



Mississippi  
Mills

# The Homeowner's Guide to Building and Planning - 2026

## Contents:

*Page 1 - General Information – Before You Get Started*

*Page 3 - Permitted Projections – Decks and Porches*

*Page 5 - Accessory Structures – Sheds and Garages*

*Page 8 - Pools, Hot Tubs , & Enclosures*

*Page 9 - Fences & Drainage*

*Page 10 - Applying for Building Permits*

Updated: April 2026

Step 1: Find out what your property is zoned using the Municipality's [Online GIS Mapping Tool](#).

You can see aerial imagery by changing the map view here



Online GIS Mapping Tool

<https://cgis.com/cpal/Default.aspx?CLIENT=MMILLS&MAPTYPE=Zoning>

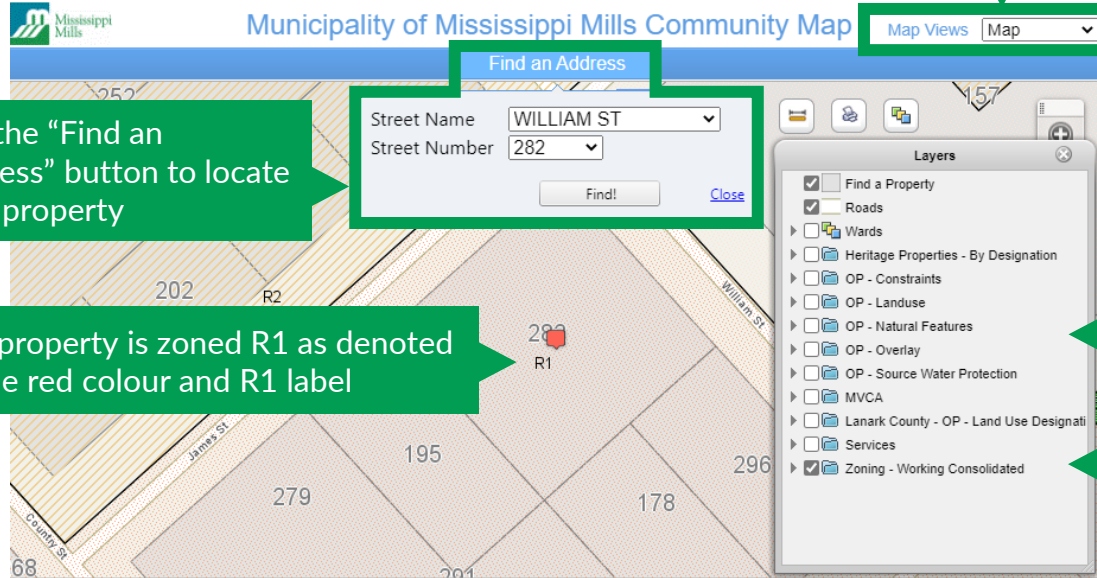
Use the “Find an Address” button to locate your property

Find an Address

Street Name: WILLIAM ST  
Street Number: 282

Find! Close

This property is zoned R1 as denoted by the red colour and R1 label



Other layers, including Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority info and Official Plan Designations, can also be turned on

To check your property's zoning, make sure the “Zoning – Working Consolidated” layer is turned on

## Step 2: Determining your property's required setbacks

- Once you figure out what your property is zoned, you can check the [Zoning By-law](#) to see what the required setbacks are by looking at the “zone provisions” table under each of the zone sections.
- Sometimes, properties will have a Subzone (i.e.: R2E, denoted by a letter after the zone), there will be a table of “subzone provisions” that sets out the required setbacks.
- Some properties will also have a Special Exception (i.e.: R2-1, denoted by a dash and a number after the zone), there will be a “Special Provisions” section that sets out specific differences to the zone provisions that apply to this property only.

Provisions	No Municipal Water or Sewer	Either Municipal Water or Sewer	Municipal Water and Sewer
Lot Area, Minimum (m <sup>2</sup> )	2000 (c)	1000 (c)	450
Lot Frontage, Minimum (m)	30	20	18
Front Yard, Minimum (m)	7.5	6	6
Side Yard, Minimum (m)	3 (d)	3 (d)	1.2 (a), (d)
Exterior Side Yard, Minimum (m)	7.5	7.5	4.5
Rear Yard, Minimum (m)	10	10	7.5
Building Height, Maximum (m)	9		
Lot Coverage, Maximum	30%		
Floor Area, Minimum (m <sup>2</sup> )	75		

