

Seattle Permits

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

Addressing Review

Updated September 27, 2023

This Tip explains the processes and requirements for the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) addressing reviews. SDCI is responsible for assigning all addresses for the city of Seattle, and for adding addresses to the discrete address point (DAP) layer in the geographic information system (GIS). The DAP layer allows some governmental and non-governmental agencies the ability to locate properties within the city with a high degree of certainty so that services, including emergency response, may arrive to an accurate location in a timely manner.

ADDRESSING STANDARDS

Addresses point to the location of a site or structure within the city street grid. Addresses serve many functions including:

- How 911 dispatches emergency responders
- How life/safety services find you quickly
- Where your utility and other bills are sent

SDCI assigns addresses in accordance with the numbering system prescribed in Chapter 5 of the *Seattle Building Code*.

ADDRESSING PROCESSES

The Development Site Team will verify that development is occurring on a legally recognizable site by checking the legal description provided by the applicant against various criteria to determine that the narrative description of the property, King County Assessor's Parcel Number and dimensions match the plan description of the same property, GIS and SDCI records. Then the address ranges are determined, a property address is established (if necessary) and a development site parcel is created for SDCI records.

A development site parcel is a lot or multiple lots comprising the area of development to which certain standards are applied.

A development site is used to:

- Define the legal boundaries of the area to be developed
- Evaluate lot coverage
- Evaluate setbacks
- Evaluate other land use and building code requirements

The characteristics of a development site include:

- One or more King County Assessor Parcels
- One or more development site address ranges (that fit within existing Seattle street segment address ranges)
- Zero or more buildings
- One or more owners
- Ability to change over time

The development site parcel contains the legal description, King County Assessor's Parcel Number(s), lot size, zones, overlays, address ranges, addresses, building identifiers, parcel status, and history of the development site.

ADDRESS ASSIGNMENTS

Each legal lot is apportioned one address per every 20 feet of street frontage. This numbered identification is necessary for life safety vehicles to locate residences and businesses according to the *Seattle Building Code*, Chapter 5.

The placement of this numbered identification needs to be in a conspicuous place over or near the principal entrance or in other conspicuous places so the address is easy to locate from the street.



To locate a building, development site or vacant lot along a particular thoroughfare, a street address is used. It consists of a combination of the street number and the full street name as follows:

Street Address = Street Number + Full Street Name

The street number typically ranges from one to five digits depending on the property location on the street grid. A letter modifier may also be added to the end of the number (e.g. 5609E) in areas where there are more buildings on a development site than available addresses. This may occur when several properties share a common driveway or when townhouses are built in previously developed areas.

When multiple buildings share a common driveway the addresses need to be posted at the front of the driveway in a manner that can be easily read from the street.

Addresses are even numbers on one side of the street, ranging from 00 to 98 on the block front, and odd numbers ranging from 01 to 99 on the opposite side of the street.

- On north-south running streets, the addresses are even numbered on the east side of the street and odd numbered on the west side of the street.
- On east-west running streets, the addresses are even numbered on the north side of the street and odd numbered on the south side of the street.
- Address modifier: Each building will be assigned an address (e.g., 10501 Aurora Ave North). If the number of units with direct street access exceeds the available addresses, the same building address will be used and each unit will be assigned an alpha modifier (e.g., 10501A, 10501B). Should the site have more than one street frontage and/or an alley with units facing the alley, the units may be assigned addresses off the adjacent street. The addresses will be in a sequential order based on the pedestrian access from the street to each unit.

The full street name consists of one or more of the following components:

- Geographical prefix (e.g., N, NE, E, S, SW, W, NW) appears at the beginning of a street name. Street names with geographical prefixes (e.g., North 54th Street) run east to west.
- Geographical suffix (e.g., N, NE, E, S, SW, W, NW) appears at the end of the full street name. Street names with geographical suffixes (e.g., 12th Avenue West) run north to south.

- Street name: Street names often commemorate city pioneers, land and water features. Alternately, street names may be numerical (e.g., 1st Avenue).
- Street (thoroughfare) type: Street, Avenue, Place, Lane, Court, Boulevard, Park, Way, Drive, Road, and Alley.

How are addresses assigned for platting actions?

Addresses for short plats, lot boundary adjustments, unit lot subdivisions and full subdivisions are based on available addresses within the property range and the location of the pedestrian access to the street for the proposed development sites. Assigned addresses are provided following the plat intake appointment.

Applicants are responsible for reviewing these assigned addresses, which can be found online at SDCI's Permit & Complaint Status web page. If an addressing conflict exists, contact the addressing reviewer immediately. Use SDCI assigned addresses when requesting service from Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle City Light. Assigned addresses become final after the plat has been recorded.

