

Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

Site Plan Guidelines and Requirements

Updated August 20, 2025

Applications for City of Seattle Master Use Permits (MUPs) and construction (CN) permits require site plans. This Tip will assist you in preparing a site plan. It lists information that must appear on site plans submitted with permit applications and provides examples of basic and enhanced site plans.

For general information on standards for plans and drawings, as well as helpful hints and guidelines on how to prepare a plan, refer to Tip 106, *General Standards for Plans and Drawings*.

What is a Site Plan?

A site plan is an accurate drawing or map of a property that shows its size and shape; and the size, shape and location of man-made and natural features (such as buildings, structures, driveways, and trees) on the property. Site plans show both what currently exists on the site and what physical changes you wish to make to the site.

You may choose to contact SDCI to ask questions about what you may do on a site. If so, you will need to have a basic site plan to discuss. A basic site plan contains enough information to help staff understand the scope of your project. We can assist you in identifying codes, requirements, and processes that could impact your project.

To find out what permits are required for a proposed project and what plans you will need to prepare, contact us through one of the options on the [SDCI Services](#) webpage.

NOTE: Be aware that the information provided to you can be only as reliable as the information you provide. The initial information we provide is advisory only and does not constitute approval of an application.

Site Plan Guidelines

The following are guideline steps to creating a site plan.

Step 1: Determine the property boundaries and legal description. There are several ways to determine the boundaries and legal description of your property. A legal description usually contains your property's lot number, the number of the block, and the name of the subdivision in which your lot is located. Or it may be a metes and bounds description making use of the boundaries and measurements of the land in question.

- Refer to the surveyor's map that often accompanies your real estate deed or the title to your property.
- Review [microfilm records](#) for previously submitted site plans.
- Obtain copies of the King County Assessor's Office real estate property tax assessment records for your property.
- Hire a licensed surveyor to prepare a topographic survey that can then be used to prepare your site plan.

Step 2: Determine the location of all structures and other physical features to be shown on the site plan. You need to measure the size of all the buildings on your property as well as other important man-made and natural features (such as carports, garden sheds, rockeries, retaining walls, decks, trees and all structures greater than 18 inches above grade). Include special features of structures, such as cornices, eaves, and sunshades with associated gutters and chimneys.

Note: This information will be included in a topographic survey prepared by a licensed land surveyor.

You will also have to determine the distance between these items and the property lines and the main buildings. To make these measurements, you will have to locate your property lines on the ground. Measuring is best done by two people, using a measuring tape long enough to avoid dividing each measured length into several segments. (A 25-foot or 50-foot tape is generally sufficient.) When measuring yards and pavements, hold the tape level and measure perpendicularly to the prop-



erty line or feature being measured. Record all measurements on a sketch plan when you do the measuring and then transfer that information onto the final scale drawing.

Step 3: The next task is to draw the plan. You need to determine the site plan drawing "scale." In our case, "drawing scale" or "scale of the drawing" denotes how many inches on the plan equals a given length on the actual property. Typically, the site plan scale is 1" = 1'0". Then, it is usually easiest to begin by drawing the property lines. Next, add the existing features and then show proposed additions or changes. Notes and dimensions are generally drawn last so they can be placed to avoid conflicting with the lot and building elements. Printing and numbers should be at least 1/8" high so that they can be read easily. Varying the line weight (thickness of pencil line) will help the drawing be more readable.

Property lines and buildings are usually drawn in heavy lines. Dimension lines and pavement lines are usually lighter. Indicate the proposed work using notes and cross hatching. The dimension line "strings" or segments through the property should add up to the overall property dimensions.

Note: For building sites that do not slope uniformly and gradually, a licensed surveyor may have to plot the contour lines.

Step 4: Check the drawings. You can save yourself time in the application process by making sure that your site plan is complete and accurate. You need to submit your application materials online through the [Seattle Services Portal](#). You will need to upload electronic versions of your site plan drawings or high-quality scans of hand-drawn drawings.

Types of Site Plans

We require a basic site plan for more simple projects such as platting actions, small additions/alterations, demolition, and grading permits.

We require an enhanced site plan for more complex projects, such as construction of a new single-family, multifamily, or commercial project.