Example: R1 Zone Provisions

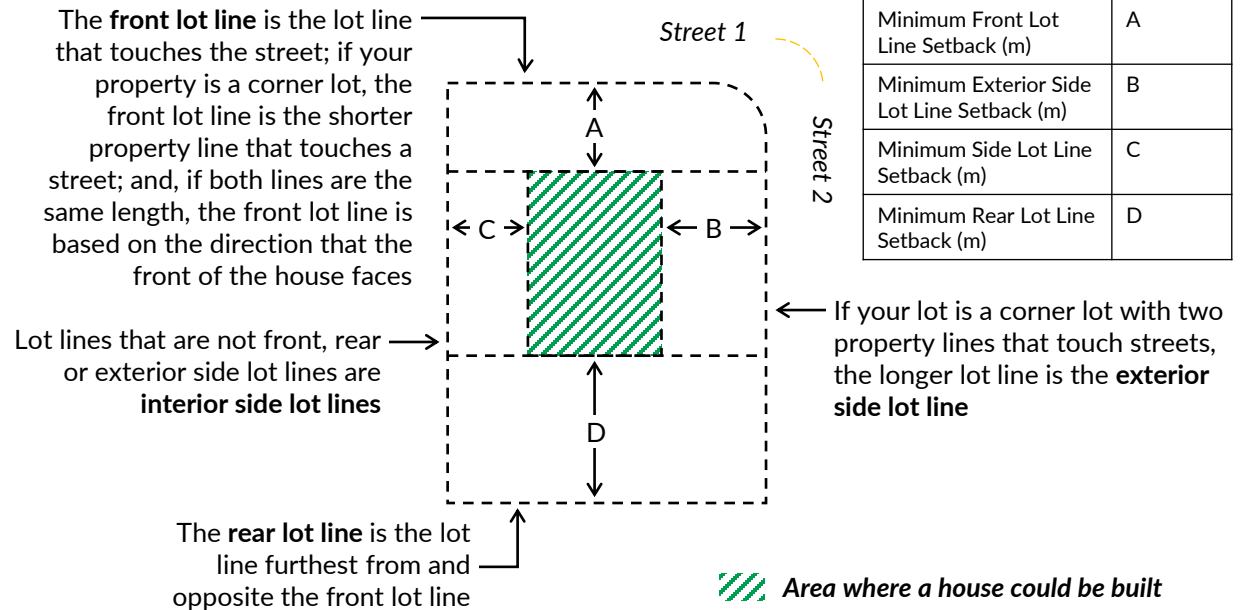


Zoning Bylaw

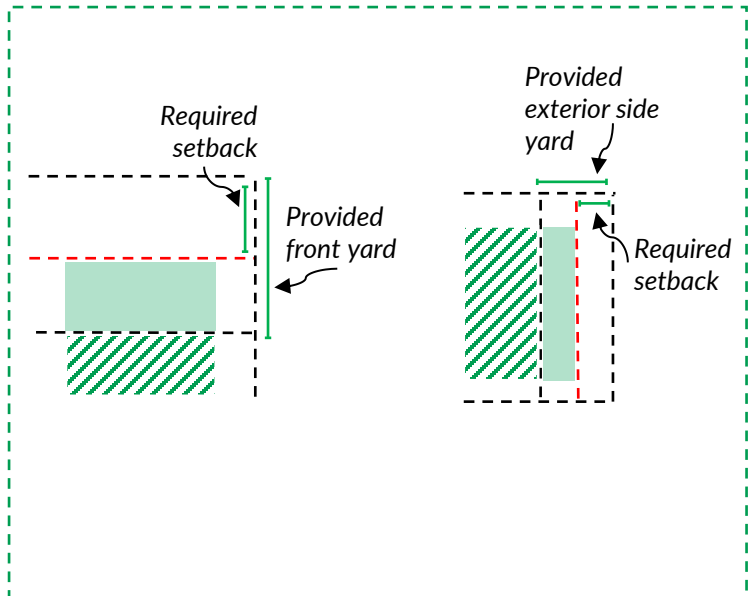
<https://www.mississippimills.ca/media/hgonw5kw/consolidated-zoning-by-law-11-83-nov-2024-clean-online-version.pdf>

## Step 3: Understanding how the required setbacks apply to your property

- The setbacks in the [Zoning By-law](#) are the distances that you must keep between your lot lines and the structure that you're building. This setback distance creates your "required yard".
- A "provided yard" is the actual distance from your house to the lot lines. This is important to know for building decks and porches.
- If you are unsure about where your lot lines are located, you may need to consult an *Ontario Land Surveyor*. Only *Ontario Land Surveyors* can tell you exactly where your property lines are located.



