Attached Garages and Additions

CITY OF FARGO
BUILDING INSPECTION DEPARTMENT

The State of North Dakota requires that you call *1-800-795-0555* at least two business days before you dig.

This handout does not address any covenants or easements assigned to the property, nor does it relieve you of code compliance with items which may not have been included from the International Residential Code (IRC).

Table of Contents

This is some information that you, the homeowner or contractor, need to know before you can begin planning for the project.

<u>Please note:</u> these are general rules. Additional Specific rules may apply to your property.

DEFINITIONS

Foundations:	The foundation must be constructed of masonry, concrete, or treated wood and shall extend below the frost line.
Garage Floor:	Where motor vehicles are stored, floor surfaces shall be constructed of noncombustible materials.
Lot Coverage:	The percentage of the area of the lot that is allowed to be covered by the main buildings and all accessory buildings within a specified zoning district.
Property Line:	A recorded boundary of a plot. It is the owner's responsibility to know where and how to locate the property lines. The City of Fargo assumes that the owner knows this information. Errors due to lack of property line knowledge will cause delays and additional expense.
Required:	Needed; essential; necessary
Yard:	An open space, other than a court, on the same lot with a building.
Yard, Front:	A yard extending across the full width of a lot and having a depth equal to the shortest distance between the front line of the lot and the nearest portion of the main building, including an enclosed or covered porch. Where a building line or other line for designation of future street width has been established, the front yard depth shall be measured from such line instead of from the front line of the lot.
Yard, Rear:	A yard extending across the full width of a lot and having a depth equal to the shortest distance between the rear line of the lot and the main building.
Yard, Side:	A yard between the side line of the lot and the main building extending from the front yard to the rear yard and having a width equal to the shortest distance between said side line and the main building.

Lot Coverage and Setbacks

§20-0501 Residential District Standards

The dimensional standards of Table 20-05010 apply to all development in MR-3 and more restrictive zoning districts.

Table 20-0501

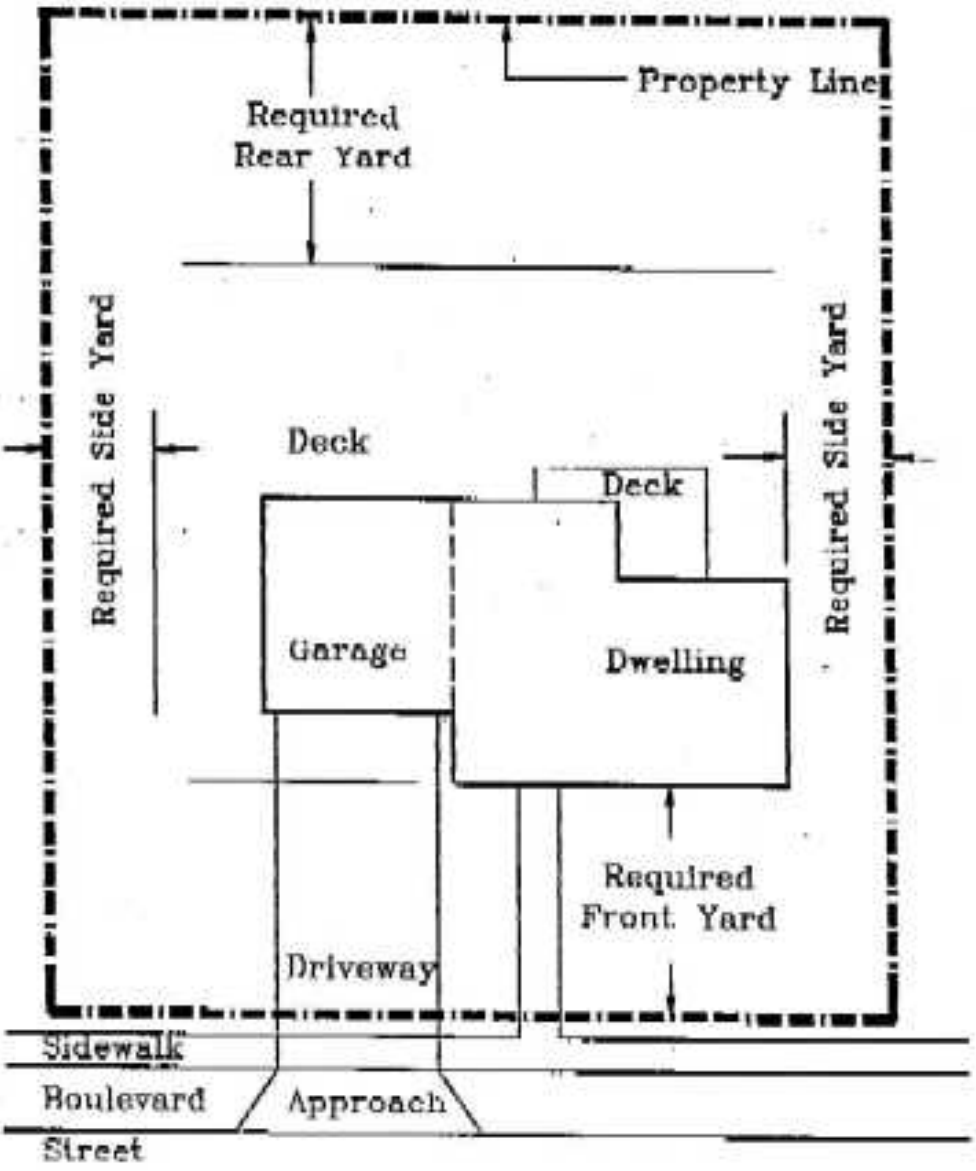
Dimensional Standard	Zoning District										
	AG	**SR-0**	**SR-1**	**SR-2**	**SR-3**	**SR-4**	**SR-5** [9]	**MR-1**	**MR-2**	**MR-3**	**UMU**
Maximum Density (UPA-Units Per Acre)	0.1	1.0	2.9	5.4	8.7	12.1	14.5	16.0	20.0	24.0[1]	18.0 Min.
Minimum Lot Size											
Area (Sq. Ft.)	10 Ac	1 Ac [2]	15,000	8,000	5,000	3,600	3,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	2,420
Width (Ft.)	200	120	80	60	50 [3]	50 [3]	25	50 [3]	50 [3]	50 [3]	50 [3]
Minimum Setbacks (Ft.)											
Front	50 [4]	50	35	30	20	15 [5]	15 [5]	25	25	25	10
Interior Side [6]	25	25	15/15	10/5	10/5	4	4	15/25	15/25	10	5
Street Side	25 [7]	25	17.5	15	12.5	10	10	12.5	12.5	12.5	10
Rear	50	50	25	25	15	15	15	20	20	20	15
Watercourse Setback	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]	[10]
Max. Building Coverage (Pct. Of Lot)	NA	25	25	35	40	45	50	35	35	35	75
Minimum Open Space (Pct. Of Lot)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	35[8]	35[8]	35[8]	N/A
Maximum Height (Ft.)	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	35	45	60	60

