

### Permit & Development Center

809 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, WI 53202 | (414) 286-8210 | [milwaukee.gov/permits](http://milwaukee.gov/permits) | [DevelopmentCenterInfo@milwaukee.gov](mailto:DevelopmentCenterInfo@milwaukee.gov)

The issuance of a building permit means that your building project meets all applicable building and zoning laws, including those laws that regulate the placement of the building on a property.

If you are constructing a new building or adding to an existing building, you must submit a survey along with your building plans. A survey is a legal document that shows all the boundaries and existing features of a property. The survey is the document used by the plan examiner to determine if your project meets building placement regulations.

You need to hire a licensed surveyor to draw up a survey for your property. To find a list of licensed surveyors, consult the yellow pages under “surveyors – land.” Surveyors may need two to four weeks lead time before your job can be completed.

In some neighborhoods, front setbacks are established by averaging the setbacks of existing buildings, to ensure the new building respects the context of existing buildings. When front setback averaging is required, the following information must be shown on the survey:

- Front setbacks of buildings on adjacent lots.
- If either adjacent lot does not contain a building, show front setbacks on two nearest buildings on same block face. If necessary, show setbacks for buildings on next block face on same side of street.
- If no buildings exist there, show setbacks of block face across the street.
- If no buildings exist across the street, show setbacks for nearest similar street block face.

The Development Center maintains a microfilmed copy of all surveys that have been submitted. To find out if a previously submitted survey is on file for a particular property, call (414) 286-8210.

City ordinance (Ch. 200-26-1-c) describes in detail the items that must be included in the property survey. Here are some of the key elements of an acceptable survey:

- A legal description of the lot.
- Name and address of the property owner.
- Date on which the survey was made.
- Scale drawings of the parcel of land showing:
  - Dimensions of the lot and lot area.
  - Exact location of all existing buildings and structures.
  - Location of new building(s) or addition(s) to be constructed.
  - Exact measurements of distance from property line to buildings and proposed buildings and additions.
  - Exact measurements of distance from property line to side yards and setback dimensions to the face of any building, porch piers, bays, overhangs, offsets, and cornice projection of building or structure, whichever is nearer to the adjoining property or street line.
  - Exact measurement of distance from lot lines to street walks, width of street walks, distances from street walks to outside face of street curb and width of street or alley.
  - Location and sizes of buildings and structures on adjoining lots and of buildings and structures across the alley, if any, and distances from lot lines.
  - Elevations of ground lot grade at lot corners, building corners, adjacent building grades, street sidewalks, curbs and alleys.
  - Proposed finished yard grade for residential properties, and also the established grade of the sidewalk at the midpoint of the front of the residence.
  - Indicate space set aside for parking, utility easements, proposed street widening and relation of creeks and drainage ditches.
  - Description of any existing or proposed on-site sewage systems or private water-supply systems.