**\* It is important to know your property's setbacks before designing your project.**



## What if my project does not meet these zoning requirements?

- Certain types of structures have different rules for setbacks. This document will provide you with the information needed to meet the zoning requirements, such as:
  - Permitted projections for decks and porches
  - Accessory buildings such as sheds and garages
  - Pools and hot tubs
- If you're unable to meet the Zoning requirements, you may still be able to build your project if you apply for a [Minor Variance application](#). Contact the Planning Department at [mplanner@mississippimills.ca](mailto:mplanner@mississippimills.ca) to learn about the Minor Variance process.

# Permitted Projections – Decks and Porches

Permitted projections are unenclosed structures attached to a building, such as porches and decks. Covered or uncovered balconies, porches, decks, platforms and verandahs are all considered permitted projections and are permitted on most buildings provided that they meet the permitted projection requirements of [Section 6.19 of the Zoning By-law](#).


Building permits are required for decks and porches of any size if they serve the building directly via a doorway of any kind, even if they are less than 10m<sup>2</sup> (108 sq ft).

**Enclosed structures such as sunrooms are considered additions** and follow the same setbacks as the main house.


*\* It is important to know your property's setbacks, and how far your house is from your lot lines, before designing your project.*

**Table 6.19 – Permitted Projections into Required Yards**

<p>(6) Covered or uncovered balcony, porch and deck including those with a minimum of 1 unenclosed side, where sides are limited to 1.8 metres in height or guardrails not exceeding 1.2 metres</p>	<p>(a) project up to 3.0 metres into the provided front yard and no closer than 3.0 metres to the front lot line, or in the case of a provided front yard setback that is less than 5.0 metres no closer than 2.0 metres to the front lot line;</p> <p>(b) no closer than 2.0 metres to the rear lot line;</p> <p>(c) no closer than the minimum required interior side yard setback;</p> <p>(d) project up to 2.0 metres into the provided exterior side yard and no closer than 2.0 metres to the exterior side lot line, or in the case of a provided exterior side yard setback that is less than 4.0 metres, no closer than 1.0 metre to the exterior side lot line; and</p> <p>(e) Notwithstanding provision (c), if the principal use of the building is a semi-detached dwelling, vertically separated triplex or fourplex, or townhouse dwelling:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(i) where uncovered, no limit to the shared interior lot line;</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(ii) where covered, no closer than 1.0 metre to the shared interior lot line</p> <p>(e) Notwithstanding provision (b), where covered, and with a walking surface greater than 0.6 metres in height:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">(i) 3.65 metre maximum projection into the required rear yard, but no closer than 2.0 metres to the rear lot line.</p>
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Min height of guardrails is 0.9m (Ontario Building Code)  
Max height of guardrails is 1.2 m (Zoning By-law)

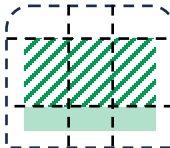



Minimum of 1 unenclosed side; where there are enclosed sides, they must not exceed 1.8 m in height

If you live in a semi-detached dwelling, vertically separated triplex or fourplex, or townhouse dwelling, your deck can be built to the interior side lot line\*