Source: *2985 (1999), 3062 (1999), 4039 (2000), 4668 (2003), 4695 (2009), 4818 (2012).*

[1] Higher densities may be allowed with the Bonus Density provisions of Sec. 20-0505.
[2] SR-0 minimum district size is 20 acres. See section 20-0203-A.
[3] Minimum lot width subject to limitation of access as provided in Section 20-0702.
[4] Minimum 100 feet from right-of-way on Arterial or section line road.
[5] Minimum 20-foot setback shall be provided between front-entry garages and nearest edge of sidewalk crossing plate.
[6] #/# = Percent of Lot Width/Feet (whichever is less)
[7] Minimum 75 feet from right-of-way on Arterial or section line road.
[8] Maximum of 37.5 percent of building coverage shall be allowed if site amenity is provided in accordance with Sec. 20-0403.B.7 If the amenity is contained within the footprint of one primary structure, the floor area of that amenity is counted as open space, but is not subtracted from the area of the building.
[9] The SR-5 zoning district is limited to a maximum size of 21,000 square feet, up to a maximum of two acres provided the district is within 600 feet of a private or public dedicated open space feature, such as a public park, private park, school yard or playground that is accessible to residents of the SR-5 district, any of which shall be a minimum of two acres or more in size. For purposes of identifying a single SR-5 zoning district, parcels adjacent to one another that are, or will be, the same zoning classification shall be deemed to be within the same zoning district and, therefore, shall be subject to the maximum size limitation.
[10] Watercourse setbacks for all residential, nonresidential, and overlay/special zoning districts are set forth in Section 20-0508.

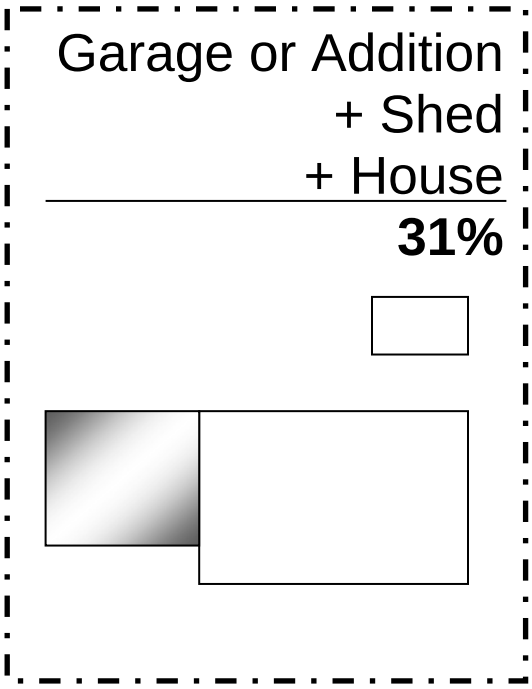
Location on Property

Attached garages and single family attachments are not permitted in a required side, front, or rear yard. Specific examples are shown on the following pages.



