of exploring questions about how development regulations apply to a specific property. Please review the [pre application materials](#) to determine whether a pre application review may be applicable.

How can I find out if a property has a previous review? (General/Maps/Zoning)

Visit [emaplink](#). In the upper right-hand side of the screen find the search bar that defaults to “Enter Address” and type in the property address, then hit *Enter* on your keyboard.

Once the property has been identified on the map, click on the property and a pop-up window will appear with more information. Click on the “Property Report” link, then click on “Download PDF Report”. If the Property Summary Information includes a parcel tag referencing a *Previous Review* please contact PDSRecordRequest@bouldercolorado.gov to obtain information about previous approvals associated with the property. Once you have reviewed the materials you may contact a Project Specialist at plandevelop@bouldercolorado.gov with specific questions related to the development restrictions associated with the approvals. The development limitations on this FAQ page may not apply to the property if a previous review exists.

Please be advised that even if the Previous Review parcel tag is not associated with the property there is a chance that additional development constraints apply to the property. If you know that a variance, planned unit development, site review or use review has been approved for the property, or it seems clear that the property does not meet the development requirements found on this page, please follow the steps in *How can I get the permit history from a property, planned unit development documents or a copy of a survey?* above.

How can I determine the lot size of a property? (Zoning)

Visit the Boulder County Assessor’s [Property Search](#) webpage. Once on the webpage, you will see a white text bar across the center/top of the screen that says “Enter search term...,” enter the property address into this text bar and hit enter on your keyboard. A nested menu will appear on the left-hand side of the screen. Click the section titled “Property”. Look for the line item that says Est. Parcel Area: -> Square Feet. Please note that this number is for reference only and often does not reflect parcel size as accurately as a survey.

What are the setback requirements for the property? (Zoning)

First, determine the zoning district of the property, see *How do I determine the zoning for a property?* above. Navigate to TABLE 7-1 FORM AND BULK STANDARDS in [9-7-1, B.R.C. 1981](#). Locate the zoning district in the top row of the table. The setbacks will depend on the zoning district and whether the structure in question is principal or accessory. Principal buildings and uses can be found in the top section of the table; accessory buildings and uses are just below that. On the left-hand side of the table, the various types of setbacks are identified. Pay close attention to any footnotes listed in the setback descriptions in the left-hand column. To determine which side of the property is the front, side or rear yard, use the [definition of Yard, front, rear, and side in 9-16, B.R.C. 1981](#) which states:

Yard, front, rear, and side means the open space between the buildings and the property lines at the front, rear, and sides of the property, respectively. On a corner lot, the open space adjacent to the shorter street right-of-way shall be considered the front yard. The rear yard is opposite the front yard, and the side yard is between the rear yard and the front yard. (See Figures 16-4 and 16-5 of this section.)

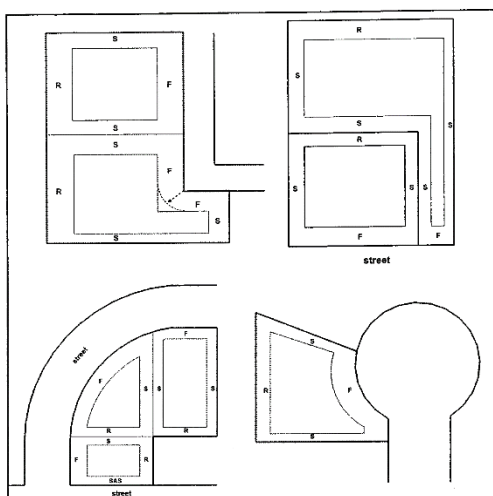


Figure 16-4: Yards for Irregularly Shaped Lots
To the extent possible, setbacks of irregular lots will match the setbacks of adjacent lots.