We require an environmental critical area site plan when your site has an environmentally critical area (ECA). Under Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 25.09, the City of Seattle regulates activities on sites that include environmentally critical areas (ECAs) such as landslide-prone areas, flood-prone areas, riparian corridors, wetlands, wetland buffers, steep slope erosion hazard areas, and steep slope erosion hazard area buffer.

Note: We accept a "key location" plan for projects including interior-only tenant improvements or alterations or minor telecommunication facilities. See Figure 1 for an example.

Site Plan Requirements

The following information is required to be included in the site plan for your proposed project.

Basic Site Plan

The following information is required to be included:

1. Address of project.
2. Legal description of the property.
3. King County Assessor's parcel number (property tax account number).
4. North arrow pointing to the top of sheet.
5. Property lines and dimensions (existing and proposed).
6. General location, size, and shape of any structures presently on the site and of those proposed for construction; including buildings, retaining walls, patios, decks, porches, and rockeries (existing and proposed).
7. For existing and proposed structures, the front, side and rear distances from the structures to the property lines, and distances between structures, porches and decks.
8. Right-of-ways, including adjacent street(s) name(s) and alleys.
9. Location and dimensions of all driveways, parking areas, and other paved areas (existing and proposed).
10. For projects subject to the provisions of SMC Chapter 25.11, Tree Protection, you must show the following:
 - Location, species, and diameter at 4.5 feet above the ground of all Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 trees, including off-site Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 trees with canopies overhanging and/or roots extending onto the lot.
 - Tree protection area per SMC 25.11.060.A for all Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 trees that will be retained during development.
 - Tree protection fencing for all Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 trees that will be retained during development. SDCI's Tree and Vegetation Protection Detail must be included in the plan set.

Enhanced Site Plan

Include everything required on the basic site plans. Numbers 11-22 are additional items required for an enhanced site plan.

11. Location of any easements including King County Recording number.
12. Location of the pedestrian path to each dwelling unit and the primary entrance to each building.
13. Elevations and contour lines with labeled contour intervals on sloping sites or where earth grading is proposed (2-foot intervals).
14. All proposed and existing street trees and other landscaping in the public right-of-way.
15. Sewer mains (sanitary only {PPS} and/or combined sewers {PS}).
16. Storm drains {PSD}, catch basins, and inlets.
17. Water mains, fire hydrants, and water meters.
18. Power poles, street lights, signal and transit poles, overhead system, bus zones, street signs, etc. adjacent to the subject property.
19. All other elements between the pavement edge and property line (such as side sewer, electrical ducts and vaults, electrical conduits, handholes, ditches, culverts, curb ramps, etc.).
20. On-site stormwater treatment, infiltration, or detention systems.
21. Calculations demonstrating compliance with applicable Land Use Code development standards.
22. For street improvement plans (SIPs) refer to the City of Seattle's standard plans. Standard plans 002 and 003 provide information related to standard symbols and abbreviations, which are required when submitting plans to the Seattle Department of Transportation.

Environmental Critical Area Site Plan

Include everything required on the basic and enhanced site plans. Numbers 23-29 are additional items required for an environmental critical area site plan and must be prepared and stamped by a state of Washington licensed surveyor.

23. Terrain and stormwater-flow characteristics within the site, on adjacent sites within 25 feet of the site's property lines, and on the full width of abutting public and private rights-of-way and easements.
24. Location of all grading activities in progress and all natural and artificial existing drainage control facilities or systems on site or on adjacent lands within

25 feet of the site's property lines, and in the full width of abutting public and private rights-of-way and easements.

25. Location and boundaries of all ECAs and their buffers on-site and on adjacent land within 25 feet of the site's property lines, noting both total square footage and percentage of site.
26. Proposed location and boundaries of all required non-disturbance fenced areas and buffers on site and on adjacent lands within 25 feet of the site's property lines.
27. Location and identification of the ordinary high water mark (for fresh water) or the mean higher high water mark (for marine water) of all water bodies and watercourses within 200 feet of the site's property lines, and the location and identification of the associated riparian management areas on the project site.
28. Location of floodplain and floodway, base flood elevation, and flood zone type (AE or VE).
29. Location and identification of the shoreline environment if any portion of the site is within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark (for fresh water) and mean higher high water mark (for marine water) of a state shoreline. Show all designations and appropriate shoreline setbacks.