Lot Coverage

Requirements: Lot coverage varies depending on zoning. As an example, SR-2 zoning allows 35% lot coverage maximum for all buildings. For a typical lot of 60'x140' (8400 square feet) of lot area, 35% of 8400 SF is 2,940 square feet of lot coverage allowed.



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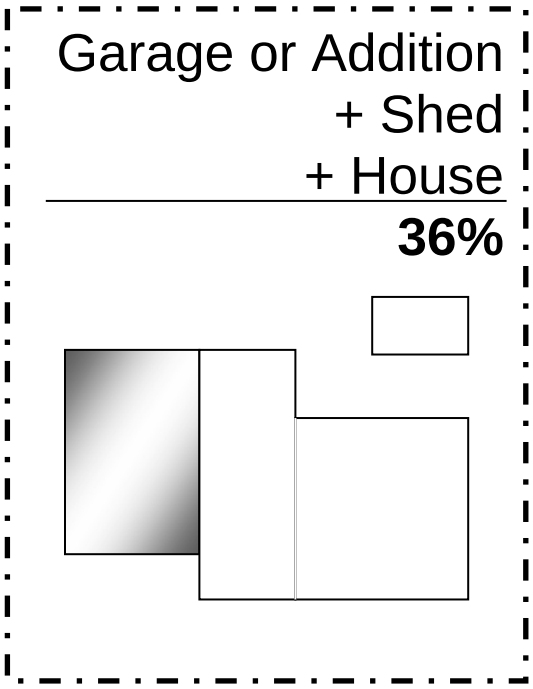
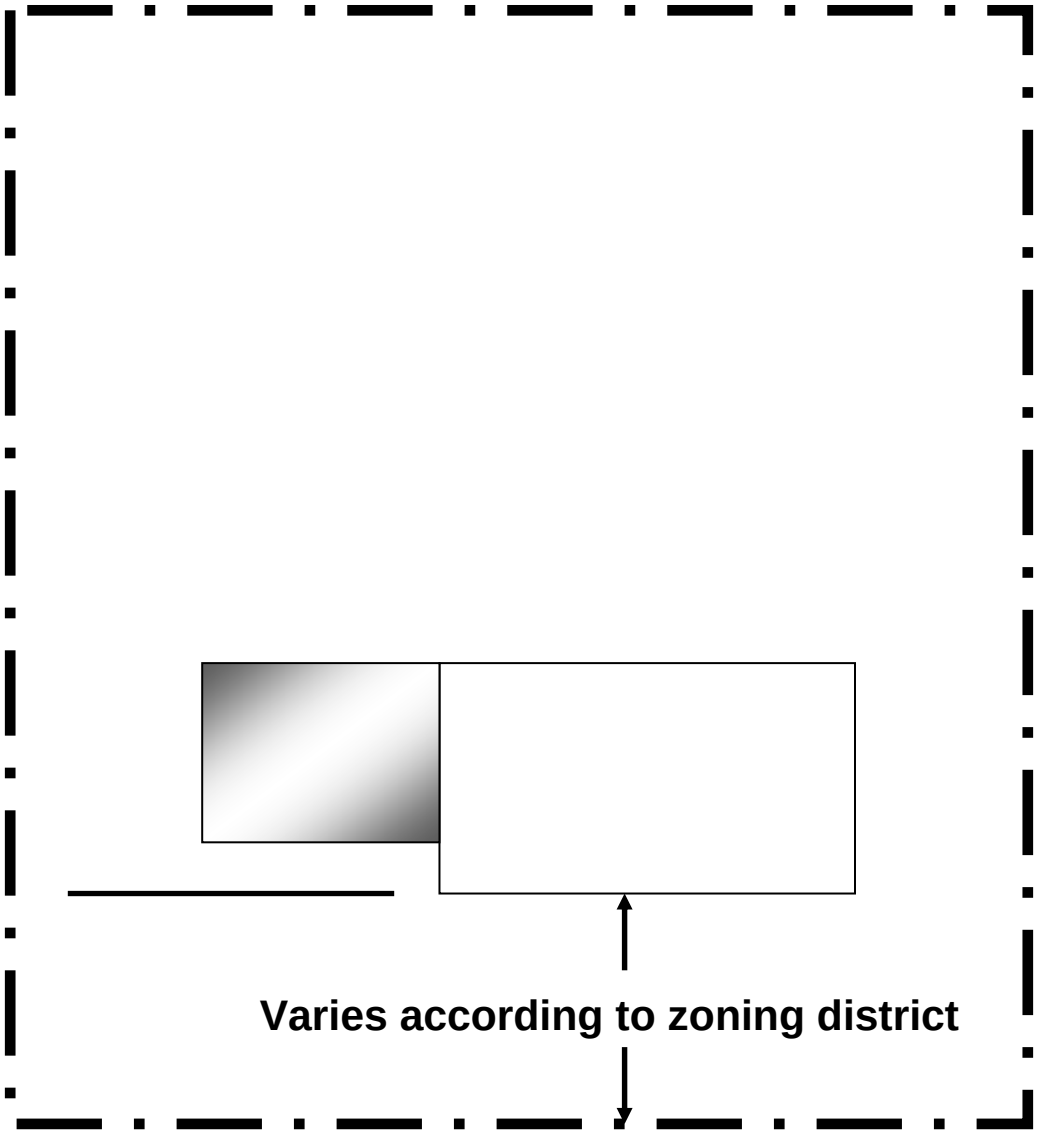


