



DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

Concept to completion...



INTRODUCTION

Sheridan's Historic Downtown is without a doubt one of the community's most important assets.

As one of the best preserved and functional downtowns in the region, it is the heart of Sheridan. It is a location for business and recreation, and increasingly a place where community members choose to live. It is critical that the downtown remain a hub of economic activity and stability both now and in the future.

The Mayor, City Council and municipal staff are committed to helping the downtown thrive. To that end, this brief guide has been prepared to help business and property owners with renovation and remodeling of downtown buildings and spaces. For the downtown to be vibrant, its buildings must be kept in good repair; and their spaces well utilized with a blend of retail, residential, restaurant, and office uses.

Before launching into the ins and outs of downtown redevelopment, we want to pass along a few important contacts at City Hall. These offices and individuals are referenced throughout the guide, and are the partners in helping you make your project successful.

City Building Division (307) 674-5941 (*Building Official and Plans Examiner*) – Your go to for building and construction related questions, or general questions about redevelopment.

City Planning Division (307) 675-4226 (*Planning Director and Planning Tech*) – Questions about zoning, signage or subdivision and replatting of land.

City Engineering Division (307) 675-4232 (*City Engineer and Project Managers*) – Questions about streets, city construction projects, drainage and engineering related questions.

City Utilities Division (307) 675-4231 (*Utility Division Manager and Utilities Coordinator*) – Questions about availability of city water and sewer services and making connections to those services.

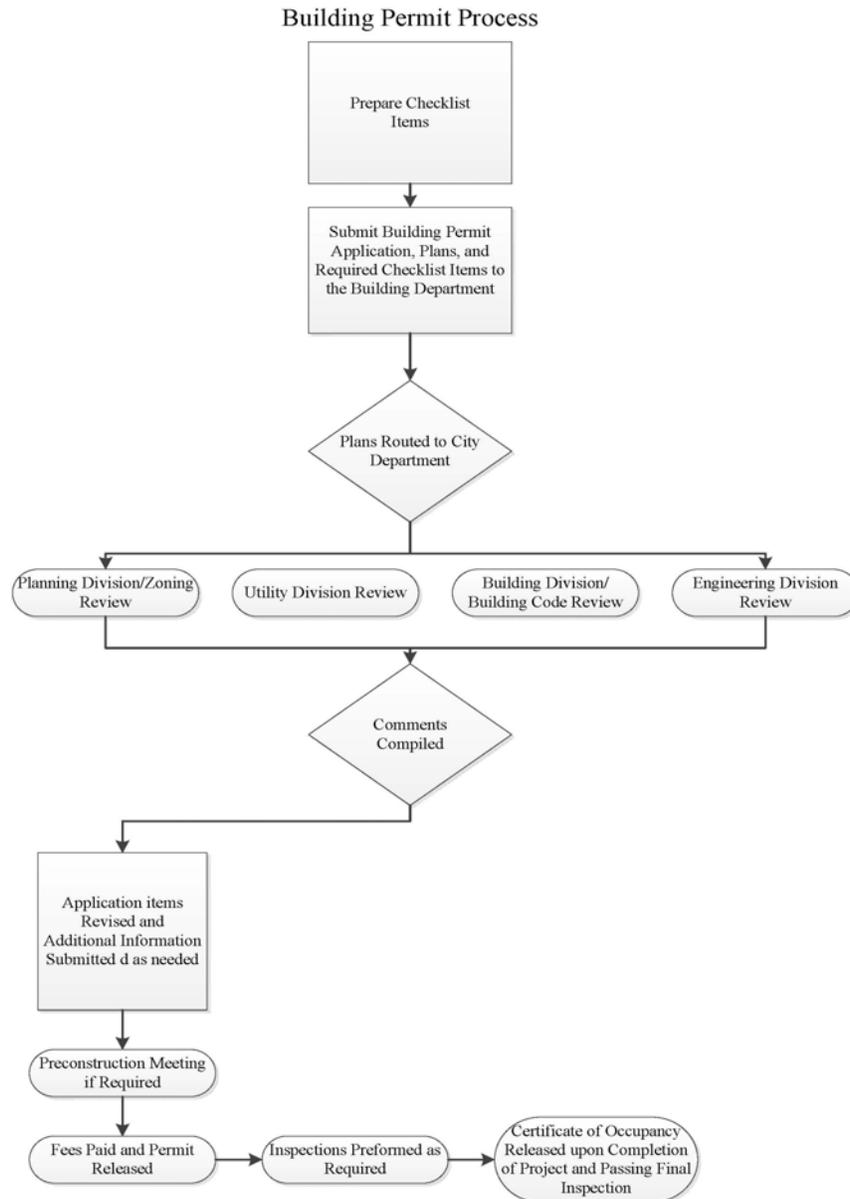
City Customer Service Division (307) 674-6483 (*Customer Service Technicians*) – All other general questions regarding City of Sheridan operations or upcoming activities.

