



# Changes to Zoning Permits

## L&I's Zoning Webinar Series



# Changes to Zoning Permits Webinar

- Topics:
  - Making Minor Changes to Issued Zoning Permits
  - Amended Permit Process
  - Administrative Review Process
- Use the Q&A feature to ask questions.
- Please keep questions general - no address-specific questions.
- The slide deck will be shared and posted on the website.



# Zoning Webinar Series



Zoning 101

Feb 28, 2024



Zoning Use  
Classifications

April 3, 2024



Zoning Research

May 8, 2024



Zoning & eCLIPSE

June 12, 2024



Changes to Zoning  
Permits

July 10, 2024



Zoning Bonuses

Sept 18, 2024



Slide decks of prior sessions can be found on [L&I's website](#). Future sessions will be advertised on the [website](#) and [newsletter](#).



# About L&I

# What Does L&I Do?

The Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) enforces the City of Philadelphia's construction, fire, zoning, business compliance and property maintenance codes through the issuance of licenses and permits and through building and property inspections.

Contractors, business and property owners, landlords, and tenants are all served by L&I.



# L&I's Mission & Vision

## MISSION

### MISSION

The Department of Licenses & Inspections (L&I) enforces the City's codes for the safe and lawful construction and use of buildings.

## VISION

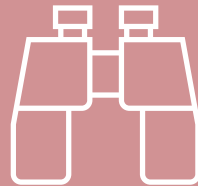
### VISION

To build and sustain a safer Philadelphia, L&I embraces best practices in technology and customer service. We enable the public to access information, secure required approvals, and comply with building safety requirements in a convenient, reliable, and transparent manner. L&I achieves code compliance through collaboration, education, and effective enforcement measures that hold businesses, contractors, and property owners accountable.

## VALUES

### VALUES

Our core values: Accessibility, Accountability, Consistency, Integrity, Transparency





# What Does L&I Do?

As part of our mission, we:

- Review building plans and applications and issue permits in accordance with the City's construction and zoning codes.
- Inspect construction projects for code compliance.
- Inspect higher-risk properties for compliance with the Fire Code.
- Respond to complaints regarding suspected Property Maintenance Code, Fire Code and Business Compliance violations.
- Inspect, monitor, seal, and demolish vacant and/or dangerous buildings.
- Issue trade and business licenses, including rental property licenses.
- Help landlords and tenants understand their responsibilities.





# Transparency

One of L&I's core values is transparency. The resources below can be used by the public to access L&I related information and records.

## Atlas

<https://atlas.phila.gov/>

- History of permits, licenses, inspections and appeals at any address
- Access zoning information at any address (district, overlays and achieve)


## L&I's Website

<https://www.phila.gov/li>

- Detailed descriptions of our services, permit status tracker, access to eCLIPSE, newsletters, FAQs, etc.