WRONG

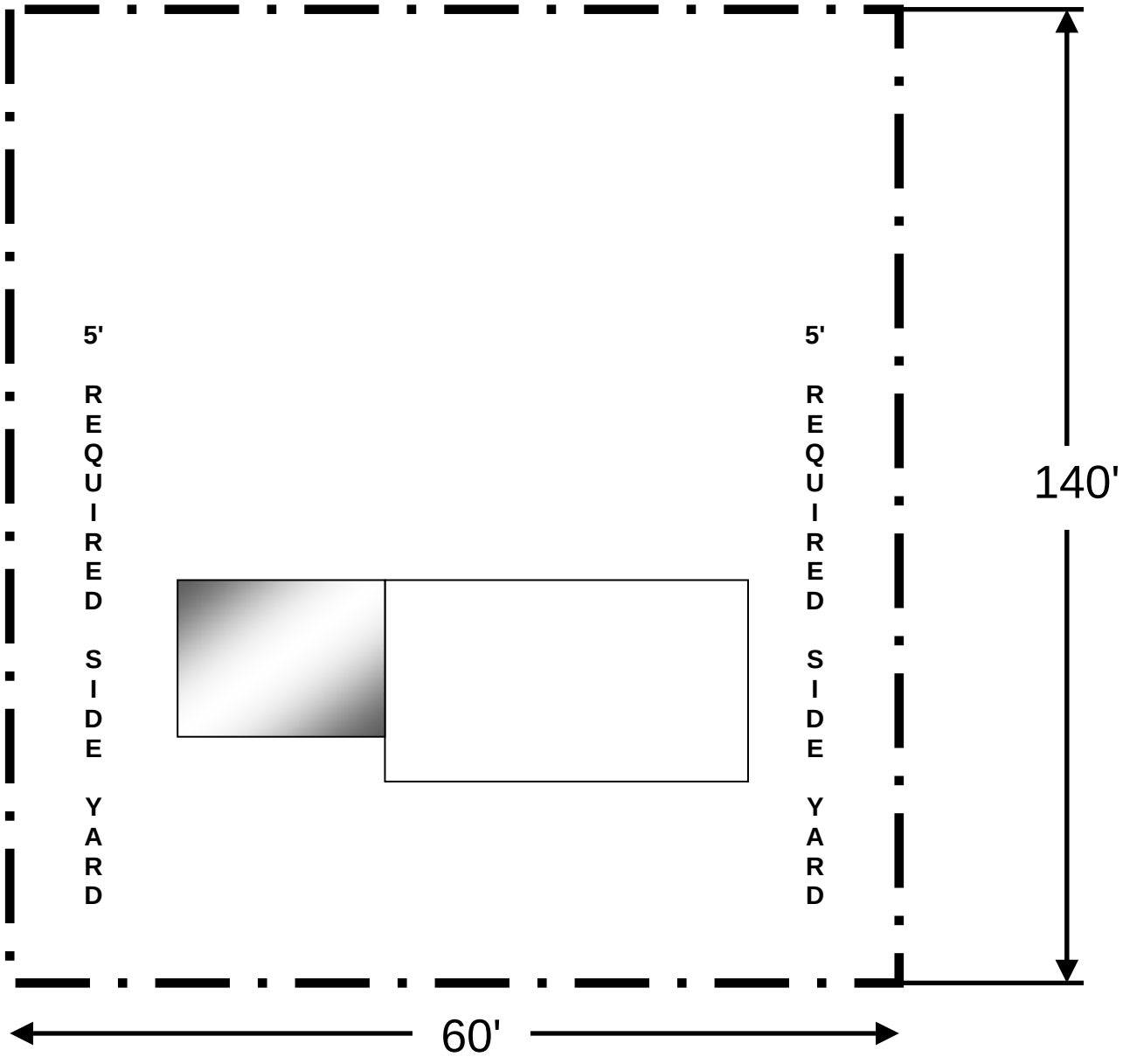
Front Yard

Front yard requirements vary from 50 feet in zoning district SR-0, 35 feet in SR-1, 30 feet in SR-2, 20 feet in SR-3, to 15 feet in SR-4 with a minimum 20-foot setback provided between front-entry garages and the nearest edge of a sidewalk crossing plate. The front yard is measured from the property line to the point of the house or garage nearest the street toward which the front door faces.