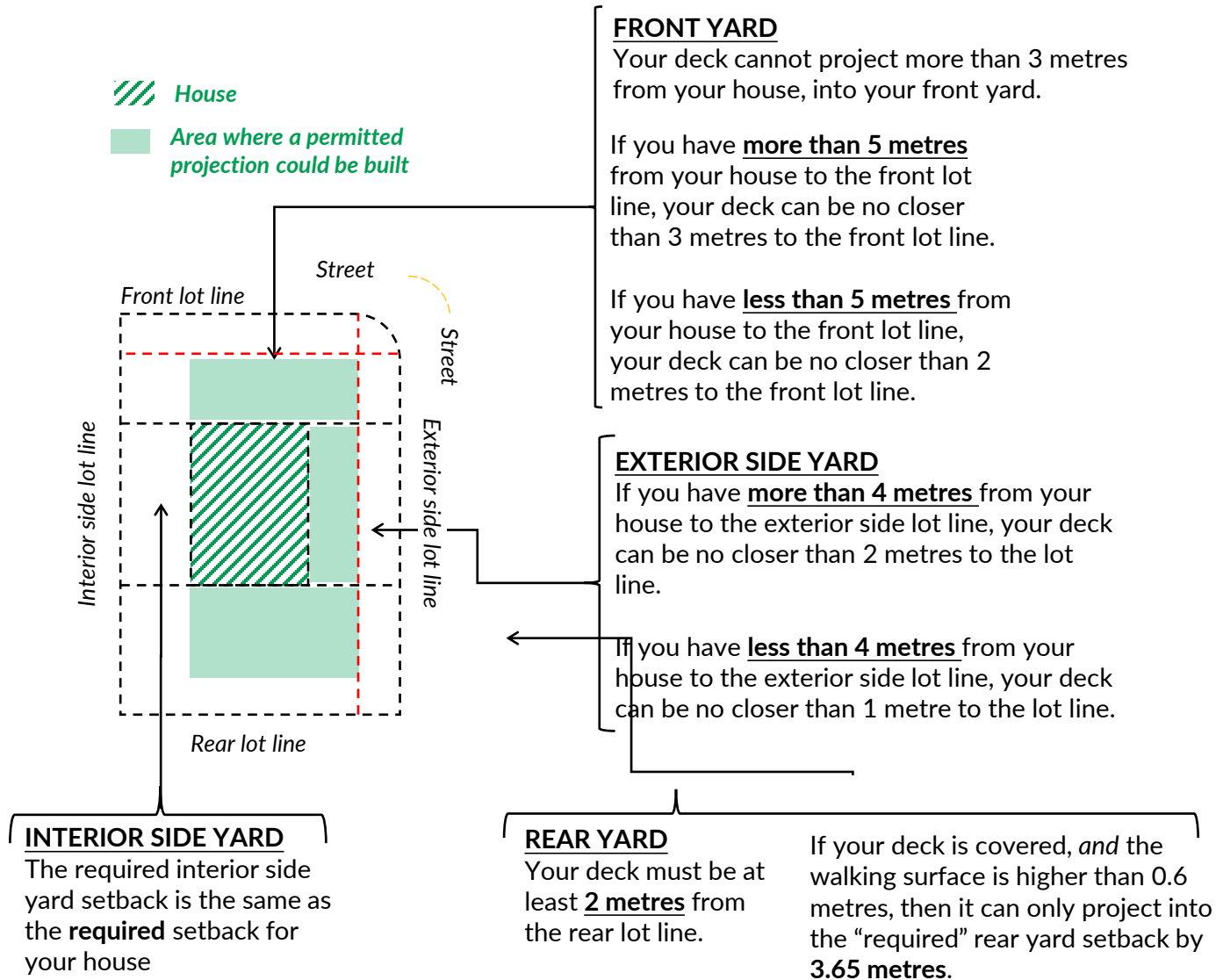
...

\*If your projection is covered, you must maintain a 1 m setback from the interior side lot line

# Permitted Projections – Decks and Porches

Permitted projections, like a deck or porch are allowed to extend into required yards, as long as they meet the limits listed in Table 6.19 (shown on page 3) and shown in the diagram below.



\*It is important to know where your property lines are as most properties include a municipal right-of-way between the road and your property.

# Accessory Structures – Sheds and Garages

Accessory structures are buildings, such as sheds, detached garages and shipping containers, that are located on the same lot as the main building such as a house. Accessory structures are permitted on most lots provided that they meet the accessory structure requirements of [Section 6.1 of the Zoning By-law](#). Different rules may apply depending on the zoning of your property.

Storage sheds and containers under 15m<sup>2</sup> (161 ft<sup>2</sup>) do not require a building permit, however they still need to meet the requirements of the [Zoning By-law](#). All storage sheds over 15m<sup>2</sup> (161 ft<sup>2</sup>), including pre-manufactured sheds and shipping containers, require a building permit. Structures used for anything other than storage will require a building permit if they are 10m<sup>2</sup> (108 ft<sup>2</sup>) or larger.