## Open Data

<https://www.opendataphilly.org/>

- Download searchable data sets for permits, licenses, appeals, etc.
  - Data can be sorted by council district, census tract, date, status etc.
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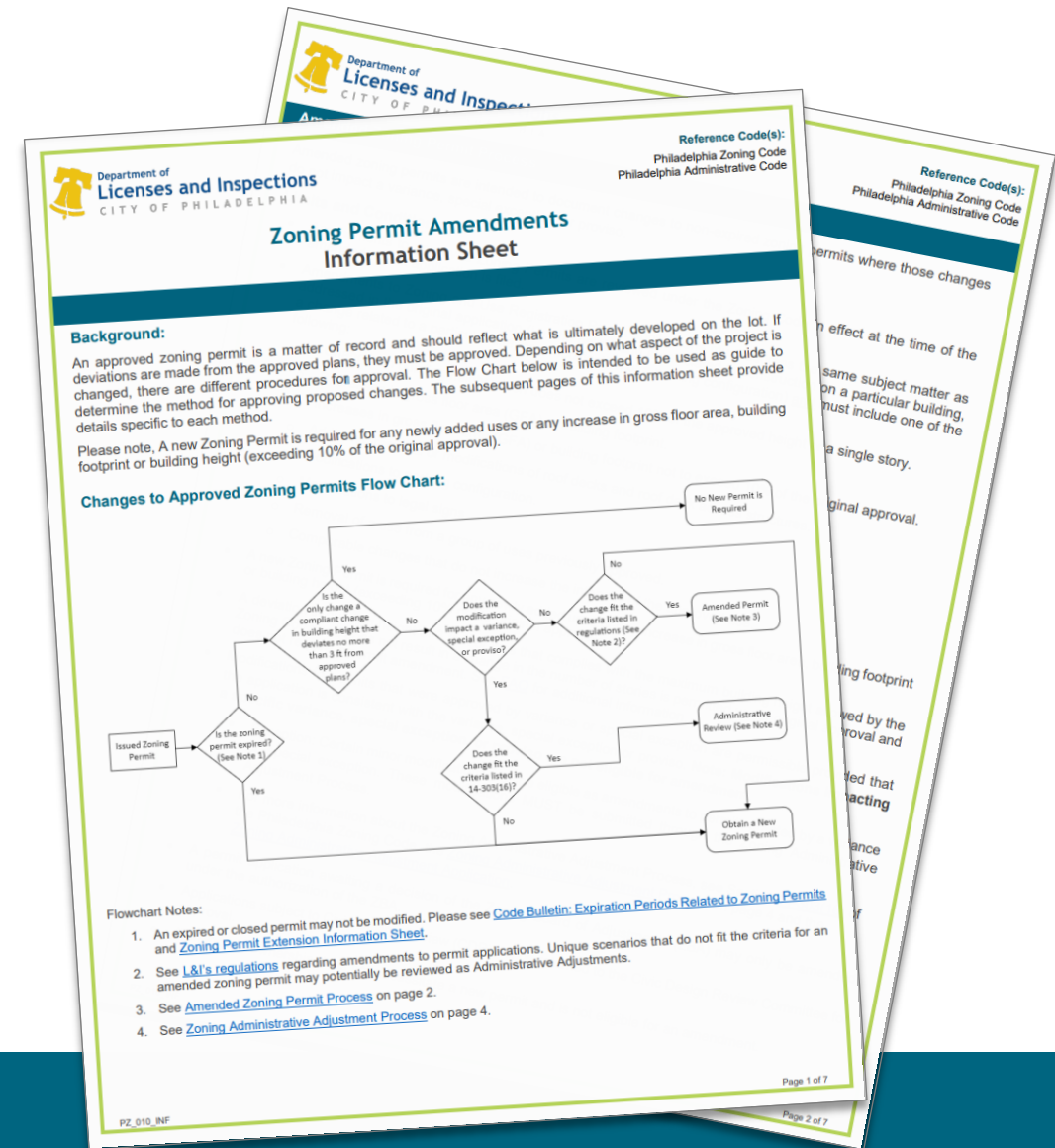




# Making Minor Changes to Issued Zoning Permits

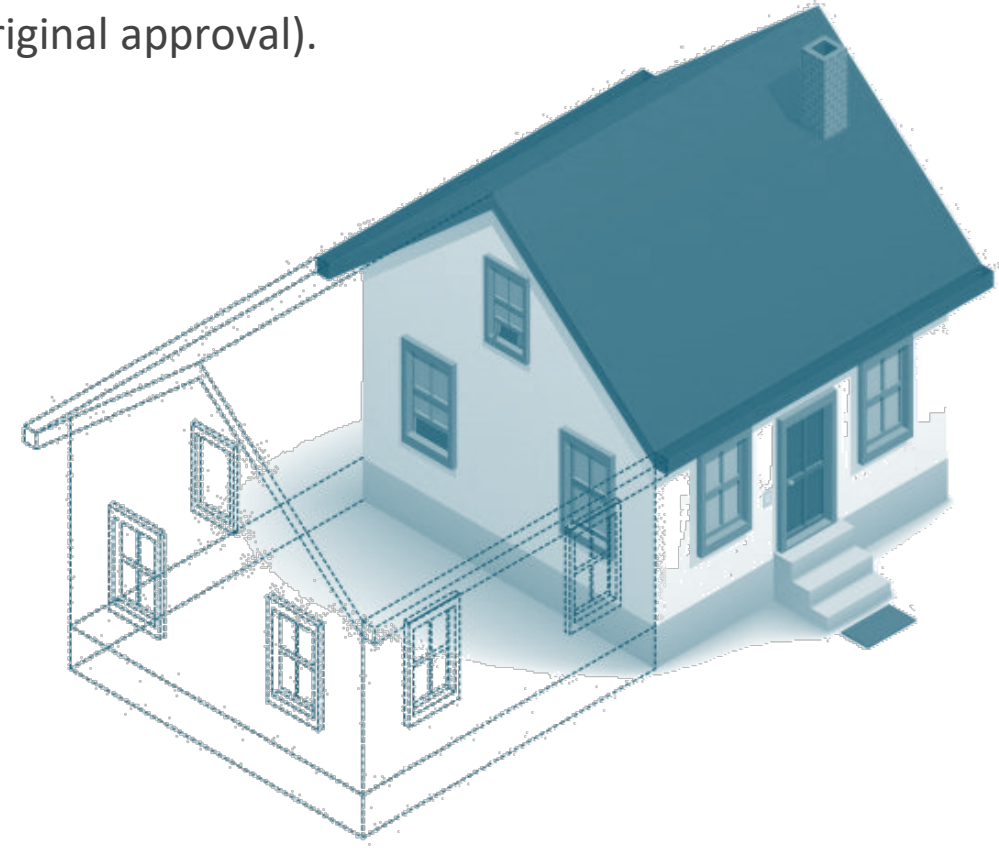
# Making Minor Changes to Zoning Permits