In cases where a parcel is not located directly on the abutting street, the applicant may be asked to provide an easement, covenant, or other legal agreement for an address sign. This sign is to benefit all subject property and needs to be located visibly from the abutting right-of-way. Property owners are responsible for maintaining address signage.

Why do property addresses change?

SDCI is responsible for assigning property addresses that are correct and changing property addresses that are incorrect. A property address change can be made to correct and update the following:

- Existing address
- Out-of-sequence address
- Historically inaccurate address
- New development

An accurate and sequential addressing scheme is essential to eliminate confusion and to facilitate quick emergency response during life-threatening situations.

What qualifies for an address assignment?

SDCI is responsible for assigning addresses for ground floor spaces with front doors that directly access the street. Examples include:

- Townhouses
- Commercial/retail spaces
- Accessory dwelling units
 - Attached accessory dwelling units (AADU)
 - Detached accessory dwelling units (DADU)
- Condominium Conversion
 - Prior to condominium conversion, submit your address assignment request for single family and townhouse developments.

Units above ground level

All units above ground level or spaces that are accessed through a common hallway are eligible for unit or suite number designations. The unit or suite numbers reassigned by the property owner or manager and established through the post office in conjunction with the postmaster.

Please submit your unit numbering spreadsheet to the postmaster at the post office branch responsible for the applicable zip code.

How do I request a property address change or address assignment?

1. To begin the process to request an Address Assignment, you will need to create or log into an account through the Seattle Services Portal at <https://co-saccela.seattle.gov/Portal/>. Complete the Address Assignment request located under the Land Use Permit record type. A site plan will be required with your submittal, see [Tip 103, Site Plan Requirements - Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections](#).

If you have questions or need help visit the [SDCI Virtual Customer Service](#).

The Development Site Team will research the development site, determine appropriate addresses and notify the public utilities, police department, fire department, CenturyLink, King County Assessor's Office, and the Post Office of the property address change/tenant address assignment. The address assignment takes effect the day the notification is sent out unless otherwise stated. When making a property address change

request, please include the owner's email address and contact information or any other party who wishes to receive the notification email. The building owner is responsible for notifying all tenants and posting the new address(es) in a visible location on the building. The address assignment and notification takes approximately two to four weeks.

BUILDING ID PLAN

A building ID plan identifies the location of a building on a development site that has more than two buildings. Each building is assigned a unique nine digit number within the SDCI permit tracking system. The number is used to track building specific permit history.

Applicants are responsible for providing a building ID plan when submitting an application to SDCI with multiple buildings on the site. The internal and external use of a building ID plan and numbering system reduces error and confusion during application, routing, review, inspection, microfilming, and research. For more information see Director's Rule 8-2000.

GLOSSARY

■ AADU - attached accessory dwelling unit

An AADU is a room or set of rooms designed and established by permit to be a separate dwelling unit. AADUs can be located in a single-family home in the Neighborhood Residential NR3, NR2, and NR1 and Neighborhood Residential Small Lot (RSL) zones. In the RSL zone they can also be located in a principal dwelling of an apartment unit, carriage or cottage house, rowhouse, or townhouse. In the lowrise (LR) zones, AADUs can be located in a single-family home, rowhouse or townhouse unit. AADUs must include living, sleeping, kitchen, and bathroom facilities and have a lockable entrance door, and are located within the same structure as a principal or primary dwelling unit.

■ DADU - detached accessory dwelling unit

A DADU is a type of accessory dwelling unit consisting of a room or set of rooms designed and established by permit to be a separate dwelling unit. DADUs share a lot with a single-family home in NR3, NR2, and NR1 zones, any principal unit in an RSL zone, or with a single-family home, rowhouse or townhouse in a lowrise zone.

- DADUs include living, sleeping, kitchen and bathroom facilities and have a lockable entrance door.

■ **Development site**

Development sites are one or multiple lots, comprising the area of development to which certain standards are applied.

■ **Seattle street grid**

The Seattle street grid system uses geographic prefixes and suffixes to help indicate approximately where each street address lies within the city. The areas associated with these geographic prefixes and suffixes have established boundaries.

■ **DAP - discrete address point**

The discrete address point/master address file/common placename layer of the GIS was created to relate various departmental definitions of address to a specific point, or set of points. Each address corresponds to a unique point on the earth described geographically in the GIS as an X/Y coordinate. The DAP is the X/Y coordinate with a list of relevant addresses and common place names as contributed by user departments.

■ **GIS - geographic information system**

GIS is an electronic mapping tool that enables users to analyze and understand spatial relationships among things that exist and occur in a given location.

■ **SND - street network database**

The street network database describes valid street segments in the city street grid with ranges of potentially valid addresses for each block front.

