

Guide to the Building Design Summary (BDS)

March 2024

The Guide is intended to assist applicants in understanding the application requirements for Commercial – New Construction and Additions building permits.

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1. Introduction

The Building Design Summary (BDS) must be completed by the applicant and attached with the plan submission. This document applies to all buildings regulated by Article 1.3.3.2 – Division A of the Manitoba Building Code (i.e. Part 3 buildings).

1.1 General

All permits related to building construction are issued by the Planning, Property & Development Department (PP&D). Refer to the applicable application form for submission options and prerequisite development permit requirements.

This guide is intended to outline the building permit application process and plan submission requirements. The guide also discusses such topics as meetings, alternative solutions (i.e. code equivalents), relevant codes, and bylaws.

1.2 Building permit and approvals

A permit is required whenever work regulated by the Winnipeg Building By-law or the Manitoba Building Code (MBC) is to be undertaken (Winnipeg Building By-law 4555/87 - Article 14.1.1).

A building permit application will result in the issuance of a building permit when two conditions are satisfied:

1. A satisfactory review for code compliance, and
2. The approval of all other City departments or branches that have bylaws or regulations that apply to the work undertaken by the building permit (Winnipeg Building By-law 4555/87 – Subsection 8.6).

The review for code compliance is the responsibility of the Plan Examination Branch.

The approvals required by other City departments or branches are as follows:

1. Fire Paramedic Service, Fire Prevention Branch – to review firefighting access and compliance to the Manitoba Fire Code.
2. Other City departments or branches that may be required to review the plans – PP&D Historic Buildings

Note: Your application may be audited to confirm it aligns with prior approvals provided under the associated development permit. This may include an audit by Water and Waste, Public Works and Urban Planning and Design.

1.3 Plan examination branch

The Plan Examination Branch reviews the plans to assess compliance with the various parts of the MBC, Manitoba Fire Code and Canadian Electrical Code. Plans are reviewed for items, such as:

- Fire Protection and Life Safety (Part 3)
- Structural Design (Part 4)
- Environmental Separation (Part 5)
- Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning (Part 6)
- Electrical systems (Canadian Electrical Code)

1.4 Code compliance is mandatory

Plans will be audited by the Plan Examination Branch. Code compliance remains the responsibility of the owner (Winnipeg Building By-law 4555/87 – Subsection 5.8).

Compliance with the MBC is mandatory and a waiver of a code requirement is not permitted. However, alternatives that meet the intent or level of performance required by the code (see MBC – Division C – 2.3 Alternative Solutions) may be permitted provided sufficient evidence is submitted to demonstrate the intent or level of performance required by the code has been achieved (for details, see section 5 of this guide).

1.5 Plan submission

Sufficient information shall be provided to show that the proposed work will conform to the code and whether or not it may affect an adjacent property. Plans shall be drawn to scale and shall indicate the nature and extent of the work, or proposed occupancy, in sufficient detail to establish that, when completed, the work and proposed occupancy will conform to the code (MBC – Div. C – Article 2.2.2.1).

In order for the City to issue a permit in a timely manner, it is important to provide a complete and code compliant application. If it is determined during technical review that information is missing or code deficiencies are noted, submission of revised information/documentation will be required and the application will need to be re-reviewed for compliance.

A building permit application does not guarantee that a building permit will be issued. A building permit will only be issued through demonstrated compliance with the building code and all other bylaws and applicable regulations.

The information required with a building permit application shall include the following:

- Site plan
- Design summaries
- Construction drawings (for details see Section 2 of this guide)
 - Architectural drawings
 - Structural drawings
 - Mechanical drawings
 - Sprinkler drawings, if applicable and/or available (if unavailable, must be submitted within 60 days of building permit issuance as a separate M2 trade permit)
 - Electrical drawings
- Owner statement
- Declaration Form for Building Permit Application (required if you have a prerequisite development permit)
- Declaration Form for Development Permit Exemption (Accessory Structures) Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings Declaration
- Required Professional Designer's Certification (from each professional)
- Geotechnical Report

Plan submission for a permit can be in three forms:

1. Full plan submission (for details, see Section 3.1 of this guide)
2. Shell only plan submission (for details, see Section 3.2 of this guide)
3. Staged plan submission (for details, see Section 3.3 of this guide)

1.6 Permit stages

The designated employee may issue a permit for the entire construction project or, when requested, may issue separate permits for aspects or stages of the construction project (Winnipeg Building By-Law – Article 9.5.1).