- An approved zoning permit is a matter of record and should reflect what is ultimately developed on the lot.
- Changes to zoning permits must be approved by L&I.
- Depending on what aspect of the project is changed, there are different procedures for approval.
- Refer to the [Zoning Permit Amendments Information Sheet](#).

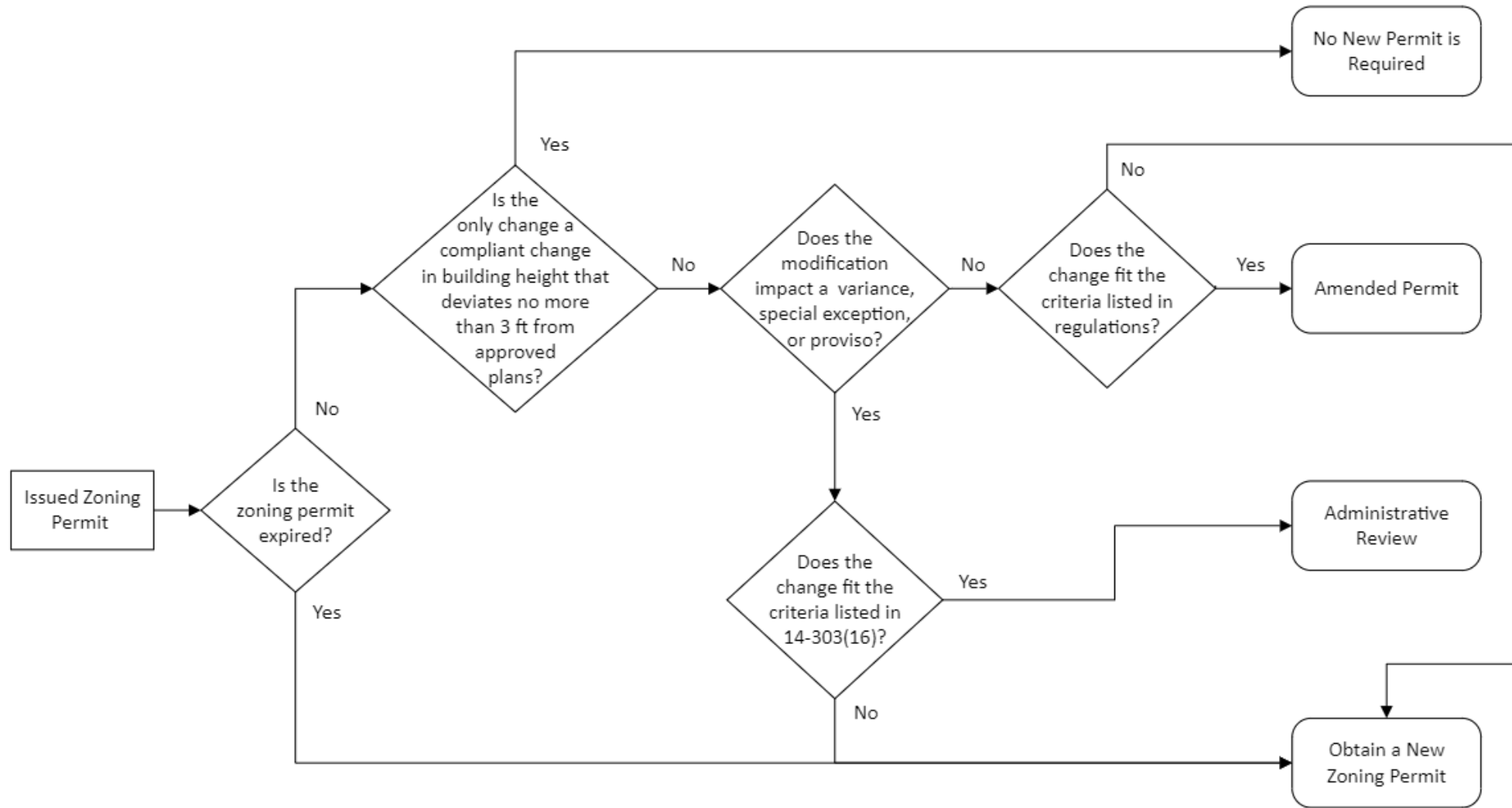


# New Zoning Permit Required

- These processes are intended for **minor** changes NOT complete redesigns.
- A **new Zoning Permit** is required for any newly added uses or any increase in gross floor area, building footprint or building height (exceeding 10% of the original approval).

