

# Start with these Steps

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**1 Draw a plan.** You need a site plan to show to City Zoning staff to find out if your proposed addition meets setback and side yard requirements. Follow the example plan provided on the back of this brochure and draw a plan to scale. Be sure to show the measurements of the lot, house, addition and distances from the house to the lot lines.

Call **Diggers Hotline, 1-800-242-8511**. They will mark your yard to show where there are underground wires and pipes. You might not be able to build over these areas.

Consider these points when planning your addition:

## ◆ Use

City codes allow additions for almost any type of single family use. However, adding a second dwelling unit to a single family home is permitted only under certain circumstances.

Additions solely for a home-based occupation are not allowed. Home-based businesses are subject to special requirements. Ask the Zoning staff about these requirements.

## ◆ Placement

Houses must be set back from all lot lines. If the depth of your house from front to back is large, you may be

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required to increase the side yard setbacks. Again, Zoning staff will advise you if a special review and approval is needed.

## ◆ Older Houses

If your home is a landmark, next to a landmark, or in an historic district, any changes to its exterior may require review by the Landmarks Commission. Call the **Permit Counter, 266-4559**, to find if your home is in one these categories.

In older houses, an addition may require electrical, heating and plumbing systems to be upgraded. Lenders may also require homes with 30 or 60 amp service to upgrade to 100 amp service. These items can add unanticipated costs to your project.

Call the **Building Inspection staff, 266-4551**, with your questions on building issues.

## ◆ Health-Related Concerns

Many homes were constructed with materials that may affect your health and the future sale of your home. These are the most common, potentially harmful materials:

- asbestos insulation
  - lead paint
  - lead plumbing pipes
  - radon
  - underground oil storage tanks
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Take advantage of the opportunity to remove and/or replace these items while remodeling your home.

Call the State's **Asbestos/Lead Certification program at 267-0928 or 267-2297** for more information on these materials.

**2 Show your plan to Zoning staff at least a month or more before you apply for your construction permits.** This will help you avoid delays when you want to start construction. Some types of additions need special review by a board or commission. These reviews usually require a fee and can add weeks to the review and approval process. Zoning staff will look at your plan and tell you if a special review is needed.

**3 Shop around for materials and/or contractors.** Know what you can afford. Choose a price range and stick to it when selecting appliances, fixtures and materials.

You can do your own electrical, heating, plumbing and structural work on the single-family house you own and live in. All work done by you or a contractor needs a permit and must be checked by the City Building Inspectors at specific times during and after construction.

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Look for a contractor with the experience and resources to do your project on time and according to the State of Wisconsin building code.

Get estimates from at least two contractors. Some contractors charge for estimates.

Be as specific as you can about what you want and expect in your project and show the contractor your sketches.

Call past clients for references. It's important you feel comfortable with the contractor you select.

**4 If you use a contractor, you may want a proposal that includes these items:**

- Contractor's full name, address, phone number and insurance company.
  - Names, addresses and phone numbers of any subcontractors.
  - The dates work will begin and be completed. You may add a penalty for each day or week the completion date is not met and/or a bonus for early project completion.
  - A complete description of the project and materials. Be specific about quantity, size, color and brand.
  - Total project cost and a breakdown of labor and material charges.
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# Adding On to Your Home



- Payment schedule based on work completed, not calendar dates.
- A stipulation that before final payment is made all contractor lien waivers are completed and submitted to you.
- A guarantee of workmanship and the delivery of all warranties, registrations, directions and care instructions for all materials installed.
- A stipulation that the contractor is responsible for obtaining and paying for all permits and approvals and that the work will conform to all City codes.
- Who will be responsible for debris removal and landscaping damaged during construction.
- A procedure for making changes during the work. Any change should be in writing and signed by both parties.
- An agreement on how disputes will be settled.

Sign the contract in the presence of your contractor. If you change your mind, you have 3 business days to cancel the contract. You must cancel the contract in writing. Call the **Attorney General's Consumer Hotline, 266-1852**, for more information about contracts.

Don't pay for any work until you are satisfied with the job and the appropriate inspections are made.

Be sure to get a copy of the bill marked *PAID* from the contractor when you do pay.

**5** After obtaining Zoning approval, either you or your contractor can apply for the building permit. Read

the brochure *Applying for a Building Permit* to find out more about this step. Call **266-4551** to have a copy sent to you.

### Web Address

[www.cityofmadison.com/developmentcenter/](http://www.cityofmadison.com/developmentcenter/)

## Example of a Site Plan

**X** is a dimension you need to show on your drawing

Show as much information as you can.

**Note:** The front lot line is not the curb or edge of the street. If you have a sidewalk, the lot line is usually 6-8" toward the house from the inside edge of the sidewalk. If you can not locate the property lines, you may need to hire a surveyor.