Permit stages include:

1. Partial building (foundation) permit – to permit construction to T/O main floor
2. Partial building (structural frame) permit
3. Building (full or superstructure) permit – to permit construction to completion of project

1.7 Meetings

The Plan Examination Branch can meet with designers and contractors to discuss code issues and interpretations at the pre-application stage for an hourly fee as per the fees bylaw. Meetings can involve other City departments upon request (see Section 4 of this guide).

2. Application Information

2.1 General information

Provide an accurate address, including unit number, gross floor areas and number of storeys (where applicable), to help avoid delays in processing and issuing the permit. All building permits are associated directly with the address of the building. Identify the construction start date and the declared construction value of the total project cost, which is required for statistical purposes.

2.2 Application type

A. Full plan submission process

A full plan submission is a complete set of the final architectural, structural, mechanical and electrical drawings.

Building (full) permit

A complete plan submission is required and a full review must be conducted by all plan examiners (fire protection, structural, mechanical, electrical). Partial permits may be issued to allow construction to proceed before a full plan review has been completed. Approvals for the various permit stages will be the same as those listed for the Staged Plan Submission Process (for details see Section 3.3 of this guide).

Notes:

- 1) Applicant declares at the application stage a request for a partial building (foundation) permit. (Refer to section 2.2 of the BDS)
- 2) A plumbing permit or an electrical permit for underground services may be issued upon issuance of a partial building (foundation) permit. Separate permit applications for plumbing and electrical work are required.
- 3) A plumbing permit, mechanical permit or an electrical permit may be issued, or the building mechanical or electrical systems may be installed, upon issuance of the partial building (structural frame) permit, provided the appropriate drawings and BDS have been submitted and a full review has been completed by the appropriate discipline(s). Separate permit applications for plumbing, mechanical and electrical work are required.

Required documentation:

- BDS application
- Site plan
- Final architectural drawings and specifications
- Final structural drawings and specifications
- Final mechanical drawings and specifications
- Final sprinkler drawings and specifications, if applicable and/or available (if unavailable, must be submitted within 60 days of building permit issuance as a separate M2 trade permit)
- Final electrical drawings and specifications
- Design summaries from each professional
- Owner Statement
- Declaration Form for Building Permit Application (required if you have a prerequisite development permit)
- Declaration Form for Development Permit Exemption (Accessory Structures) Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings Declaration
- Required Professional Designer's Certificate (from each professional)
- Geotechnical Report

May be required documentation:

- Alternative solution (if proposed)
- Encroachment application (permission to construct and maintain an encroachment must be obtained independently from the building permit approval)

Note: Your application may be audited to confirm it aligns with prior approvals provided under the associated development permit. This may include an audit by Water and Waste, Public Works and by Urban Planning and Design.

B. Shell only plan submission process

A shell only permit submission is a set of plans completed to the shell only stage. This process is limited to new buildings (does not include additions) that are single story (with no basement), single or multi-tenant use(s) and contains only Group A2, D, E, F2 and F3 major occupancies.

Building (shell only) permit

To obtain a building (shell only) permit, the final architectural and structural drawings to the shell only stage must be submitted and full fire protection and structural plan examination reviews must be completed. Occupancy of a building constructed to the shell only stage is not permitted. Separate permits are required for the full development to the final stages of occupancy and that includes approvals by the fire protection, mechanical and electrical plan examiners.

Notes:

- 1) Applicant to declare at the application stage a request for a shell only permit (Refer to section 2.2 of the BDS)
- 2) A plumbing permit or an electrical permit may be issued or the building mechanical or electrical systems may be installed to the shell only stage provided the appropriate drawings and Architectural Design Summary have been submitted and a review has been completed by the appropriate discipline(s). Separate permit applications for plumbing and electrical work are required.