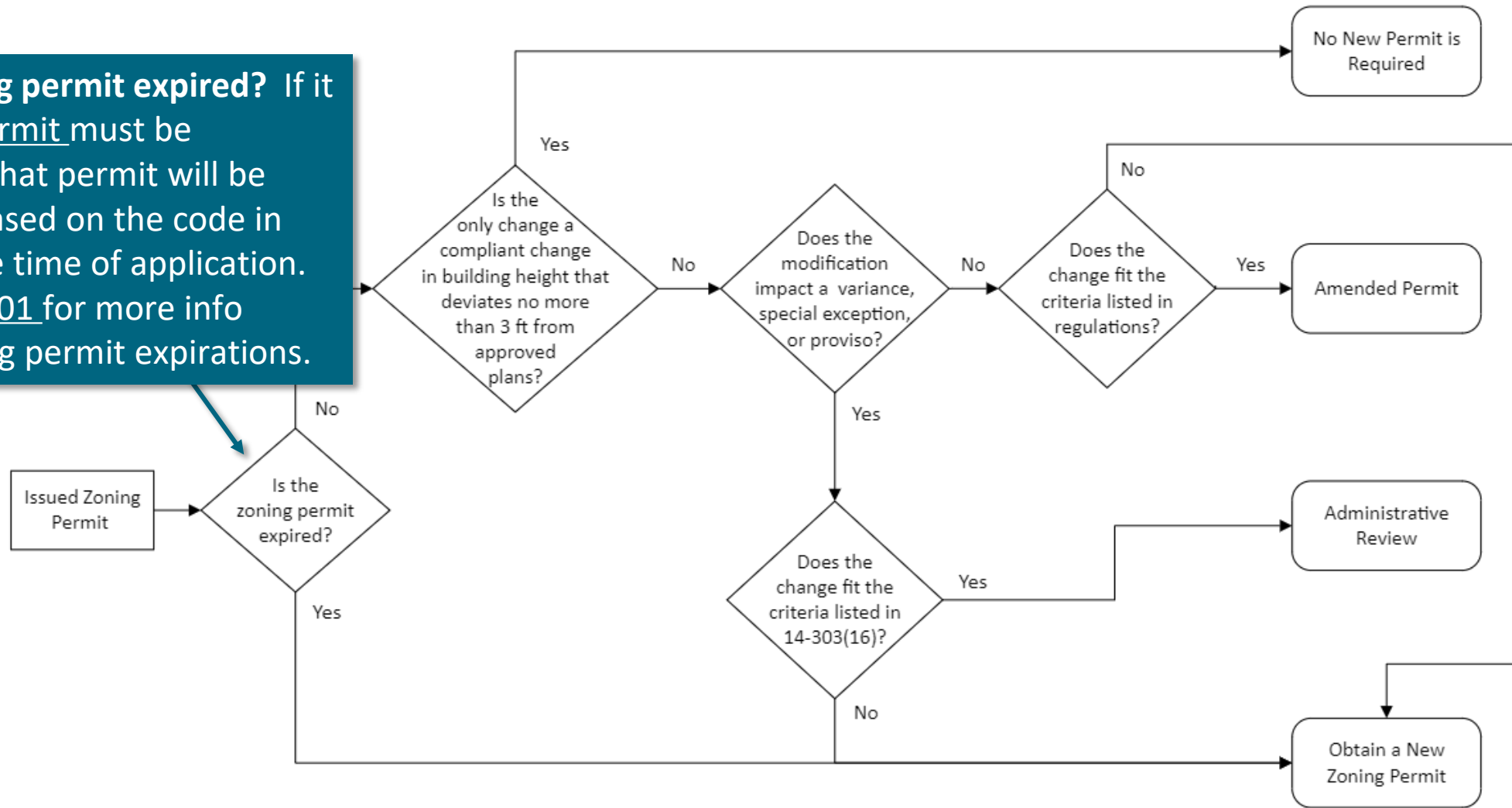


# Changes to Zoning Permits – Paths Forward

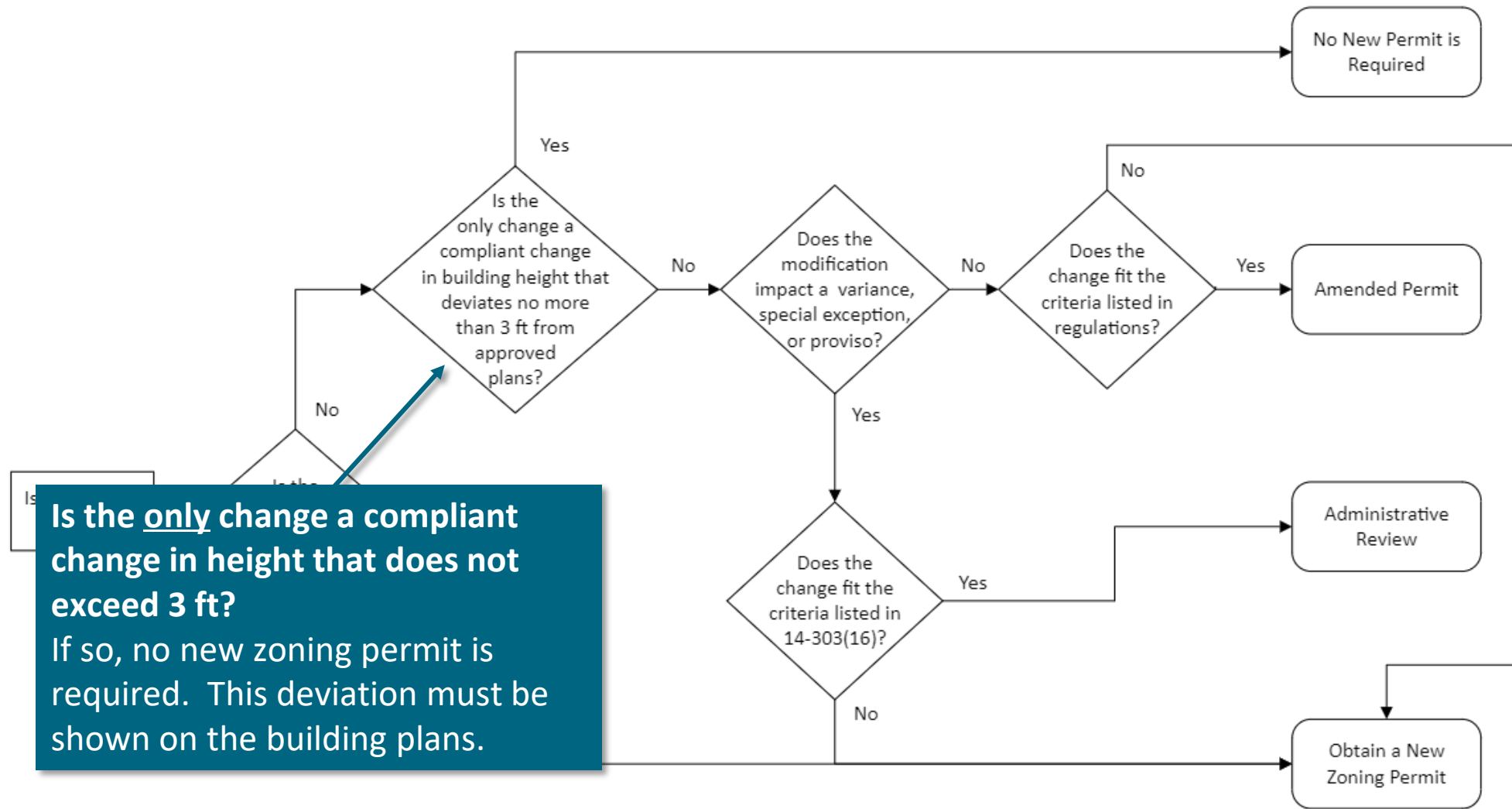


# Changes to Zoning Permits – Paths Forward

Is the zoning permit expired? If it is, a new permit must be obtained. That permit will be reviewed based on the code in effect at the time of application. See [CB Z-1901](#) for more info about zoning permit expirations.