Downtown Sheridan Association (307) 672-8881 – A local nonprofit representing business and property owners in the downtown.

GETTING STARTED

From the City process perspective, the core of most downtown renovations and redevelopment projects will be a building permit. Building permits come in two basic categories: simple permits, permits issued for a single specific job (water heater replacement or roofing project), and full building permits, permits issued for a larger scope of work that often involves more than one type of work or tradesperson. Most new construction and remodel projects will ultimately result in you needing to pull a full building permit.

So, where do you start? The basic building permit process looks like this:



The goal of City staff is assist property owners with projects early in the development process, helping to streamline steps and save money. There are things you should consider, and steps you should take, long before you or your contractor applies for a building permit. In order to minimize hassle, keep costs down, and have the smoothest experience; consider following the steps below. Keep in mind that one of the most important things you can do to help your project move through the City's approval process is to have a plan. Developing a plan before getting too far along in your project will save you both time and dollars in the long run.

STEP 1. CONCEPTUALIZE YOUR PROJECT

Take a moment to plan out your project concept. This step is helpful because it's you taking a moment to get your dream and vision down on paper. It helps you to remember key details and goals, and to convey your ideas to others who will be assisting you with your project.

A project concept doesn't have to be fancy. It can literally be a bar napkin sketch. Take some time to rough out your idea, and jot down some key bullets of what the project entails. Try to think about your immediate plans for the space, and what you might do in the future. If you have questions you already know you need answered, write those down too.

STEP 2. TAKE A MOMENT TO TOUCH BASE WITH THE CITY BUILDING

Once you have a rough project concept put together, contact the City Building Department. You'll want to talk to either the Building Official or Plans Examiner. These members of City staff are familiar with all aspects of the municipal code and the community's adopted building codes.

The Building Official or Plans Examiner will walk through your rough concept and help you answer your questions, as well as explain the project approval process and things to be aware of. They may point you to other members of City staff who are more familiar with a particular aspect of your project.

STEP 3. DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU NEED A DESIGN PROFESSIONAL

Wyoming, particularly Sheridan, is filled with independent and skilled people who know the value of saving money and resources by doing things themselves. However, many times a licensed general contractor can identify cost savings, material savings and streamline your project through permit review process and onsite inspections. A well selected general contractor brings with them project management experience that often saves time and money in the long run.

Many projects can be put together and successfully built with just the oversight of a general contractor. However, for more complex endeavors or design assistance, you may want to engage an architect. City Building Division staff can assist you with identifying when and what professionals may be necessary to achieve the goals of your project.

REGARDING SELECTING YOUR CONTRACTOR OR DESIGN PROFESSIONAL:

Although often asked, City staff cannot make recommendations as to a contractor, architect engineer, or surveyor to represent you, or provide permit application materials. However, like any business arrangement, it pays to follow some simple guidelines:

1. Call multiple professionals, and get written quotes and estimates for work performed.
2. Make sure that the professional you choose is properly licensed with the city or state, carries insurance, and is appropriately bonded for the type of work being performed.
3. Ask for, and follow up with, references.
4. Insist on a written contract with clear scope of work and fees associated. Any alterations to the contract should be in writing.

STEP 4. FIRM UP YOUR CONCEPT

This is the point where you should have either a design professional or general contractor on board. From here on out you are going to be moving your project from your "napkin sketch" to a more developed concept that will lead into a formal building permit submittal.

Working with your general contractor or other design professional, you can create a more formal concept. The goal is to make sure it is clear exactly what you are trying to accomplish, and to understand potential challenges or concerns early on. In some cases plans can be sketched and provide enough detail to be used for the building permit application.

STEP 5. CONSIDER THE CITY'S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

While not mandatory, the City has a free option to help you troubleshoot your project. The Development Review Committee (DRC) is made up of key members of city staff that participate in the review of development applications. This includes staff from the city Planning, Building, Engineering and Utilities Divisions. These are the people who will ultimately be reviewing your construction project.