Required documentation:

- BDS application
- Final site plan
- Final architectural drawings to shell only stage and specifications
- Final structural drawings and specifications
- Final mechanical drawings completed to the shell only stage
- Final sprinkler drawings and specifications, if applicable and/or available (if unavailable, must be submitted within 60 days of building permit issuance as a separate M2 trade permit)
- Final electrical drawings completed to the shell only stage
- Design summaries from each professional
- Owner Statement
- Declaration Form for Building Permit Application (required if you have a prerequisite development permit)
- Declaration Form for Development Permit Exemption (Accessory Structures)
- Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings Declaration
- Required Professional Designer's Certificate (from each professional)
- Geotechnical Report

Note: Your application may be audited to confirm it aligns with prior approvals provided under the associated development permit. This may include an audit by Water and Waste, Public Works and by Urban Planning and Design.

C. Staged plan submission process

A staged plan submission is a set of plans that are either preliminary drawings and/or do not include the final architectural, structural, mechanical or electrical drawings.

Notes:

1. Permits will be issued in stages based on the extent of the drawings submitted for review.
2. Mechanical or electrical systems, such as commercial cooking operations and manufacturing processes, are permitted to be excluded from the plan submission. However, separate permits will be required for those mechanical and electrical systems.

D. Staged as a partial permit request

A partial permit is when a permit is issued in several installments.

Note: A partial permit can also be requested from a full plan submission.

1) Partial building (foundation) permit

Clarification: Foundation permit allows construction up to and including main floor level.

To obtain a partial building (foundation) permit, a building permit application must be submitted. For a partial building (foundation) permit, both fire protection (Part 3) and structural plan examination reviews are required. Sufficient information must be submitted to allow a fire protection review of the major occupancy classification, building construction requirements, exit locations and building location/spatial separation requirements. Sufficient structural information is needed to determine all loads transfers to permit a full foundation review.

Notes:

- 1) Applicant to declare at the application stage a request for a partial building (foundation) permit (refer to section 2.2 of the BDS).

- 2) A plumbing permit or an electrical permit for underground services may be issued upon issuance of a partial building (foundation) permit. Separate permit applications for plumbing and electrical work are required.

Required documentation:

- BDS application
- Site plan
- Final architectural drawings for all construction work up to and including the main floor level
- Final structural drawings for all construction work up to and including main floor level.
- Preliminary superstructure drawings for the remainder of the building. Must indicate all design loads and have sufficient framing details to determine all load transfer to the foundation.
- Design summaries from architectural and structural professionals
- Owner Statement
- Declaration Form for Building Permit Application (required if you have a prerequisite development permit)
- Declaration Form for Development Permit Exemption (Accessory Structures)
- Required Professional Designer's Certificate (from each professional)
- Geotechnical Report

Note: Your application may be audited to confirm it aligns with prior approvals provided under the associated development permit. This may include an audit by Water and Waste, Public Works and by Urban Planning and Design.

2) Partial building (structural frame) permit

To obtain a partial building (structural frame) permit, the final architectural and structural drawings must be submitted and a full fire protection/building and structural review must be completed.

Notes:

- 1) Applicant to declare at the application stage a request for a partial building (structural frame) permit (refer to section 2.2 of the BDS).
- 2) A plumbing permit or an electrical permit may be issued or the building mechanical or electrical systems may be installed upon issuance of the building (structural frame) permit, provided the appropriate drawings and BDS have been submitted and a full review has been completed by the appropriate discipline(s). Separate permit applications for plumbing and electrical work are required.

Required documentation:

- BDS application
- Final architectural drawings and specifications
- Final structural drawings and specifications
- Design summaries from architectural and structural professionals
- Required Professional Designer's Certificate (from each professional)

Note: Your application may be audited to confirm it aligns with prior approvals provided under the associated development permit. This may include an audit by Water and Waste, Public Works and by Urban Planning and Design.

3) Partial building (superstructure) permit

To obtain a partial building (superstructure) permit (i.e. final building permit or building (full) permit), a complete plan submission is required and a full review must be completed by all plan examiners (fire protection, structural, mechanical, electrical).