Side Yard

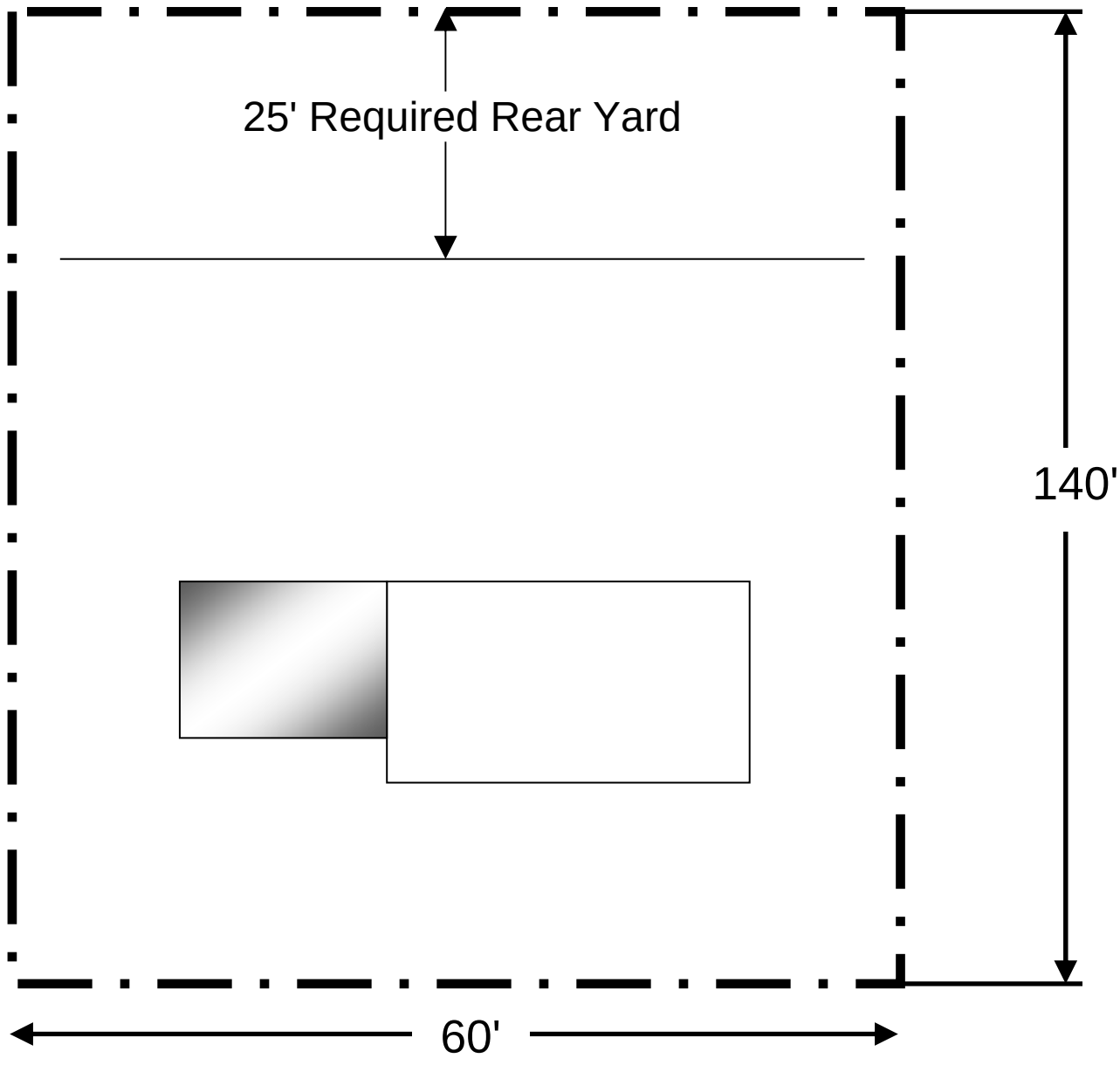
REQUIREMENT: A side yard is required to be 25 feet in SR-0; 15 feet or 15% of the lot width (whichever is less) in SR-1; 5 feet or 10% of the lot width in SR-2 and SR-3, whichever is less; and 4 feet in SR-4 and SR-5 zoning districts.



SR-2 Zoning District
10% of the lot width is (60' x 10%) 6 feet so
5 feet is the required side yard.

Rear Yard

REQUIREMENTS: For SR-0 a 50-foot rear yard is required. For SR-1 and SR-2 the requirement is 25 feet, and for SR-3, SR-4, and SR-5 it is 15 feet. An example of a lot 60' wide and 140' deep, zoned SR-2, is shown below.



Foundation Requirements

Regardless of whether your addition will be on a slab, like a garage, a full basement, or a crawl space, foundations are required to be on footings that are below frost depth. In the City of Fargo this depth is 54" (four and a half feet). The minimum size depends on the material and the structure you will be building, including the type of foundation and number of stories. These sizes are determined by Tables R403.1(1) through R403.2(3).

The footing and foundation must be continuous around the entire perimeter of your addition. If you wish to build something on piers, rather than a continuous foundation, you must have an engineer design the piers and submit a stamped drawing with an original signature before we can issue the permit.

Note that floodproof foundations have much higher requirements for reinforcing, buttresses, and floor bracing. See below for more information.