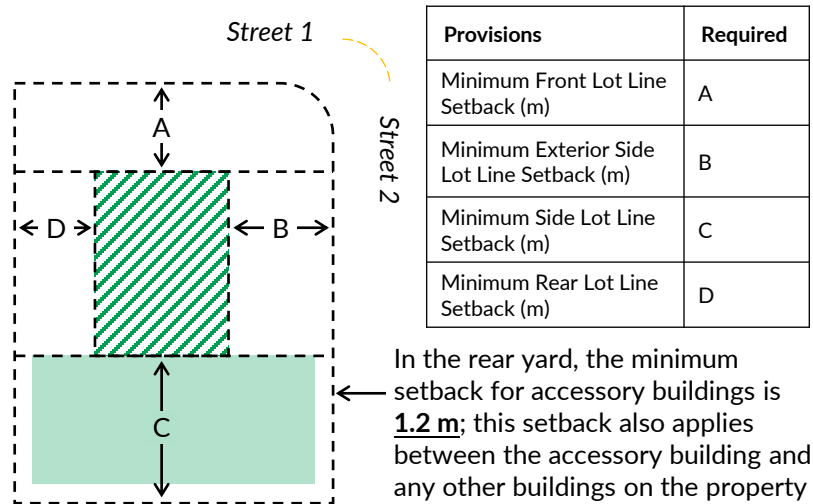
Table 6.1A – Provisions for Accessory Uses, Buildings or Structures

Zoning Requirements		R1, R2, R3, LSR, V, RR	RU, A, C1, C5, M3, M4, MP, MQ, MR	All Other Zones
Minimum Front Lot Line Setback		* Same as required for principal building (see the applicable zone)		
Minimum Exterior Side Lot Line Setback and Minimum Rear Lot Line Setback Where the Rear Lot Line Abuts a Street		* Same as required for principal building (see the applicable zone)		
Minimum Side Lot Line Setback	In an Interior Side Yard or Exterior Side Yard	* Same as required for principal building		0.6 m
	In a Rear Yard	1.2 m	1 m	0.6 m
Minimum Rear Lot Line Setback Where the Rear Lot Line Does Not Abut a Street		1.2 m	1 m	0.6 m
Maximum Height		4.5 m	A and RU zones: 12 m	6 m
			All other zones: 6 m	
Maximum Cumulative Area of All Accessory Buildings Combined		The lesser of 55 m <sup>2</sup> or 50% of the area of the yard in which they are located	The greater of 150 m <sup>2</sup> or 5% of the area of the total lot	No restrictions
Maximum Number of Accessory Buildings Permitted on a Lot		2	3	3
Maximum Number of Agricultural Accessory Buildings Permitted on a Lot		Not permitted	No restrictions	Not permitted
Minimum Required Distance from Any Other Building Located on the Same Lot		1.2 m		

\*Visit the [Zoning By-law](#) to determine the required setbacks for your principal building

# Accessory Structures – Sheds and Garages

## Example Diagram - R1, R2, R3, LSR, V, RR Zones:



Area where a house or accessory building could be built

Area where an accessory building could be built

Maximum height is 4.5 m

Maximum area for all accessory buildings is the lesser of 55 m<sup>2</sup> or 50% of the area of the yard in which they are located

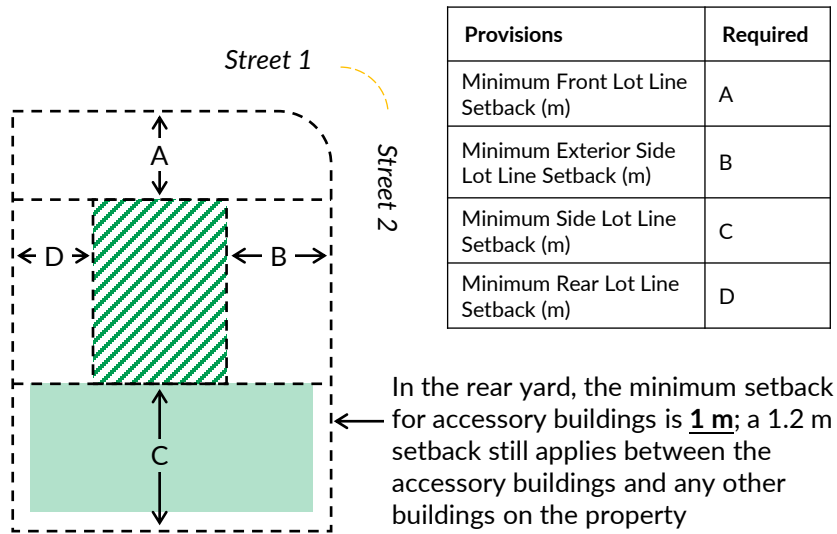
Maximum number is 2 accessory buildings on one lot

**Environmental and Contextual Notes:**

- In some cases, there may be environmental constraints that would prohibit the construction of buildings in certain locations or there may be additional approvals from the [Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority \(MVCA: mvc.on.ca\)](http://MississippiValleyConservationAuthority.org) that are required.
- Please note that on some properties, there may be easements, drainage easements, swales or other drainage features that may limit where your project can be located; contact the Municipality to determine if there are features on your property.