Required documentation:

- BDS application
- Final mechanical drawings and specifications
- Final sprinkler drawings and specifications, if applicable and/or available (if unavailable, must be submitted within 60 days of building permit issuance as a separate M2 permit)
- Final electrical drawings and specifications
- Design summaries from mechanical and electrical professionals
- Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings Declaration
- Required Professional Designer's Certificate (from each professional)

Note: Your application may be audited to confirm it aligns with prior approvals provided under the associated development permit. This may include an audit by Water and Waste, Public Works and by Urban Planning and Design.

2.3 Contact information

Provide as much contact information as possible to ensure deficiencies or omissions are addressed to the appropriate contacts, and do not delay permit issuance.

Tenant contact information

If tenant information is known, provide contact details in this section.

2.4 Document checklist

This section is intended to be used as a checklist to ensure the application is complete, including all required documentation, and is ready for submission. Review and complete the checklist to avoid delays due to an incomplete permit application submission.

A. Required documentation - one copy

Construction drawings and specifications (where applicable) shall be submitted for all disciplines involved in the construction project. All final construction drawings must be labeled as "Contract Documents" or "For Construction".

Note: 'Permit Set', 'Tender Set', '% Review', 'Pricing Set', or drawings bearing stamp 'Not For Construction' are not acceptable

- a) BDS application form
- b) Design summaries from each professional, where applicable
- c) Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings Declaration
- d) Owner Statement
- e) Declaration Form for Building Permit Application
- f) Declaration Form for Development Permit Exemption (Accessory Structures)
- g) Site plan
- h) Complete construction drawing package and set of specifications, if not on drawings. See Section 3 of this guide for details.
- i) Required Professional Designer's Certificate (from each professional)

- j) Geotechnical Report

B. May be required documentation – one copy

Based on the scope of work for a permit application, additional documentation may be required, including:

- a) Alternative Solution (if proposed)
- b) Encroachment application
Permission to construct and maintain an encroachment must be obtained independently from the building permit approval. Encroachment applications are processed at the Zoning & Permits Branch office.

2.5 How to apply

Review application submission options and digital submission requirements in this section.

3. Construction drawings

To obtain a building permit, a complete set of final construction drawings are required. Plans shall be drawn to scale and shall indicate the nature and extent of work or proposed occupancy in sufficient detail to establish that, when completed, the proposed occupancy will conform to the code (MBC – Division C – Article 2.2.2.1).

The following outlines what is necessary for a complete set of construction drawings.

3.1 Architectural drawings

1) Fire Protection Component (Part 3) details:

- Drawings (fully dimensioned) sealed, signed and dated by an architect*
- Floor layout(s) – all rooms uses identified
- Building elevations
- Building section details
 - wall(s)
 - floor(s)
 - roof
- Firewall location(s)
- Wall construction type/schedule
- Wall fire test assembly reference(s)
- Floor fire test assembly reference(s)
- Flame-spread rating reference(s)
- Door schedule, including door size, rating, hardware, etc.
- Stair, guard and handrail details
- Exit enclosures and elevator and service shafts

2) Environmental Separation (Part 5) details:

- Drawings (fully dimensioned) sealed, signed and dated by an architect
- Building section details
- Envelope/ connection details

*Notes:

- For A3 (1000 persons or less) and F occupancies – may be architect or engineer
- Buildings regulated by Part 9 of the Code – may be architect or engineer

3.2 Structural (Part 4) drawings

- Drawings (fully dimensioned) sealed, signed and dated by an engineer
- Foundation, floor(s), roof plans and related structural details
- Design loads, including snow, live, dead & wind loads,
- Material standard references for concrete, steel, wood, etc.

3.3 HVAC and other mechanical (Part 6) details

- Drawings sealed, signed and dated by an engineer
- Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) details
- Make-up air and exhaust system
- Cooking exhaust equipment
- Fire dampers/fire stop flaps
- Fire stop materials (test reference)
- Fire suppression systems (sprinkler, standpipe, others)
- Manufacturing processes and/or systems (MFC)

3.4 Sprinkler drawings

- Sprinkler documentation as per NFPA

3.5 Electrical (as per Electrical By-law/Code) details

- Drawings sealed, signed and dated by an engineer
- Service and distribution
- Power and lighting
- Fire alarm and detection system
- Exit signs
- Emergency lighting
- High voltage systems, transformers, etc.
- Electrically classified areas

