

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

Foundation Repair

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BEFORE PURSUING THE BUILDING PERMIT

Before beginning any work, answering the questions below will help with the permitting process.

Is a contractor doing the work?

There are many ways to ensure that you are working with a good contractor. The City of Houston does not license building contractors, but there are several voluntary trade organizations where you can find lists of them. You can also check the Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org) for business reviews, alerts and tips. Be sure to always check references and ensure that your contractor is properly insured.

Are you aware of any Homeowners Association (HOA) restrictions?

HOAs sometimes place restrictions on the types of construction that can occur, so be sure to check with your HOA before beginning any construction projects.

Is your property in the 100-year floodplain, floodway or conveyance zone?

Prior to starting your project, visit www.gims.houstontx.gov to determine if your property is located in the 100-year floodplain, floodway or conveyance zone. If you have flood insurance you can also contact your insurance provider for this information as well.

Will your project encroach on an easement?

You will be required to obtain an exemption from the Office of the City Engineer if your project encroaches on any portion of the street or roadway easement. You will be required to apply for Consent to Easement Encroachment through the Utility Analysis – Developer Services Section if your project encroaches on a City of Houston utility easement. If you have questions regarding this, please contact Sarun Chhin at 832-394-8986.

NOTE: If the easement is dedicated to the Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD), you must have your plans approved by HCFCD prior to obtaining a permit from the City. If your easement is dedicated to a utility company, you will need to obtain a release from the utility company. Contacts for utility company easement questions can be found in the left hand column on this page

What is the total cost of your project?

The estimated project cost will be needed in order to complete the building permit application. (See page 4 for more information.)



DEFINITIONS**CONVEYANCE ZONE**

The portion of the Special Flood Hazard Area that is utilized to convey water during the occurrence of the base flood. Areas in a floodplain where natural ground is 18 inches below base flood elevation or are within 100 feet of the floodway are defined as conveyance zones.

EASEMENT

Areas set aside for installation and maintenance of utilities by public and private utility operators. You cannot typically build on these areas because they would limit access to the utilities.

FLOODPLAIN

Land area around a stream, river or bayou that would be affected by flooding during a “100-year event” (a rainstorm that has a 1% chance of occurring in a given year), because the water is no longer contained within the banks of the stream, river or bayou during or after that event. In the City of Houston, this area has been mapped throughout the City and can be found on the GIMS (Geographic Information & Management System) website. www.gims.houstontx.gov. The floodplain is also known as “A” zones on flood insurance maps produced by FEMA. “A” zones include Zone A, Zone AE and Zone AO.

FLOODWAY

The area for storm runoff along a bayou, river, or other watercourse. In the City of Houston, this area has been mapped throughout the City and can be found on the GIMS website (www.gims.houstontx.gov).

HOMEOWNER'S ASSOCIATION

An organization created by a group of property owners, or property developers which helps to oversee any shared property belonging to the homeowner group, and which usually has a legal means of enforcing agreed upon rules the homeowners must follow.

PROJECT COST

This includes the total cost of construction to the end user, excluding the land purchase costs and the overhead attributed to the land purchase. It also includes the value of donated goods and services.

PROPERTY LINE

A line dividing one lot from another, or from a street or any public place.

HELPFUL INFORMATION AND LINKS

Flood maps:

www.gims.houstontx.gov

Harris County Appraisal District:

www.hcad.org

Montgomery Central Appraisal District: www.mcad-tx.org

Fort Bend Central Appraisal District:

www.fbcad.org

Harris County Flood Control District (HCFCD)

9900 Northwest Freeway

Houston, TX 77092

713-684-4000

Harris County Flood Control District
Watershed Coordinator

713-956-3074

Harris County Flood Control District
Property Management

713-684-4000

Center Point Energy Land & Right-of-Way Department (TRT-11)

PO Box 1700

Houston, TX 77251-1700

Attention: Julie Bray 713-207-1557

Linsey Williams 713-207-6211

Southwestern Bell Telephone

Company (SBC) Right-of-Way

7602 Spring Cypress, Room #226

Spring, TX 77379

Jerry Ray 281-379-7524 or Amanda

Burus 281-379-7518

WHAT SPECIAL CONDITIONS EXIST?

The following items represent special conditions that must be considered as you prepare your plans:

Floodplain Management Office (FMO)

All foundation repairs in the 100-year floodplain, floodway or conveyance zone must be reviewed by FMO regardless of cost.

Building Code Enforcement

- Customers that have setup Advanced Pay Accounts (APA) with the City of Houston can fax all application materials to 832-394-9625 to have the application processed.
- Piles cannot go over the property line
- Foundation repairs along a common wall, between townhouses and condos, shall require a letter from the property management stating that the homeowners affected by the foundation repair are aware of the work to be performed.

KEY CONTACTS**Houston Permitting Center**

Hours of Operation:

8:00 am – 5:00 pm

1002 Washington Ave.
Houston, TX 77002

Phone: 832-394-9000

Email: houston.permittingcenter@houston.tx.gov**Building Code Enforcement Permits**

Hours of Operation:

8:00am – 5:00pm

Contact Information:

Phone: 832-394-9494

Email: rmacad@houston.tx.gov**Floodplain Management Office**

Hours of Operation:

8:00am – 4:30pm

Contact Information:

Phone: 832-394-8854

Email: fmo@houston.tx.gov**Inspections**

General Number..... 713-222-9922

Flood..... 832-394-8854

Structural..... 832-394-8840

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR BUILDING PERMIT APPROVAL **Residential Building Application Form**

This form should be completed prior to arriving at the Houston Permitting Center (HPC).