*Remember, if you're unable to meet the Zoning requirements, you may still be able to build your project if you apply for a [Minor Variance application](#).*

## Example Diagram - RU, A, C1, C5, M3, M4, MP, MQ, MR Zones:



Area where a house or accessory building could be built

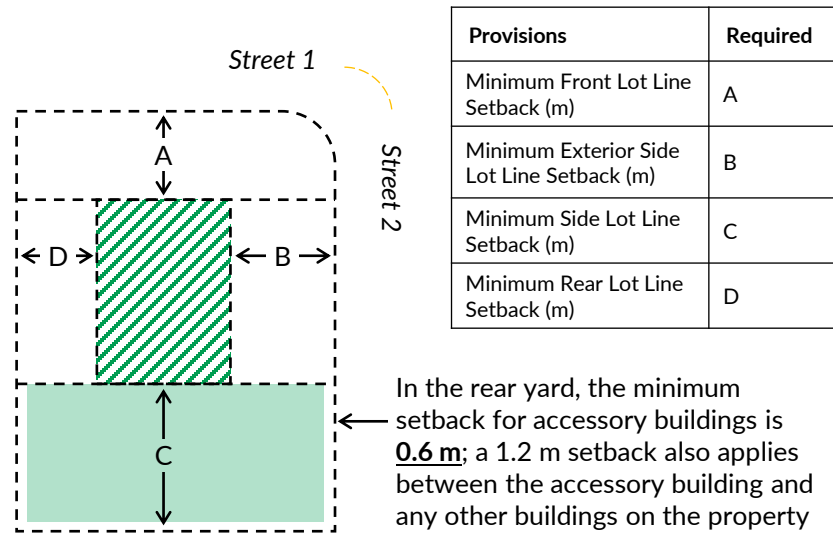
Area where an accessory building could be built

Maximum height is 12 m in the RU and A Zones and 6 m in the other zones listed above

Maximum area for all accessory buildings is the greater of 150 m<sup>2</sup> or 5% of the area of the total lot

Maximum number is 3 accessory buildings per lot; no limit on the number of agricultural accessory buildings (barns, greenhouses, etc.)

## Example Diagram - Any Other Zones:



Area where a house or accessory building could be built

Area where an accessory building could be built

Maximum height is 6 m

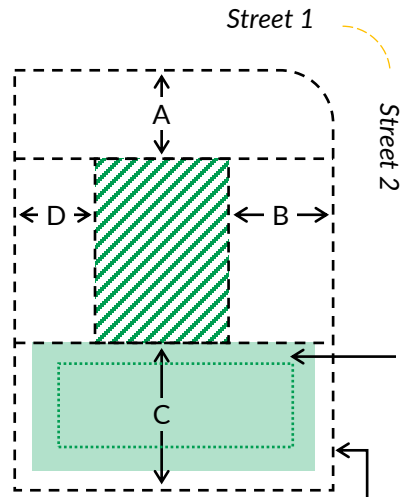
No limit on area

Maximum number is 3 accessory buildings

# Pools and Hot Tubs

Pools and Hot Tubs are permitted on most lots if they meet all the applicable provisions of the [Pool By-law](#). If there are accessory structures or decks associated with a pool, they must also satisfy all the requirements associated with accessory structures and decks. An enclosure permit must be attained prior to installation of any pool or hot tub within the Municipality. A new deck built to access the pool may also require a separate building permit.

## Inground Pools:



Provisions	Required
Minimum Front Lot Line Setback (m)	A
Minimum Exterior Side Lot Line Setback (m)	B
Minimum Side Lot Line Setback (m)	C
Minimum Rear Lot Line Setback (m)	D

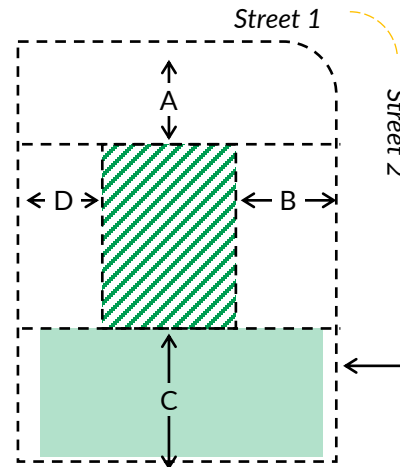
Pools cannot be located closer than **0.75 m** from the required fence