3.6 Other support documentation

- Site plan (the plan shall include the legal description of the property and show all buildings on the property, property dimensions, access routes/lanes for fire fighting/ existing or new fire hydrant locations, etc.)
- Alternative Solution (if proposed)
- Test information/data
- Evaluation reports

4. Guide for meetings

4.1 Plan Examination Branch, including Fire Prevention

The Plan Examination Branch will meet with designers and contractors to discuss code issues that may be project specific or non-project specific, and at both the pre-application stage and the permit stage. The designer must come prepared and the questions must relate to specific code requirements and/or issues. Design concepts may be discussed but no overall project review or approval will be given. The overall plan approval can only occur when a permit application is received and after a complete review of all the plans has taken place. Compliance to the building code is mandatory and waivers of the code are not permitted.

Note: Meetings can involve other City departments, branches, etc.

The designated employee shall answer such relevant questions as may be reasonable with respect to the provisions of the Code or this bylaw when requested to do so, but except for standard design aids shall refrain from assisting in the laying out of any work and from acting in the capacity of an engineering or architectural consultant (Subsection 8.5-Winnipeg Building By-law 4555/87).

4.2 Types of meetings

- i) Pre-application project meeting:
 - Designer and contractor would like to confirm design concept.
 - Designer would like to discuss code issue(s), confirm code interpretation(s) and/or code application(s).
 - Designer would like to discuss and/or seek approval of proposal for an Alternative Solution (i.e. Equivalents). See MBC – Division C – Section 2.3 Alternative Solutions.
 - Designer would like to discuss and/or seek understanding on application of MBC – Division A – Subsection 1.3.5 Limited Application to Existing Buildings.
 - All meetings shall be arranged with the Plan Examination Administrator.
 - Submit plans and discussion documents, including Building Design Summary prior to the meeting, preferably one week in advance of the meeting.
 - Come prepared to ask specific code relate questions.
 - Come prepared with your interpretation on the specific code issues or requirements, including reasons and supporting documents (e.g. NRC intent statement).
 - If requesting a code variation, please provide supporting documents that variation is justified and meets intent of code.
 - Any pre-application letters of approvals must be submitted with the plans when making a building permit application.
- ii) Code interpretation meetings:
 - Can be project specific or non-project specific.
 - Designer and contractor would like to confirm the interpretation and/or application of a code requirement.
 - All meetings shall be arranged with the Plan Examination Administrator.
 - Submit discussion documents, including the specific code reference, prior to the meeting, preferably one week in advance of the meeting.
 - Designer must present interpretation for discussion.
 - If a formal approval is required, the final submission must be submitted for approval by the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ).
 - Approved interpretation must be submitted with building permit application drawings.
- iii) Alternative Solutions (i.e. equivalents) meeting:
 - Pre-application stage - designer has identified a need for an equivalents proposal(s).
 - Permit stage – (AHJ) has identified a design condition that requires an Alternative Solution.
 - All meetings shall be arranged with the Plan Examination Administrator.
 - Submit discussion documents prior to the meeting, preferably one week in advance of the meeting.
 - State nature or extent of alternative solution using Alternative Solution submission format.
 - Designer must present equivalents rationale for discussion.
 - If a formal approval is required, the final submission must be submitted for approval by the AHJ.
 - AHJ may make suggestions to the designer to include additional reasons supporting the proposal.
 - Approved equivalents must be submitted with permit application drawings.
 - For further information regarding Alternative Solutions refer to Section 5 of this Guide.

iv) Appeals

- Further consultation will be required to establish mechanism for appeals.

4.3 Meetings Do's and Don'ts

The Do's

- 1) Do come prepared to ask only specific code related questions
- 2) Do come prepared to discuss specific code articles/sentences
- 3) Do come prepared with your interpretation on the specific code articles/sentences
- 4) Do come prepared with the major occupancy classification and code construction article for the project, and submit discussion documents prior to the meeting
- 5) Do come prepared (for new construction, additions and change of major occupancy) with the building details and features, such as building use, building area (both new and existing), building height, number of stories, sprinklers, fire alarm system, etc.
- 6) Do come prepared with your solutions/reasoning, if requesting a variation to the code
- 7) Do take notes and for follow-up or to confirm discussions, submit a copy to the AHJ
- 8) Do provide the necessary follow-up documentation on a submission proposal

The Don'ts

- a) Do not ask for a waiver of a code requirement. Compliance to the building code is mandatory and waivers are not permitted.
- b) Do not ask for a preliminary review and/or approval of the plans at the meeting.
- c) Do not ask:
 - What does the code require?
 - What do I have to do?
 - Do you see anything wrong?
 - Is there anything that I missed?