Floodproofing

If your lot falls in the FEMA 1% floodplain or the city's Water Elevation Surface and Inundation Area (WSEIA), any building or addition is required to be elevated to a minimum of two feet above the FEMA Base Flood Elevation or 1.2 feet above the WSEIA elevation. These elevations can be found on the City of Fargo web site at http://gis.cityoffargo.com/Link/jsfe/Public.aspx and turning on the "Current/Effective FEMA Floodplains" and "41 Foot WSEIA" overlays. You can get a map specific to your home by visiting the FEMA website at https://www.fema.gov/faq-details/Creating-FIRMette but these maps do not include the WSEIA information. When we issue your building permit, we will send staff out to mark the required elevation in the area where you wish to build.

There are a number of additional requirements that apply to floodproof construction. Please see our floodproofing handout for which would apply to your particular project.

If your home is in the FEMA 1% chance floodplain, a rule called "significant improvement" applies. If the value of the improvements to the building exceed 50% of the appraised value of the structure (not the land or other buildings, just the home) FEMA requires the entire house to be brought up to current floodproofing codes.

Under-Floor Fire Protection

If your addition is built on a full basement or a crawlspace used for storage or fuel-fired equipment, you will be required to provide fire protection under the floor. This typically consists of standard sheetrock but you can also use 5/8" wood structural panels or equivalent. The purpose of this protection is to extend the floor's structural integrity in case of a fire below so that it is more likely to hold up long enough for escape or rescue. This protection is not required in the case of a crawlspace that will not be used.

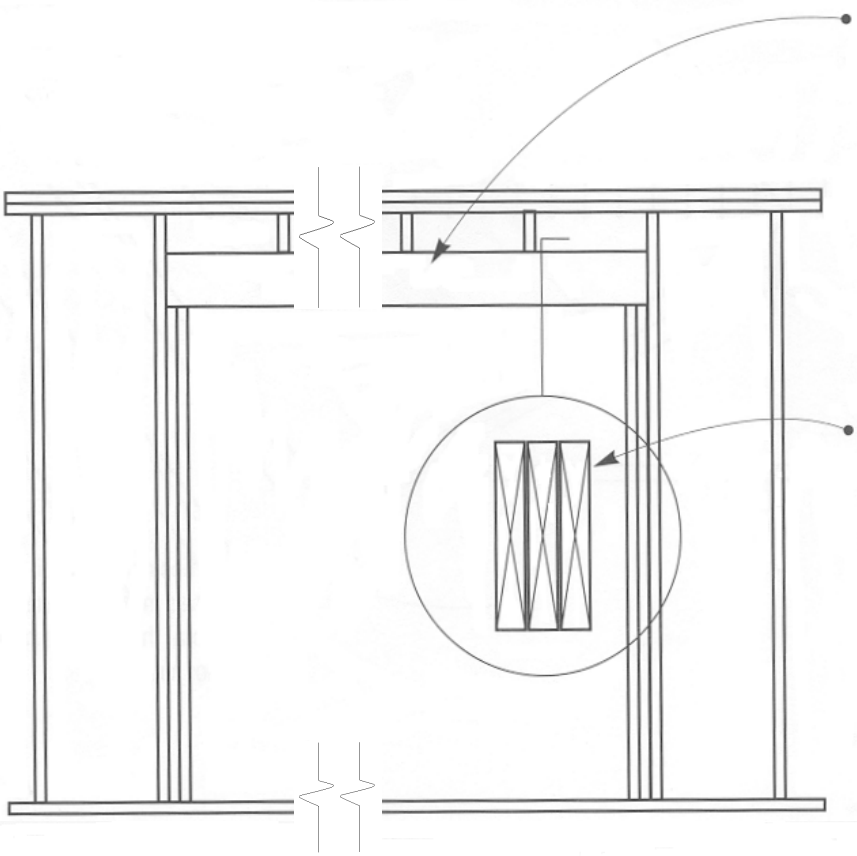
Egress Window Requirements

If your addition will include sleeping rooms, each of them must have an egress window or door that complies with code requirements. The opening must communicate directly to the outdoors. See the City of Fargo's Egress Window handout for details.