Pools cannot be located closer than **1.5 m** from a lot line if located in the rear yard; if the pool is located in any other yard, the required setbacks for the principal building apply

- Area where a house or pool could be built
- Area where a pool could be built

- Inground pools need to be fenced in with fencing that is at least **1.5 m** in height
- The fencing needs to be **non-climbable** in the form of a vertical orientation fence/barrier/wall and with no openings that will allow the passage of a 100 mm diameter sphere
- Any gates or other access openings are self-closing, with self-latching and lockable hardware located at least **1.35 m** above the ground

## Above Ground Pools:



Provisions	Required
Minimum Front Lot Line Setback (m)	A
Minimum Exterior Side Lot Line Setback (m)	B
Minimum Side Lot Line Setback (m)	C
Minimum Rear Lot Line Setback (m)	D

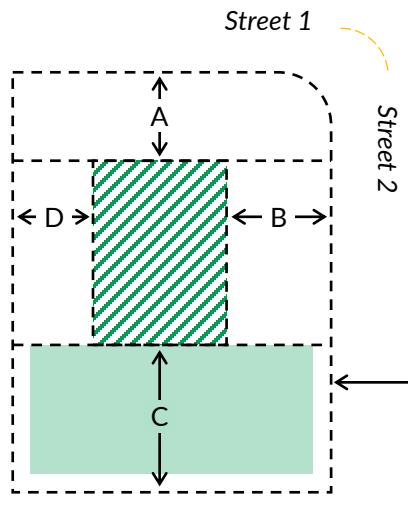
Pools cannot be located closer **than the greater of the height of the pool or 1.5 m** from a lot line if located in the rear yard; if the pool is in any other yard, the required setbacks for the principal building apply

- Pool equipment and any other climbable surfaces above grade need to be located a minimum **1.2 m** away from the pool sidewall
- Any access ladder is readily removable without the use of tools, or is lockable in a non-climbable upright position
- Pool sidewalls must be vertical, smooth, non-climbable and greater in height than 1.2m as to not require a fence.
- Any deck/floor/platform adjacent or accessible to the pool has a minimum height of **1.2 m**; the deck/floor/platform must be **non-climbable** and with no openings that will allow the passage of a 100 mm diameter sphere
- Any gate and other access opening is self-closing, with self-latching and lockable hardware located at least **1.35 m** above the ground

\* A pool for swimming, bathing or wading that can hold a depth of 600mm of water or more, requires a permit

# Pools and Hot Tubs

## Hot Tubs:



Area where a house or hot tub could be built

Area where a hot tub could be built

Hot tubs cannot be located closer than the greater of the height of the hot tub or 1.5 m from a lot line if located in the rear yard; if the hot tub is located in any other yard, the required setbacks for the principal building apply

Provisions	Required
Minimum Front Lot Line Setback (m)	A
Minimum Exterior Side Lot Line Setback (m)	B
Minimum Side Lot Line Setback (m)	C
Minimum Rear Lot Line Setback (m)	D

- Hot tubs must have a safety cover that is permanently attached to the hot tub and completely covers the hot tub
- The safety cover incorporates a lockable device
- The safety cover is structurally adequate to resist entry to the hot tub
- Hot tubs may be placed directly next to another building on the same lot without requiring a setback

# Additional Residential Units (ARUs)

For details and information on ARUs, please visit the [Planning and Land Use](#) webpage to view our ARU guides:

- [Urban ARU Guide](#)
- Rural and Village ARU Guide (coming soon!)

## Fences

Fences on residential properties are not regulated by the municipality, however there are a few rules that must be followed:

- Fences cannot block any easements on your property
- Fences cannot alter or affect drainage or block any ditches on your property
- Within a residential zone, your fence cannot be electrified, use barbed wire or contain any other dangerous components

Fence disputes between neighbours is considered a civil matter and will not be addressed by the municipality.

## Grading and Drainage

Understanding how the grading and drainage on your property works and affects your neighbour's property is important.

### Did you know?

Proper lot grading is important for the drainage of your property. It's important not to change lot grading when undertaking landscaping or making changes to your home.

### Consult us before you change!

Consult the Municipality before modifying any drainage swales on your property.