It is the responsibility of the designer to be familiar with the code requirements for the project before attending the meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss specific code requirements and /or issues.

- d) Do not assume that the discussions alone imply approval as follow-up documentation will be required specifically in cases where a variation is requested or an alternative is being proposed.

5. Alternative Solutions – Manitoba Building Code (MBC)

5.1 General

Compliance with the code can be achieved by

- a) complying with the acceptable solutions in Division B of the code, or
- b) using alternative solutions

An Alternative Solution is an alternative that will provide a level of performance that is intended by the code conforming condition. All proposals for an Alternative Solution must be made by a design professional skilled and experienced in the matter. A proposed Alternative Solution is proprietary to that design professional. An accepted design is specific to a project and cannot be transferred to other designs or projects. Each Alternative Solution must be demonstrated as meeting the level of performance required by the code. Each submission must be evaluated with each project. Acceptance of an Alternative Solution must be based on the evidence submitted to justify the proposal and not to an existing condition or approval from other projects.

Note: A proposal for an Alternative Solution can be submitted during the pre-application stage or during the application for permit stage. However, a proposal for an Alternative Solution during the permit stage will likely delay the permit process and should be avoided. During both stages, preliminary submissions and discussions on the proposed Alternative Solution can be undertaken before the final submission is presented.

5.2 Submissions

When requesting a review and acceptance of an Alternative Solution proposal, please use the following format:

1. Submissions must be prepared, sealed and signed by a design professional with experience in fire protection and life safety systems, including information about the qualifications, experience and background of the person or persons taking responsibility for the design of the proposed alternative solution.
2. Submissions shall be prepared in accordance with Division C, Section 2.3 and should include:
 - The subject of the Alternative Solution (description of the building in question, legal address, use/occupancy, building area, number of storeys of building height, any applicable building systems like fire alarm and sprinkler systems, etc).
 - Reduced floor layouts that portray the extent of the alternative solution in its entirety, where applicable and needed for clarification
 - The specific code reference(s)/requirement(s) (i.e. sentence or article number) for which the alternative solution is being applied for.
 - The prescribed wording of the code article or sentence (i.e. the acceptable solution) including the associated objective and functional, and intent statements attributed to the acceptable solution. This may include any assumptions, limiting or restricting factors, testing procedures, engineering studies, or building performance parameters that will support a Code compliance assessment.
 - A description of the alternative solution, complete with references (such as NRC publications, NFPA publications, etc.) and appropriate justification, including how the alternative solution meets the particular objective(s) and intent of the code.
 - A statement by the design professional submitting the proposal that they believe that the proposed alternative solution meets the intent of the code.
 - A statement indicating that the alternative solution is specific only to this project/location and that it is not to be seen as setting any precedence for future developments.
 - A statement requesting that the City concur that the proposed alternative solution is acceptable.

Where the design of a building includes proposed alternative solutions that involve more than one person taking responsibility for different aspects of the design, the permit applicant shall identify a single person to coordinate preparation of the design and Code analysis documentation.

6. Applicable codes and bylaws

Codes

Code	Contact
Manitoba Building Code	Plan Examination Branch
Manitoba Energy Code for Buildings	Plan Examination Branch
Canadian Electrical Code	Plan Examination Branch
Manitoba Plumbing Code	Inspections Branch
Manitoba Fire Code	Fire Prevention Branch

Bylaws

Bylaw name	Bylaw No.
Planning, Property & Development	
Airport Vicinity Acoustic Insulation	6419/1994
Building, Winnipeg	4555/1987
Electrical, Winnipeg	86/2018
Airport Vicinity Protection Area (Secondary)	6378/1994
Historical Buildings	1474/1977
Planning, Development and Building Fees	66/2016
Encroachment on Streets	692/1974
Fire Prevention Branch	
Fire Prevention	150/2004