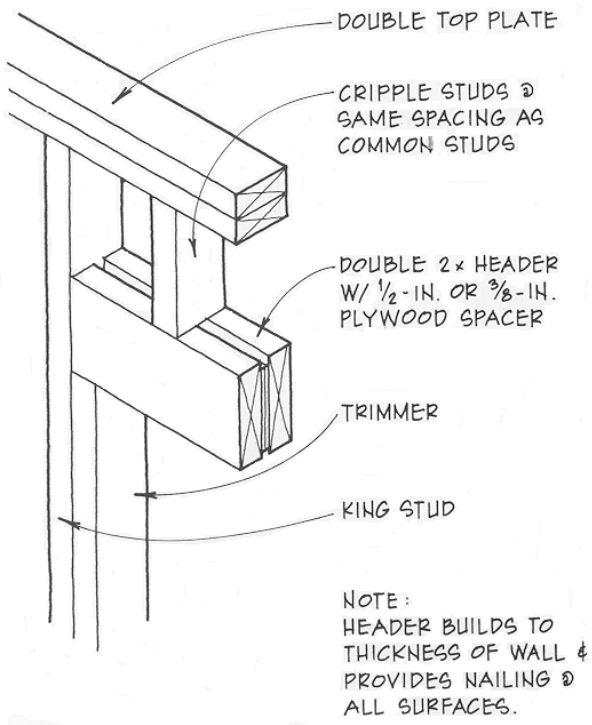
If the window is below grade a window well of a minimum 3'x3' interior must also be provided. When you are considering the required setbacks and location of your addition, don't forget to account for any window wells. They can extend into the required side yard but cannot extend past the property line and may well make it impossible to pass from your back yard to your front yard on that side of the house. Window wells cannot be placed in an easement.

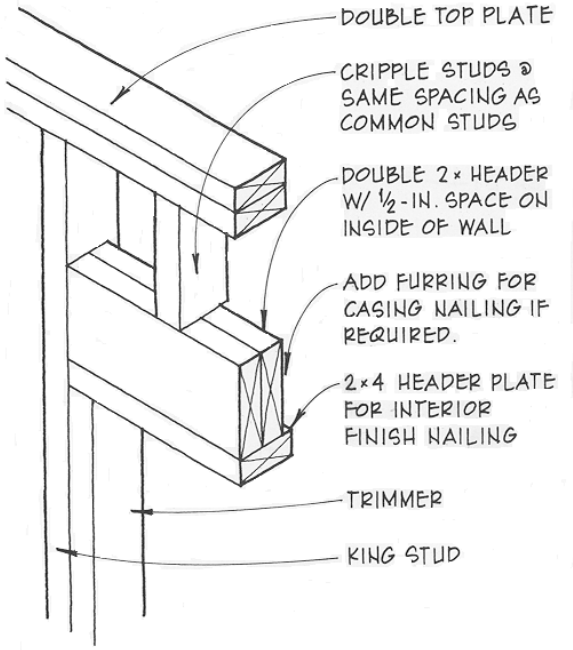
Headers

Headers are to be of 2x material set on edge and nailed together per Table R602.3(1) of the IRC.



Actual construction in terms of dimensions should be based on Table R502.5(1) of the IRC.





Wall Bracing

As a rule of thumb, you will need a full-height, sheathed wall panel within ten feet of any corner on your new addition. If the wall is longer than 16 feet, you will need another panel within 20 feet of the corner panel. There are, however, many ways of accomplishing wall bracing outside of this general rule.

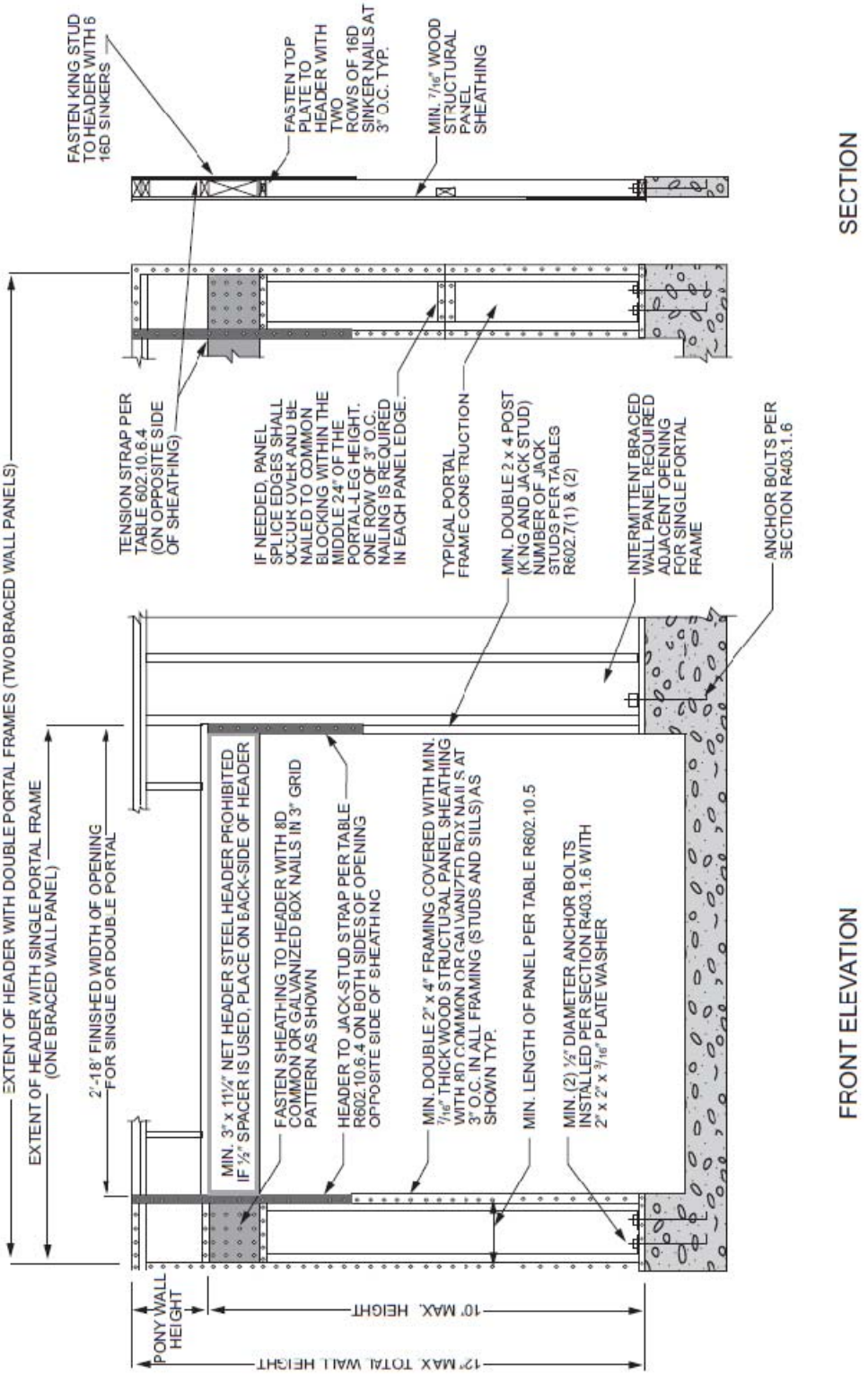
For large openings and garage doors, we typically see portal framing, which gives the required stiffness to the wall where full-size bracing panels will not fit. The following pages will give you information on how to construct panels that will give the needed protection from racking and twisting while still allowing for openings like a garage or patio door or a series of windows.