At a DRC meeting, you will have an opportunity to explain your project, ask questions of staff, and hear feedback on your project. DRC meetings are informal, and they are not open to the general public. While conceptual drawings and sketches may be helpful to staff's understanding of the project, they aren't required. Also, while we have laid out a DRC meeting as a potential Step 5, you can schedule to attend a DRC meeting at any point in your project. The process is free, and you can come as many times as you like, so feel to bring that napkin sketch for staff to take a look at.

DRC meetings occur every Tuesday (Though we can certainly arrange an alternate day for you if necessary.) with appointments starting at 2:00PM. To schedule a DRC meeting contact the City Planning Tech at (307) 675-4226.

STEP 6. WORK OUT SOLUTIONS TO PROJECT SPECIFIC SITUATIONS

Believe it or not, projects often involve a straightforward building permit, and your idea can go from that notion in your head to bricks and mortar by simply drawing up plans and getting the permit. Other times, your design professional or City staff will identify a situation that needs to be addressed for your project. Downtown building projects involve work in historic structures that may be over 100 years old. Meeting modern safety, building code requirements and construction standards may require some ingenuity. The Historic Building Code and Existing Building Code offers several options, exceptions and solutions to allow the owner to keep the historic and/or existing building integrity while making necessary improvements.

In the second portion of this guide we have highlighted some common issues that can come up in downtown building projects. They include things like fire code considerations, building access, accessibility compliance, zoning, and parking and signage issues.

Never be afraid to ask for a second opinion if you have concern about the solutions offered by City staff or your design professional.

STEP 7. HAVE A FORMAL SUBMITTAL PREPARED FOR YOUR PROJECT

Once we've worked together to find a solution to any challenges facing your project, it's time to have the formal permit application prepared. The Building Division has checklists for permit submittal, but a building permit basically consists of two sets of information:

- Documentation of who the owner is, who will be performing the work, and what will they do.
- Building plans that illustrate in detail what will be built and how. This also includes site and floor plans.

Once submitted to the Building Division, ask for the anticipated turnaround time for review. Depending on the current work load within the Building Division, commercial plan submittals may take up to 15 business days for approval.

As with everything, you can always pick up the phone and call the Building Division at (307) 674-5941 to find out what is going on with your plans and permit approval.

STEP 8. AFTER THE PERMIT IS ISSUED, STAY ENGAGED WITH YOUR

Getting to the building permit issuance stage is going to take some time, energy, brainpower, and focus on your part. There is a temptation once the permit is issued to kick back and let the general contractor "do their thing." Resist this temptation, and stay engaged with the project. Ask for and insist on regular updates from your contractor, and feel free to follow up directly with the Building Department to inquire about the status of your project.

Throughout construction your project will be inspected by City staff. You can be present for these inspections. It can sometimes be an opportunity to learn more about how the project is going, and if you are experiencing any setbacks. Staying engaged with a project and keeping yourself in the loop helps you to make informed decisions at key junctures.

Sounds easy, doesn't it? Putting together a construction project is a challenge, but it is one that you have a lot of resources to draw on to complete. It can also be a rewarding experience to see your idea for a downtown space come to fruition. To recap the steps:

Step 1. Conceptualize your project

Step 2. Take a moment to touch base with the City Building Division

Step 3. Decide whether or not you need a design professional

Step 4. Firm up your concept.