For More Information

Additional information on requirements and assistance with site plans are available from:

- [King County Assessor](#)
King Street Center Customer Service Center
201 South Jackson Street, 2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 296-7300
- [Seattle Public Utilities](#)
Engineering Records Vault
700 Fifth Ave, 47th floor
Seattle, WA 98104
(206) 684-5132
- [Seattle Department of Transportation](#)
- [Seattle GIS data](#)

Site Plan Examples

Site plan examples are included on the next few pages. Figure 1 shows a key location plan. Figure 2 shows a basic site plan. Figure 3 shows an enhanced site plan.

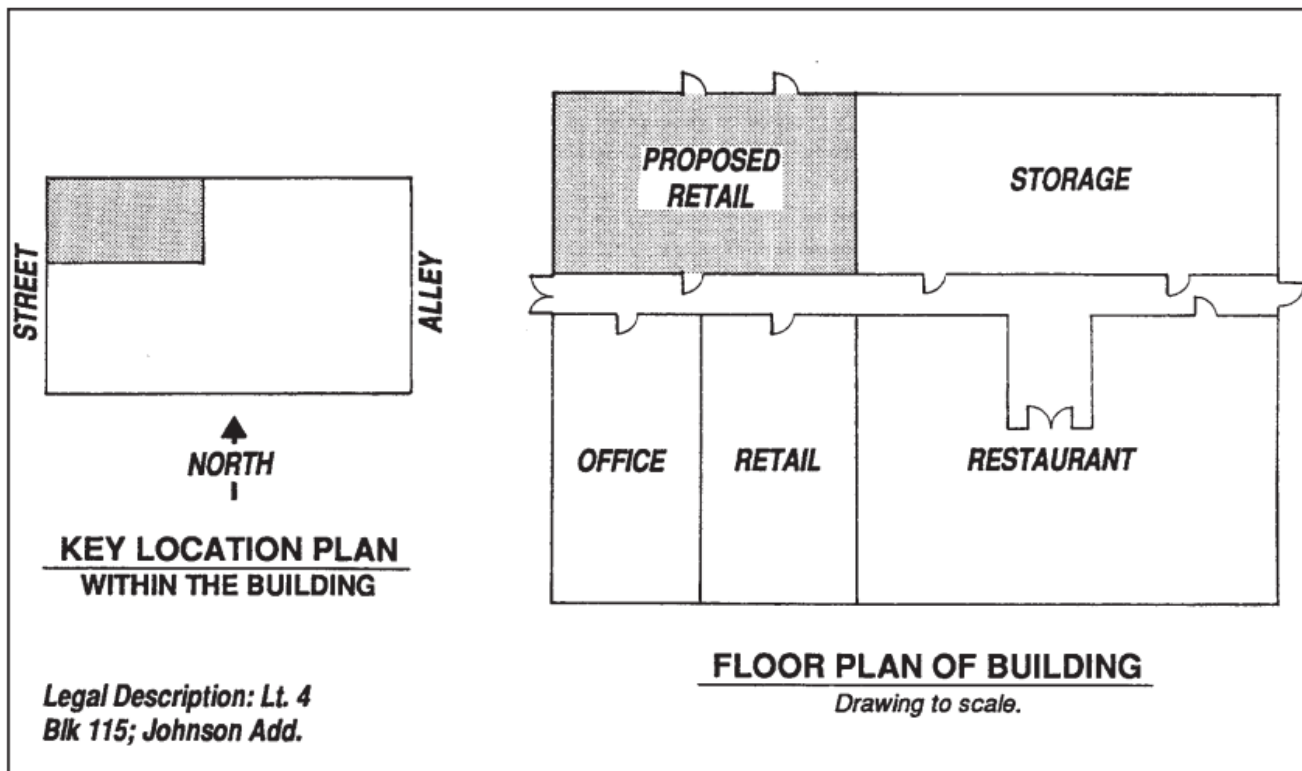


Figure 1: Key Location Plan

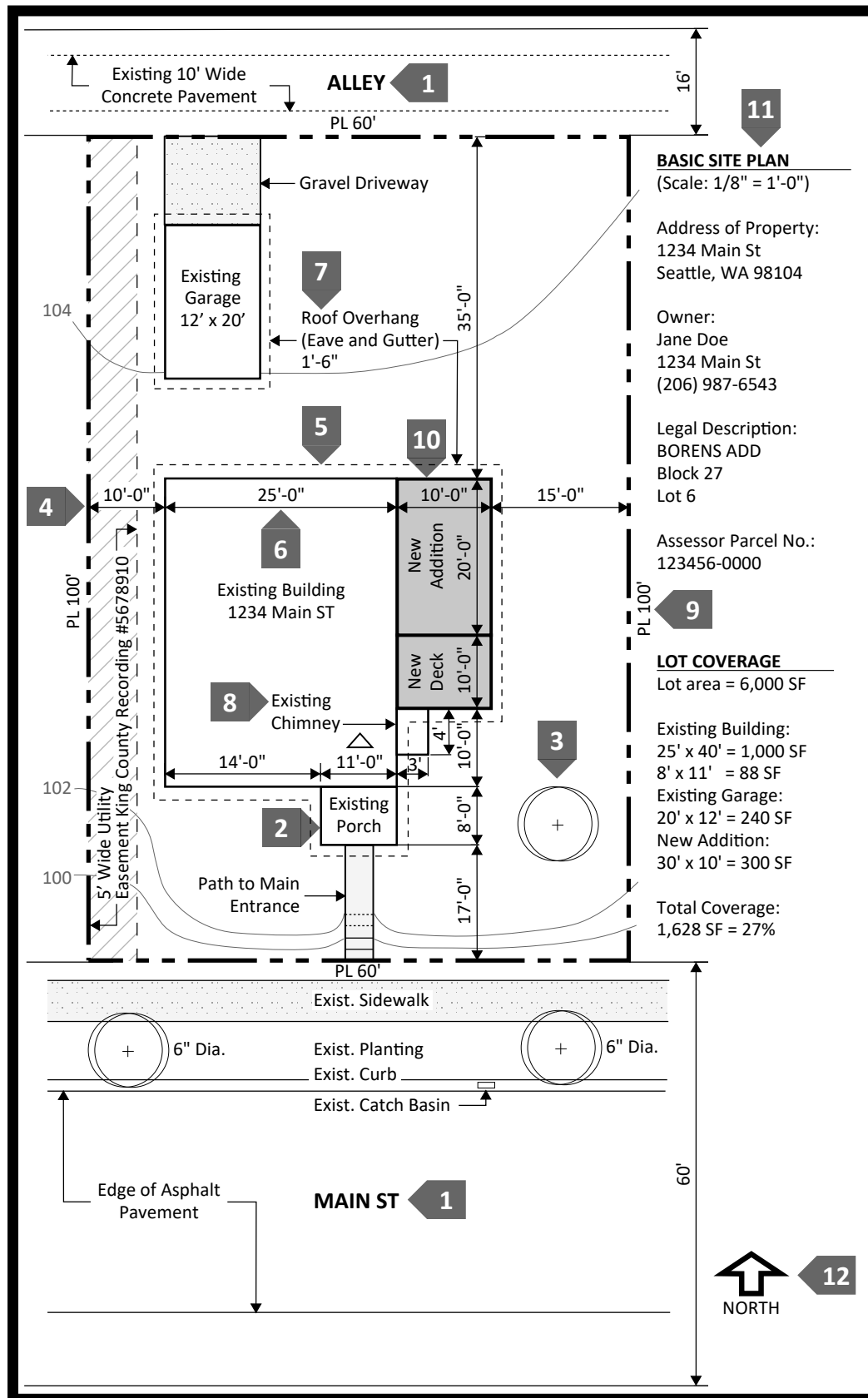


Figure 2: Basic Site Plan Elements

Enhanced Site Plan Checklist

1. Street by name.
2. Street trees and landscaping.
3. Sewer mains or combined sewers (PPS).
4. Storm drains (PSD) and catch basins.
5. Stippling (dotting) helps to identify walks and pavements.
6. Ground elevations and contour lines on sloping sites or where proposed.
7. Water mains, fire hydrants, and water meters.
8. Locations and dimensions of all porches and decks.
9. Property lines and dimensions.
10. Power poles, street lights, bus zones, street signs, etc. adjacent to property.
11. Address of project, owner's name, legal description, and King County Assessor Parcel No. (and KC Recording number for any easements or other pertinent legal features).
12. North direction arrow