The table below shows the height of the overall wall, from the bottom plate to the top plate, which is often higher than the top of the header. If your bracing panel is at least as wide as the value shown below you do not need to use portal framing on that side of your garage door window opening. The ratio is 3 inches to 1 foot of wall height.

Wall Height	**Panel Width**
13.5’	40.5”
13’	39”
12.5’	37.5”
12’	36”
11.5’	34.5”
11’	33”
10.5’	31.5”
10’	30”
9.5’	28.5”
9’	27”
8.5’	25.5”
8’	24”
7.5’	22.5”
7’	21”

You can, of course, have a structural engineer design your addition or garage. You will need to submit an original, stamped drawing that demonstrates the design meets the required loads.

Portal Framing Illustration



Portal Framing Width

The required width of the panel(s) used for portal framing depends on the size of the opening and the height of the wall. This table shows the measurement from the top of the header over the opening to the top of the bottom plate (the flat piece at the bottom of the wall) and the required panel width in inches. The ratio is two inches per foot of opening height.

Top of Header	Panel Width
10’	20”
9.5’	19”
9’	18”
8.5’	17”
8’	16”
7.5’	15”
7’	14”

Insulation Requirements

If your addition will be heated, whether it’s a garage or a master suite, the same insulation requirements apply. You must insulate the walls to a minimum R-21 value and the ceiling/roof to a minimum R-49. On aboveground walls, a vapor retarder is required on the interior side of the insulation, typically a sheet of poly behind the sheetrock with sealed seams and edges. Certain exceptions apply to these requirements when you use continuous foam.

Note that insulation must not be installed within 3inches of recessed lights, fan motors, or other heat-producing devices unless they are listed for smaller clearances. The manufacturer’s installation instructions should specify such required distances.

The insulation requirements for the floor and/or foundation depends on how the addition is built. They differ depending whether you are building on piers, a slab on grade, a crawl space, or a full basement.

There may be spaces where you are required to install fireblocking to limit the spread of fire between vertical space, like walls, and horizontal spaces, like floors and ceilings. Tightly packed insulation batts work well for such spaces, particularly around pipes and conduits. Your inspector will look for such spaces at your framing inspection and check to see that they are filled at your insulation inspection.

Frequently Asked Questions

IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

YES! Before any work is started you must acquire a building permit.

WHY SHOULD I GET A PERMIT?

To ensure your garage/home is constructed properly to safeguard your property; to protect yourself; to establish a record of construction or remodeling history on your property; and, to provide some protection from claims by subsequent property owners.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO GET A PERMIT?

The address and the zoning of the property; the intended use of the property (if uses other than residential are anticipated); the estimated cost of construction of the project; and, a site plan showing the size and location of all existing buildings on your property along with the proposed project. Also, basic construction drawings are often helpful.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET A PERMIT?

Generally less than half an hour, depending upon the information provided and the complexity of the project.

ARE INSPECTIONS REQUIRED?

YES! It is the responsibility of the permit holder to arrange for inspections. This would include foundation, framing, electrical, heating, and a final inspection. Inspections are part of the permit process. Building inspections consist of examining and evaluating construction to determine if the work is compatible with the accepted standard of construction. There is no additional charge for inspections.