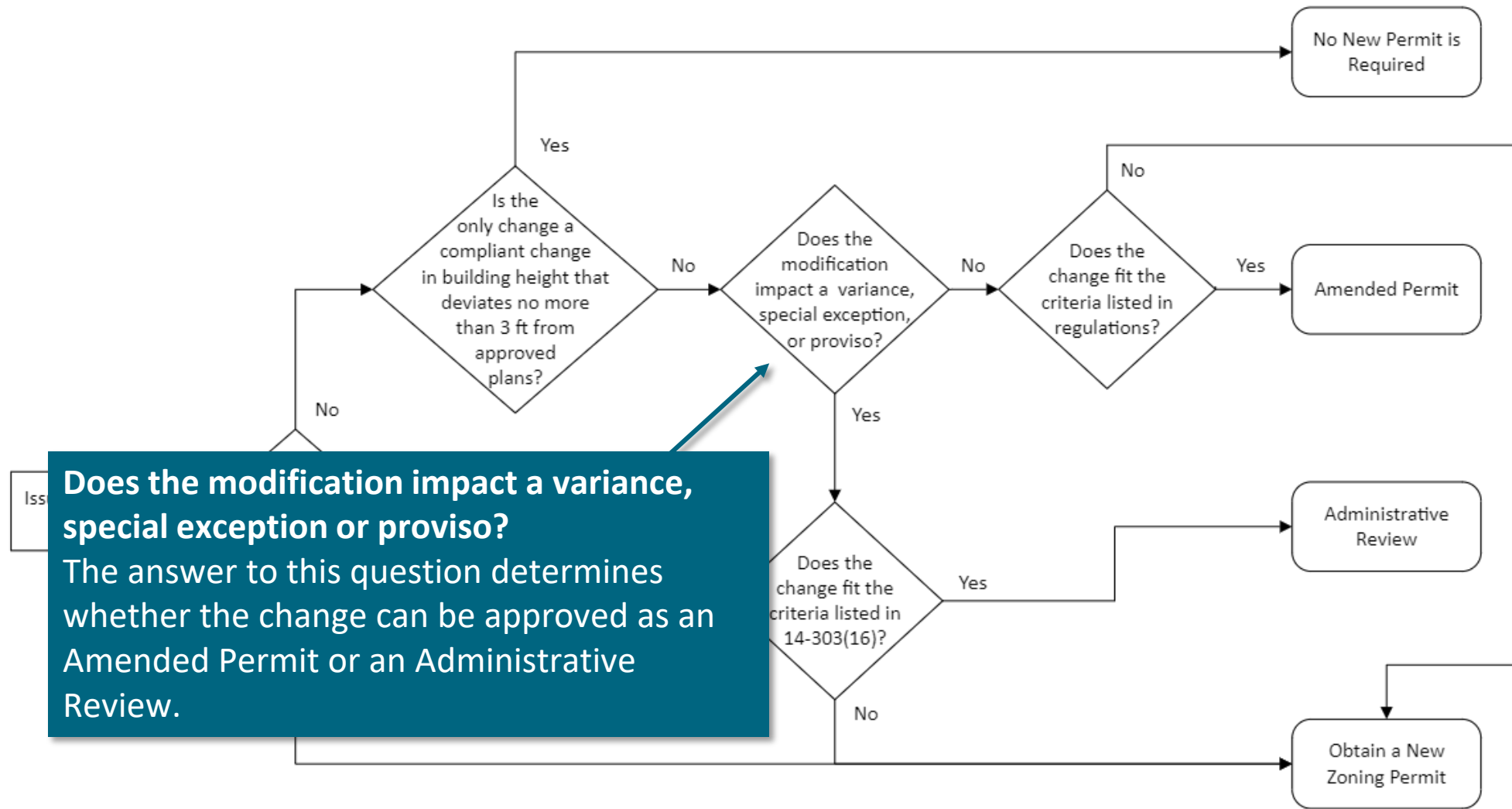


# Changes to Zoning Permits – Paths Forward

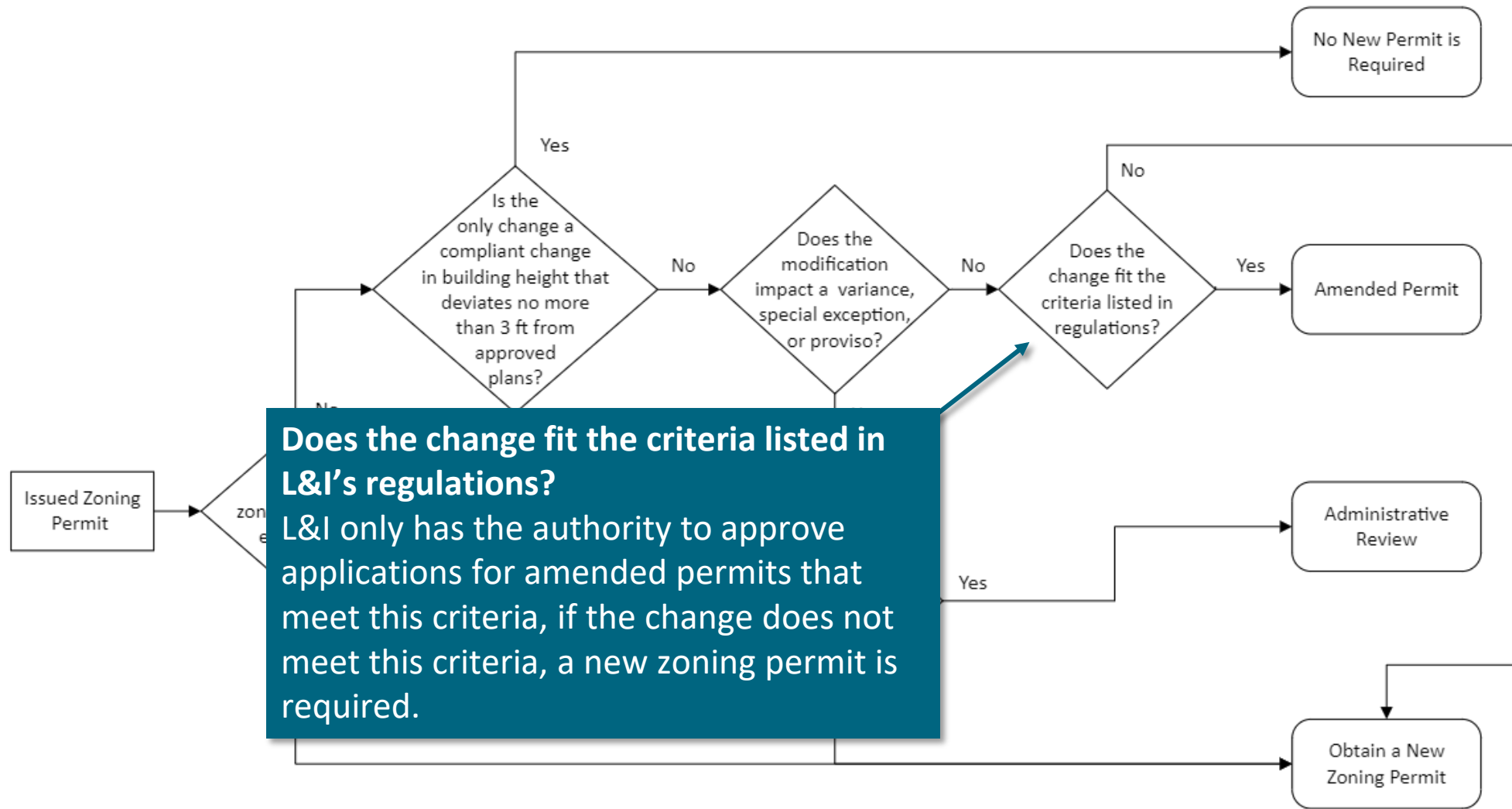


Is the only change a compliant change in height that does not exceed 3 ft?  
If so, no new zoning permit is required. This deviation must be shown on the building plans.