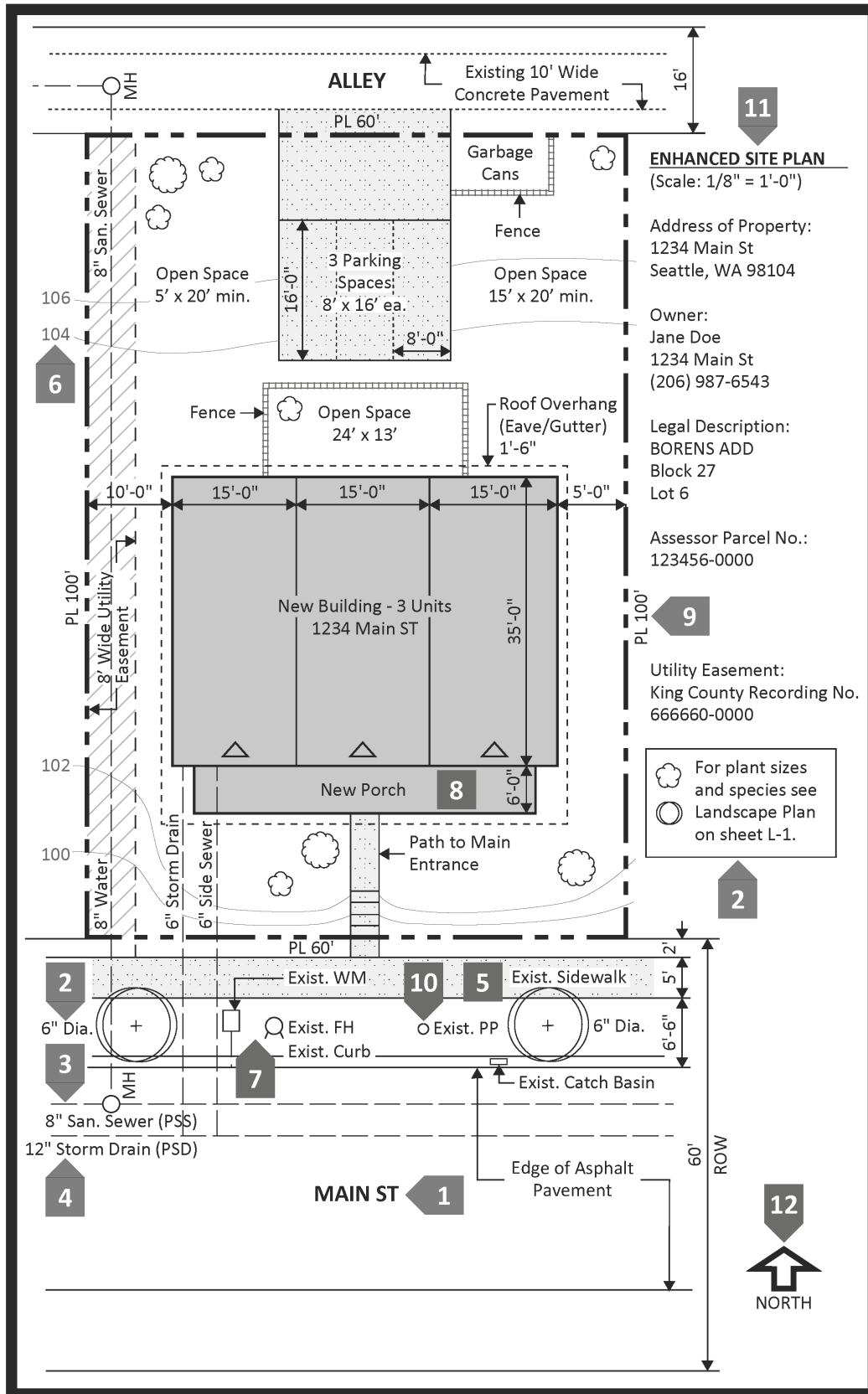


Figure 3: Enhanced Site Plan Elements

LEGAL DISCLAIMER: This Tip should not be used as a substitute for codes and regulations. The applicant is responsible for compliance with all code and rule requirements, whether or not described in this Tip.