[mplanner@mississippimills.ca](mailto:mplanner@mississippimills.ca)

613-256-2064



*The Homeowner's Guide to Lot Grading and Drainage*

[www.mississippimills.ca/DrainageGuide](http://www.mississippimills.ca/DrainageGuide)

## Office Location – 14 Bridge St:

- The Building Division is located at 14 Bridge St, Almonte, in the Almonte Old Town Hall building on the lower-level.
- Visit us Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm for building permit information, applications, and payments. **We accept debit, cheque, or exact cash.** There is also a drop box located to the left of the Building and Planning entrance for afterhours payments.
- You can also contact the building department at [building@mississippimills.ca](mailto:building@mississippimills.ca) or 613-256-2064.
- You may find all the information you're looking for and more on our [Building and Renovating webpage](#).

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## Decks:

- Building permits are required for decks and porches of **any size** if they serve the building directly via a doorway of any kind, even if they are less than 10m<sup>2</sup> (108 ft<sup>2</sup>).

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## Pool and Hot Tub Enclosures:

- Private pools (in-ground, on ground, above ground) and hot tubs require a pool/hot tub enclosure permit as per the [Pool By-law](#).
- There is a specific application form for pools and hot tubs that can be found at the Building office or on the website here: [Pool and hot tub enclosure application form](#).
- A separate building permit may also be required for decks built to access the pool or hot tub.

## Building By-law, Fees and Permit Timelines:

The Building Division deals with all matters that fall under the [Building By-law](#), [Building Code Act](#) and the [Ontario Building Code](#) including new construction, Change of Use of a building or part of a building, demolition, renovation and the occupancy of buildings.

For the most current Building Permit Fees, please visit the [2026 Building Fees By-law](#).

Permit applicants will be contacted when the building permit is ready. The Building Division typically provides notification within 10–15 business days from the date a complete application is received, either to advise that the permit is ready or to request additional information.

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## Sheds:

- Storage sheds under 15m<sup>2</sup> (161 ft<sup>2</sup>) do not require a building permit, however, they still need to meet zoning regulations (i.e. property setbacks, lot coverage, number of accessory structures) based on the [Zoning By-law](#).
- All storage sheds over 15m<sup>2</sup> (161 ft<sup>2</sup>), including pre-manufactured sheds and shipping containers, require a building permit. If the structure is used for anything other than storage, a building permit will be required if it is 10m<sup>2</sup> (108 ft<sup>2</sup>) or larger.

# Applying for a Building Permit

## Forms and Documents for Residential Building Permits:

Residential building permit applications require the following documents:

- [Building Permit Application form and Schedule 1](#)
- Site Plan (see example to the right)
- Building Drawings:
  - Floor plan(s)
  - Footing plan
  - Elevations
  - Cross section



Some additional items that may also be required, depending on the project or property:

- Ownership confirmation
- Letter of Authorization from owner
- Floor joist layout
- Truss layout
- Heat loss/gain calculations
- Plumbing information
- Energy Efficiency Design Summary (EEDS)
- Planning approvals
- Heritage Permit
- Septic permit
- Entrance permit
- Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Permit
- Lot Grading Plan
- MTO permit

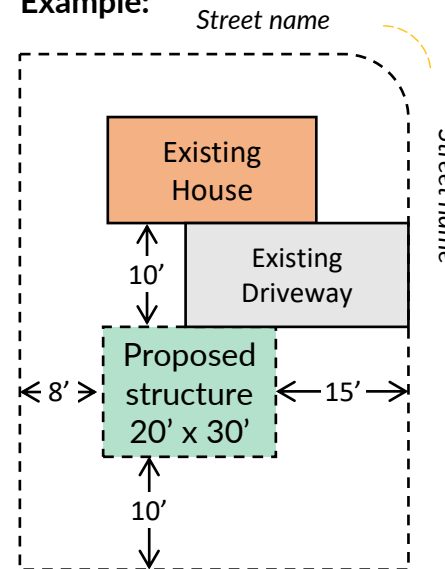
*\*Please note that properties fronting on a private road or waterfront will require a Plan of Survey and surveyor's real property report completed by an Ontario Land Surveyor.*

## Site Plan Information:

A site plan must contain the following details:

- Proposed structure dimensions
- Lot size and dimensions of property
- Setbacks to property lines for proposed structures
- Location of any other existing structure(s) on the property
- Location of existing rights-of-ways, easements and municipal services
- Location of existing powerlines, driveways, septic tanks/beds, and well

### Example:



### Note:

If you are unsure where your property lines are located, you may need to consult an Ontario Land Surveyor. Only Ontario Land Surveyors can tell you exactly where your property lines are located.