



By its setting, shape, color, and exterior finish, every new house participates in defining the composition of our region's landscape.

1- CHOOSING A LOT

Choosing a lot is very important. This significant lifestyle decision must not only meet your current needs but also accommodate your future expectations. Find out about any applicable development constraints and the type of soils on your lot. It is your responsibility as future owner to verify whether your project can be done. You may also want to get information on siting limitations in your area or other issues such as the position of the building in relation to public streets, property boundaries and if other structures are permitted on the lot.

Find out about other projects in the neighbourhood as well as easements, water supply and septic system requirements. Take note of your potential home's exposure to the sun, access (road quality), proximity to public amenities (parks, biking trails, various services), natural risks (flooding, wetlands), soil type (landfill), topography and the shape of the lot. Make sure the lot you choose can be serviced directly through public access.

Contacting the Northwest Regional Service Commission for assistance will help you to determine any obligations towards the property on which you want to build on.

2- PLANNING THE USE OF YOUR PROPERTY

After deciding on a parcel of land, you need to determine how your property will be used and where to position your residence. The setting of the building will determine how it should be constructed.

Adapting to the environment

Your construction may vary depending on where you position your residence. It is important to carefully compare neighbouring properties in order to identify any similarities, the natural environment around them, the building materials used, lot sizes and natural features. It is up to you to determine how your home will blend into the neighbourhood and which elements of your design will integrate with the rest.

Where to build

The tradition of placing a house in the middle of a lot can make it difficult to use the leftover space around the structure effectively. Building your house closer to a property line opens up more space for an interior yard. Responsible owners would identify the greatest assets of their property (vegetation, topography, trees, views, etc.) and take steps to make the most of these. Don't forget to take into account possible future additions (garage, bedrooms, patio, pool) in order to maximize your property's potential.



Choose the right model...

Your future home's immediate surroundings will guide you in considering possible models. The terrain, vegetation, neighbouring residences, sun exposure, prevailing winds and historical character of the neighbourhood will influence your budget in terms of architectural choices, size (height, width, depth), openings (doors and windows) and the location of living spaces.

A garage built on the north side serves as a barrier against the cold and wind, while south-facing glass windows bring extra heat and light into living spaces. In addition, incorporating construction elements resembling those of surrounding dwellings helps to maintain a sense of uniformity that enhances the neighbourhood in which you'll be living.

... and the right materials.

To help your home fit naturally into its surroundings, it is recommended to incorporate materials that have been used on traditional homes in your area (typically wood siding or shingles) or to substitute similar materials closely resembling these traditional materials in style, colour and texture.

3- DEVELOPING YOUR PROPERTY

The environment that you create around your residence contributes as much to your home's value as the structure itself.

Clear only the land that you need to build the house on in order to preserve as many trees and other plants as possible. Plant leafy trees to the south and conifers to the north. Choosing species that are native to the area increases your success rate and helps keep maintenance to a minimum.

Consider limited usage of waterproof surfaces (pavement or cement), keeping in mind that these types of materials are also the most expensive to install. Ensure that water runs off away from your home without causing harm to neighbouring properties.

4- HOW DO I GET A PERMIT?

Consult fact sheet "1- Do I Need a Permit for My Project?" or contact a Northwest Regional Service Commission building inspector for more information.