Step 5. Consider the City's Development Review Committee

Step 6. Work out solutions to project specific situations

Step 7. Have a formal submittal prepared for your project

Step 8. After the permit is issued, stay engaged with your project

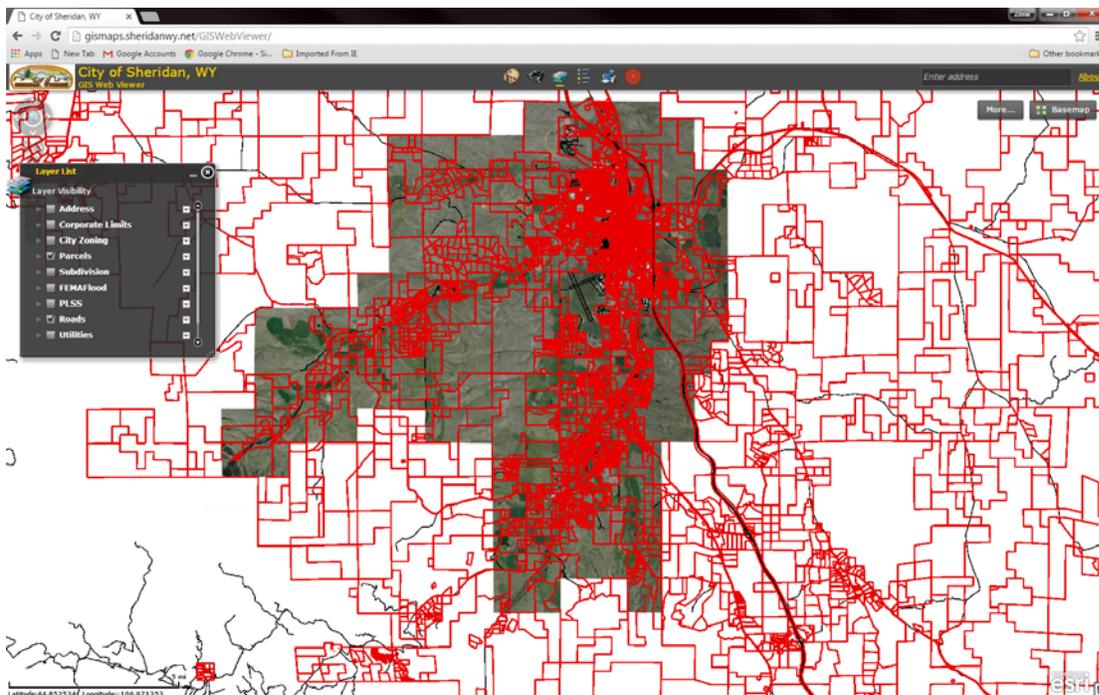
GIS RESOURCES

GIS stands for geographic information systems, and refers to a number of different types of ways of displaying spatial data and map information. The City has a number of online mapping resources that are free to the public, and can help in project planning and general information about a piece of property. The city's online GIS web viewer can be found at:

<http://gismaps.sheridanwy.net/GISWebViewer/>

Some of the most popular types of information available through the City's GIS web viewer include:

- Property owner information
- Aerial photography
- Subdivision plats (pdf format)
- Zoning
- Approximate location of public utilities (water and sewer)
- Water and sewer service line permit information (pdf format)



THINGS TO BE AWARE OF

Building permits

Building permits are required for all construction with a valuation over \$3,000.00. Electric permits are required for work with a valuation over \$1000.00. Any alteration or addition to gas piping or the replacement of a fuel burning appliance, regardless of valuation, a Permit is required. Permits are also required for exterior signage and change of use group / occupancy.

City of Sheridan adopted building codes: <http://publicecodes.cyberregs.com/icod/index.htm>

Building Permit Fees

Building permit fees are calculated in two ways. The first are flat fees for simple permits (water heaters, etc). The following table are the permit fees for simple permits:

<input type="checkbox"/> Water heaters replacement	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Furnace replacement	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Gas piping in existing buildings	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical service upgrades	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition	\$40.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Re-roofs	\$150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Siding	\$150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Window replacement	\$150.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Solar panel	\$250.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Sewer service replacement	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Interceptor	\$250.00

The second way fees are calculated is for full building permits. These are based on a percentage of the project's valuation multiplied by a fractional multiplier. For new commercial construction and remodels, the formulas look like this:

Projects Under \$100,000

$(\text{Project Valuation} \times 0.036) \times 0.8 = \text{Permit Fee}$

ex. for a \$100,000 project

$(\$100,000 \times 0.036) \times 0.8 = \2880

Projects Over \$100,000

$((\$100,000 \times 0.036) + (\text{Project Valuation} > \$100,000 \times 0.0095)) \times 0.8 = \text{Permit Fee}$

ex. for a \$150,000 project

$((\$100,000 \times 0.036) + (50,000 \times 0.0095)) \times 0.8 = \3260

Fire Code Items

- *Fire suppression*

The requirements for fire suppression, fire separation, and alarm requirements are based on a number of items. This is a time when meeting with the Building Department is beneficial. The Building Department has access to nationally recognized experts in this area. We are happy to include them in the discussion to find the safest, most economical method to complete your project.

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

ADA compliant – The US Department of Justice encourages all existing structures to prioritize accessibility the following ways:

Priority 1: Accessible approach and entrance

Priority 2: Access to goods and services

Priority 3: Access to restrooms

Priority 4: Any other measures necessary

The Americans with Disabilities Act does require buildings under renovation to work towards ADA accessibility. This does not include regular maintenance of the building. The guidelines for these improvements are not as strict as with new construction or additions. If your project does require updates to the ADA accessibility, you are only required to spend up to 20% of the total cost of the improvements to address ADA accessibility. There are two tax credits that you may be eligible to apply for to help offset these costs. The link is below. This is a great time to discuss with the Building Department your options.