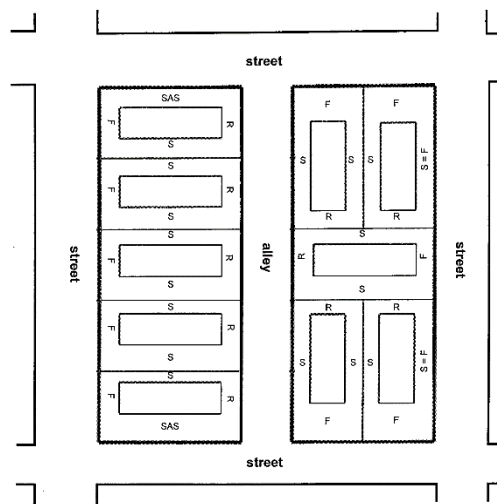


Figure 16-5: Front, Rear, and Side Yards

F: FRONTYARD

R: REAR YARD

S: INTERIOR SIDE YARD

SAS: SIDE ADJACENT STREET

How can I determine the maximum allowable building coverage for a property? (Zoning)

First, determine the zoning district of the property, see *"How do I determine the zoning for a property?"* above.

Navigate to [9-7-11, B.R.C. 1981 Maximum Building Coverage](#) and read through the "Scope" section to determine if building coverage limitations apply in the zone. Properties located within the RMX-1, RR-1, RR-2, RE, RL-1, RL-2 zoning districts can use the [Maximum Floor Area Ratio – Building Coverage Calculator](#) to perform the calculation.

Building coverage is defined in [9-16, B.R.C. 1981](#) as:

Building coverage means the maximum horizontal area within the outer perimeter of the building walls, dividers, or columns at ground level or above, whichever is the greater area, including, without limitation, courts and exterior stairways, but excluding:

- (1) Uncovered decks, stoops, patios, terraces, and stairways, all less than thirty inches high;
- (2) The outer four feet of completely open, uncovered, cantilevered balconies that have a minimum of eight feet vertical clearance below;
- (3) Up to three hundred square feet of a single-family detached residence front porch that is adjacent to a street;
- (4) Up to one hundred fifty square feet of additional porch area not located in the front yard for a single-family detached residence; and
- (5) One accessory building, no larger than eighty square feet in size and no taller than ten feet in height, associated with a single-family detached residence.

How can I determine the maximum allowable floor area for a property? (Zoning)

First, determine the zoning district of the property, see *"How do I determine the zoning for a property?"* above.

Navigate to [9-8-2, B.R.C. 1981 Floor Area Ratio Requirements](#) and read through the "Scope" section to determine if floor area limitations apply in the zone. Properties located within the RMX-1, RR-1, RR-2, RE, RL-1, RL-2 zoning districts can use the [Maximum Floor Area Ratio – Building Coverage Calculator](#) to perform the calculation.

- Floor Area is defined in [9-16, B.R.C. 1981](#) as:
- *Floor area* means the total square footage of all levels measured to the outside surface of the exterior framing, or to the outside surface of the exterior walls if there is no exterior framing, of a building or portion thereof, which includes stairways, elevators, the portions of all exterior elevated above grade corridors, balconies, and walkways that are required for primary or secondary egress by Chapter 10-5, "Building Code," B.R.C. 1981, storage and mechanical rooms, whether internal or external to the structure, but excluding an atrium on the interior of a building where no floor exists, a courtyard, the stairway opening at the uppermost floor of a building, and floor area that meets the definition of uninhabitable space.

What are the requirements to establish an accessory dwelling unit (ADU)? (Zoning)

Please visit the city's [Accessory Dwelling Unit webpage](#) for more information.

What is the city's outdoor lighting requirements? (Zoning)

For information on the city's outdoor lighting ordinance and permitting requirements, please visit the [Outdoor Lighting Ordinance webpage](#).

How do I prepare a solar analysis? (Zoning)

For information on the city's outdoor lighting ordinance and permitting requirements, please visit the [Outdoor Lighting Ordinance webpage](#).

INSPECTIONS:

What do I do if I receive an error when requesting an inspection?

In some cases, documentation is required prior to requesting framing inspection. If you receive the error below, please review the Approval Conditions document in the "Attachments" tab to determine which documentation is required and follow the instructions for [requested documentation/certifications](#) above.