 Two Complete Sets of Plans Drawn to Scale or Dimensioned Plans

- Engineered pile/pier location plans
 - the location of the piles/piers
 - the number of piles/piers
 - distance of piles/piers from the property line
- Legible structural engineers seal, signature, date and firm number as required by Texas State Engineers Practice Act on foundation plan as well as pier or pile detail
- Show the project location address on the foundation plan and detail sheets.

NOTE: *Piles/Piers cannot cross the property line.*

 Project Cost (see Definitions on page 2):

For a building permit, the required cost estimate is a market valuation that includes the profit and overhead.

NOTE: If the project cost appears to be unreasonably low, a signed contract between the owner and contractor may be required.

 Floodplain Plan Review Requirements

You must provide the following if your property resides in the 100-year floodplain, floodway or conveyance zone:

- A cost estimate must be provided in one of the following ways:
 - A signed, sealed, and dated cost estimate provided by a professional engineer or architect, each licensed by the state of Texas
 - A cost estimate prepared, signed and dated by an insurance adjustor, licensed by the state of Texas, may be provided to document the cost of repairing a damaged structure.
 - A notarized contract of work signed and dated by the property owner and a contractor
 - An owner-certified cost estimate with an owner- notarized signature may be submitted when the property owner proposes to construct the improvements or repairs. In such cases, the cost estimate must itemize the cost of materials and a reasonable estimate of the market value of labor for work performed by the owner. The Floodplain Management Office has developed a form ([Project Cost Estimation Worksheet](#)) that can be used for owner self-certification of cost.
- Documentation of the market value of the existing structure must be provided in one of the following ways:
 - The most recent property appraisal from Harris County Appraisal District (www.hcad.org) OR Montgomery Central Appraisal District (www.mcad-tx.org) OR Fort Bend Central Appraisal District (www.fbcad.org)
 - An appraisal performed by a certified real estate appraiser licensed by the Texas Appraiser Licensing and Certification Board (TALCB) that documents the market value of the structure prior to the proposed project or represents a depreciated replacement cost
- Provide notes on your plans that all spoils and construction debris will be removed from the site and disposed of in a location outside of the floodplain.

STEPS TO FOLLOW AT THE HPC FOR THE BUILDING PERMIT

- 1.0 Complete the Building Permit Application prior to arriving at the HPC
- 2.0 Customers that have an active Advanced Pay Account (APA) can fax their paperwork to One-Stop Plan Review (832-394-9625). The approved plans will be faxed to the customer if the plans are approved. If plans are not approved the plan review comments will be faxed to the customer.
- 3.0 Once at the HPC you must obtain a ticket for a project number from the kiosk station located on the first floor and wait for your number to be called.
- 4.0 HPC Customer Service Representatives (CSR) will call you on a first-come, first-serve basis. Your first step will be to obtain a project number.
- 5.0 The Floodplain Management Office is responsible for permitting all construction activity within the City of Houston’s Special Flood Hazard Area (100-year floodplain, floodway or conveyance zone). You only need to visit the Floodplain Management Office if your project is located in the 100-year floodplain, floodway or conveyance zone. If this is not the case, please proceed to Step 6.
- 6.0 The One-Stop Plan Review section ensures plans submitted are in compliance with the current construction codes. This section will issue the building permit (which authorizes you to begin construction) after your plans have been approved by all required departments/sections. A sales order will be provided to take to the cashier to purchase the building permit.
- 7.0 All monetary transactions are handled by the cashier on the 1st floor. The cashier will be able to provide your building permit once all fees have been paid.



★ CUSTOMER TIP:
 A kiosk ticket is required to access the various services at the HPC. Have the CSR 'transfer' your current ticket to the next service in the Plan Review process instead of pulling a new ticket from the kiosk.

SECTION	KIOSK PATH
Building Permits	Permits -> Building Construction -> Project Number / Single Trade
Floodplain Management Office	Plan Review -> Flood Management Plan Review -> Flood Management
One-Stop Plan Review	Plan Review -> Building Plan Review -> One Stop Plan Review

Customer Tip:

All required inspections can be scheduled online at www.pdinet.pd.houstontx.gov/cohilms/webs/Inspection_Lookup.asp or by contacting the Building Inspection Line at 713-222-9922.

The owner can only schedule building permit inspections. All other inspections must be scheduled by a licensed contractor.

WHAT INSPECTIONS SHOULD BE EXPECTED?

All required inspections are listed on the building permit job card. The following are some typical inspections that are performed for most foundation repair projects. These inspections may change depending on each project's scope of work.

Structural Inspections

- Pier / Foundation - Call before placement of concrete
- Building Final - Call after the entire project has been completed

Flood Inspections (Only If Project Is In The 100-year Floodplain, Floodway Or Conveyance Zone)

- Pre-Construction
- Final Sitework (upon completion of all work outside of the building)

LINKS TO APPLICATIONS, FORMS AND SAMPLE DRAWINGS

The below documents can be accessed by clicking the hyperlinks or by visiting www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/code-enforcement/publications.html

Applications and Forms

1. [Building Permit Application](#)
2. [Project Cost Estimation Worksheet](#) (Flood Requirement Only)

Sample Drawings and Other Useful Information

1. [Conveyance Zone FAQ](#)
2. [GIMS - How to Check Floodplain Status](#)