APPENDIX

- Property Address Change/Address Assignment Form
- Tenant Address Plan Example
- Multiple Buildings Address Assignment Example

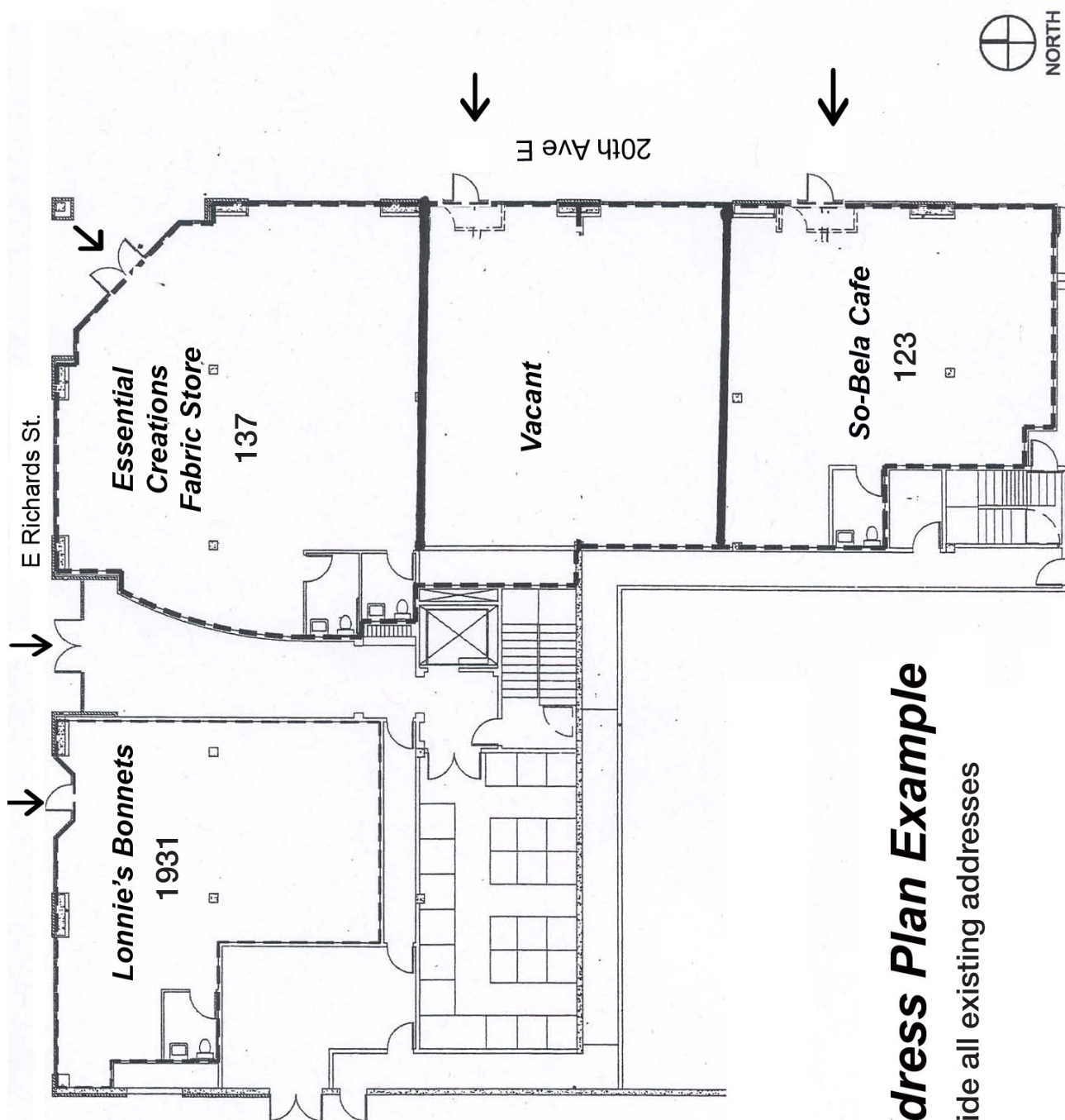
REFERENCES

- Tip 103 – Site Plan Requirements
- Tip 103A – Site Plan Guidelines
- Tip 103B – ECA Site Plan Requirements

- Tip 116A – Establishing an Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit
- Tip 116B – Establishing a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit
- Tip 233 – Sources for Property Information
- Tip 247 – Development Site Permitting Guidelines
- Tip 606 – Illegal Dwelling Units
- Director's Rule 8-2000 – Building Identification Plan Requirement for Properties Having More than Two Buildings
- Director's Rule 10-95 – Attached vs. Detached as Applied to Accessory Structures and Accessory Uses

Access to Information

Links to SDCI Tips, Director's Rules, and the Seattle Land Use Code are available on our website at www.seattle.gov/sdci.



Tenant Address Plan Example

Note: Provide all existing addresses

Multiple Buildings Address Assignment Example