

City Talk for Jan. 12, 2022
Community Development Department
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Breathtakingly beautiful places like Sedona bring people from around the world to enjoy what we have all come to know as home. Sedona's Land Development Code (LDC) strives to complement that beauty with development done in harmony with the natural environment, which leads to various development requirements working together to meet that goal. The breadth of requirements aid in maintaining a built environment that makes Sedona a unique destination that is unforgettable.

Pulling permits within the city limits is necessary for most building projects, from a new single family home to a garage or basement conversion, and even including installing a new fence. The Community Development Department, along with other city departments, understand that permitting can be a complex process and citizens who are not familiar with it may face challenges when navigating through the various requirements. As city employees, we empathize with those situations and our job is to work with our citizens to bring their visions into reality while maintaining the requirements of the codes adopted by City Council.

Getting a permit allows the city to verify code compliance and safety of the work being done through plan review and inspections and allows the city to verify that the contractor is licensed through the Registrar of Contractors (ROC). In many cases, this can elevate the quality of the work as the contractor is qualified for the job and must pass all required inspections. Further, getting a permit helps alleviate potential problems in the future sale of the house when a prospective buyer or buyer's realtor does their due diligence by checking for building permits on the property. Approved permits keep the homeowner free from fines and citations from the city or the ROC for work done without a permit and/or work done by an unlicensed contractor. Lastly, permits give the homeowner peace of mind that their project is up to code, compliant and safe.

Work without a permit can lead to a visit from the city's Code Enforcement Officers. The role of the code enforcement staff is to stop illegal work, allowing them to verify compliance of the work with adopted codes, including the LDC and the building code. Work done without a permit may need to be deconstructed to verify that it was done correctly and may need to be removed entirely if it was done in violation of code. Handling an "after-the-fact" permit case can be unnerving for the property owner but our enforcement staff tries to address each situation with professionalism and care, with an intent to educate and to gain compliance. Without code enforcement the safety and aesthetics of Sedona's built environment would not be as uniform and consistent.

For all these reasons, and to avoid the headache of having a code enforcement issue, please reach out to Community Development Department staff before starting any project. They are in part employed to help you through the permit process and navigate what's allowable within your ideas. You can come visit us at the department's front counter Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 102 Roadrunner Dr., call the department main line at 928-282-1154 or email me at kstorey@sedonaaz.gov.

We're happy to set up in person meetings as well. Please don't hesitate to reach out to city staff for your next project!