Secondary access – When you do not change the building's use, most of the time the existing exiting is sufficient. Many times when a building owner is updating their building, they are changing the use. This is a great time again to discuss with the Building Department what the options are.

IRS Tax credit for ADA compliance: <http://www.ada.gov/archive/taxpack.pdf>

Reaching Out to Customers with Disabilities Pamphlet:

<http://www.ada.gov/reachingout/intro1.htm>

Historic building

The attached map shows the locations of buildings of historical significance as it pertains to downtown. Whether or not your project building is one of historical significance is an area that may be beneficial for you to explore. Many times working with a historic building allows you more flexibility to develop your property.

Code relating to existing structures

The Existing Building Code applies to repairs, alterations, and additions of a building that have not undergone a change of use. This code offers relief to construction projects only undergoing partial renovations.

Zoning

Every property in the City of Sheridan is part of a zoning district. Zoning is used to establish what particular land use regulations will apply to a piece of property. This includes things such as whether or not the property can be put to a residential or commercial use, the maximum height of a building, property line setbacks and how many parking spaces are required. Most of the historic downtown is zoned B-2 or B-1 Business, which allows as of right for most of the residential, office, and retail uses you see in the downtown. There are some pockets of R-3 Residence zoning as you move away from the downtown core, and some of the parks and civic buildings are zoned R-1 Residence.

To find out more about zoning and how it might impact your project, call the City Planning Division at (307) 675-4225.

If you want to look up your property zoning on your own online, you can use our GIS mapping web viewer at: <http://gismaps.sheridanwy.net/GISWebViewer/>

If you are feeling particularly brave you can check out the zoning ordinance online at: <http://qcode.us/codes/sheridan/> (just browse down to Appendix A in the index)

Parking

As mentioned above, the City's zoning ordinance regulates parking requirements. Parking requirements are established based on use, and only apply to new construction. However, the success of your project may depend on offering adequate parking, even if municipal code does not require it. The table of parking requirements by use can be found in Sheridan City Code Appendix A Sec. 10. and the Planning Division is available to assist with this assessment.

Parking must be provided for new construction. That means that remodels that do not change a downtown building's footprint, do not require additional parking from what already exists for the building. New construction requires that off-street paved parking spaces be provided according to the chart mentioned above.

While there is a significant supply of on street parking in the downtown, off-street parking can be very limited, and often existing buildings have little to no available off-street parking. This can make meeting parking requirements challenging if your project involves new construction. Some potential solutions include:

- Leasing parking from another property owner within 300 feet of your project.
- Sharing parking with uses/buildings that have demands at different times of the day.
- Developing a City approved parking plan that incorporates the options listed above or offers new solutions to meeting parking requirements.

For questions regarding parking contact the City Planning Division at (307) 675-4226

Signage

While the City does not regulate the content of signs (other than for obscenity and adult content), it does regulate the size and location of signs. In the historic downtown, businesses may have the following:

Wall and Roof Signs – Up to two square feet of sign area per linear foot of facade. For example a building with 50 feet of facade would be allowed 100 square feet of signage for that facade. This square footage can be divided up among multiple signs.

Projecting Sign – One projecting sign per business (not one per building) up to 10 square feet in area.

Sandwich Boards/Temporary Signs – Businesses may use one sandwich board sign up to four feet tall and two feet wide. The sign cannot impede pedestrian traffic and must be taken in after hours.

Installing a sign on a building requires a permit issued through the Building Office. Signs with lighting and electrical features require approval for wiring and fixtures. The City does not regulate interior window displays or signs hung inside of buildings. Please contact the Planning Department for any other signage questions as well as the list of types of signs that are currently prohibited within the city limits.

For more information on signage, contact the Planning Division at (307) 675-4226.

Property Lines and Subdivisions

Many of the structures in the historic downtown are built to property lines with buildings sharing common walls or abutting each other. Doors open out directly onto public spaces, and some buildings may even occupy several old historic lots. Since many building code requirements and development regulations are tied to property lines and potential separations of ownership, the downtown environment can involve some special situations to consider.

In some cases, adjusting or consolidating property lines can eliminate these challenges. The City of Sheridan has an administrative replat process designed to allow property owners to adjust property lines without needing to go to a public hearing.

For more information, contact the City Planning Division at (307) 675-4226.

Have some project paper on us...

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55 E. GRINNELL PLAZA
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BY DATE SUBJECT SHEET NO. OF
ADDRESS PERMIT NO. JOB NO.

"GATEWAY TO THE BIG HORNS"



LIVE. WORK. PLAY. SHOP.
SHERIDAN, WYOMING