# Changes to Zoning Permits – Paths Forward



# Changes to Zoning Permits – Paths Forward








# Amended Permit Criteria


Amendments must (.1) address the same subject matter as addressed in the original application, and (.2) must constitute one of the following:

1. Increase in building height which does not exceed 10% of the approved height, 10 feet or a single story, whichever is greater.
  2. Increase in gross floor area not to exceed 10% of the original approval, when the zoning district is governed by maximum floor area.
  3. Increase in or building footprint not to exceed 10% of the original approval.
  4. Decrease in height, gross floor area or building footprint.
  5. Addition, removal or modification of roof decks and roof deck access structures.
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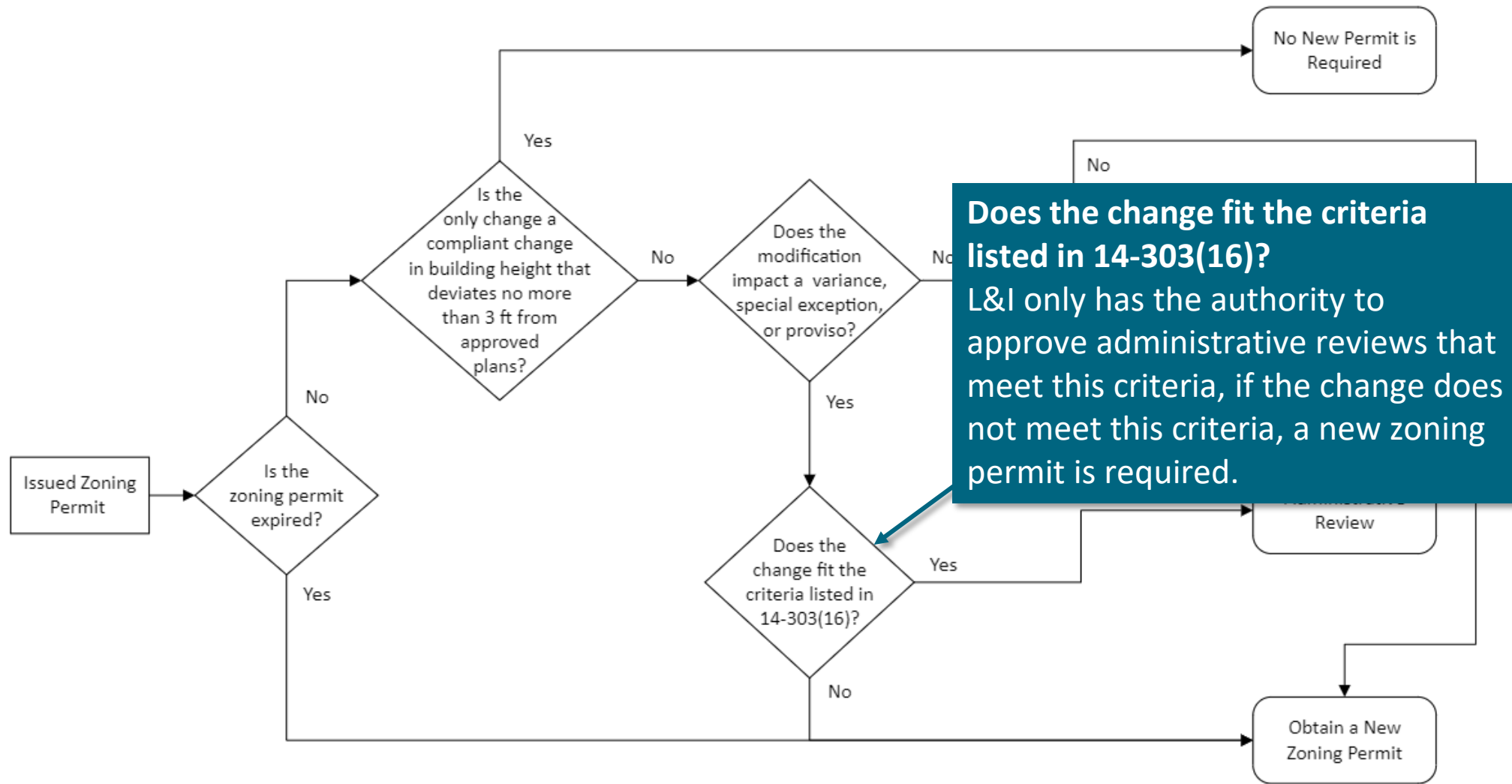


## Amended Permit Criteria (continued)

Amendments must (.1) address the same subject matter as addressed in the original application, and (.2) must constitute one of the following:

6. Modification to parking configuration, including a change in the number of spaces not to exceed 10% of the original approval.
  7. Modification to legal signage.
  8. Removal of a use from a group of uses previously approved.
  9. Comparable changes that do not increase the intensity of the approved use.
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# Changes to Zoning Permits – Paths Forward



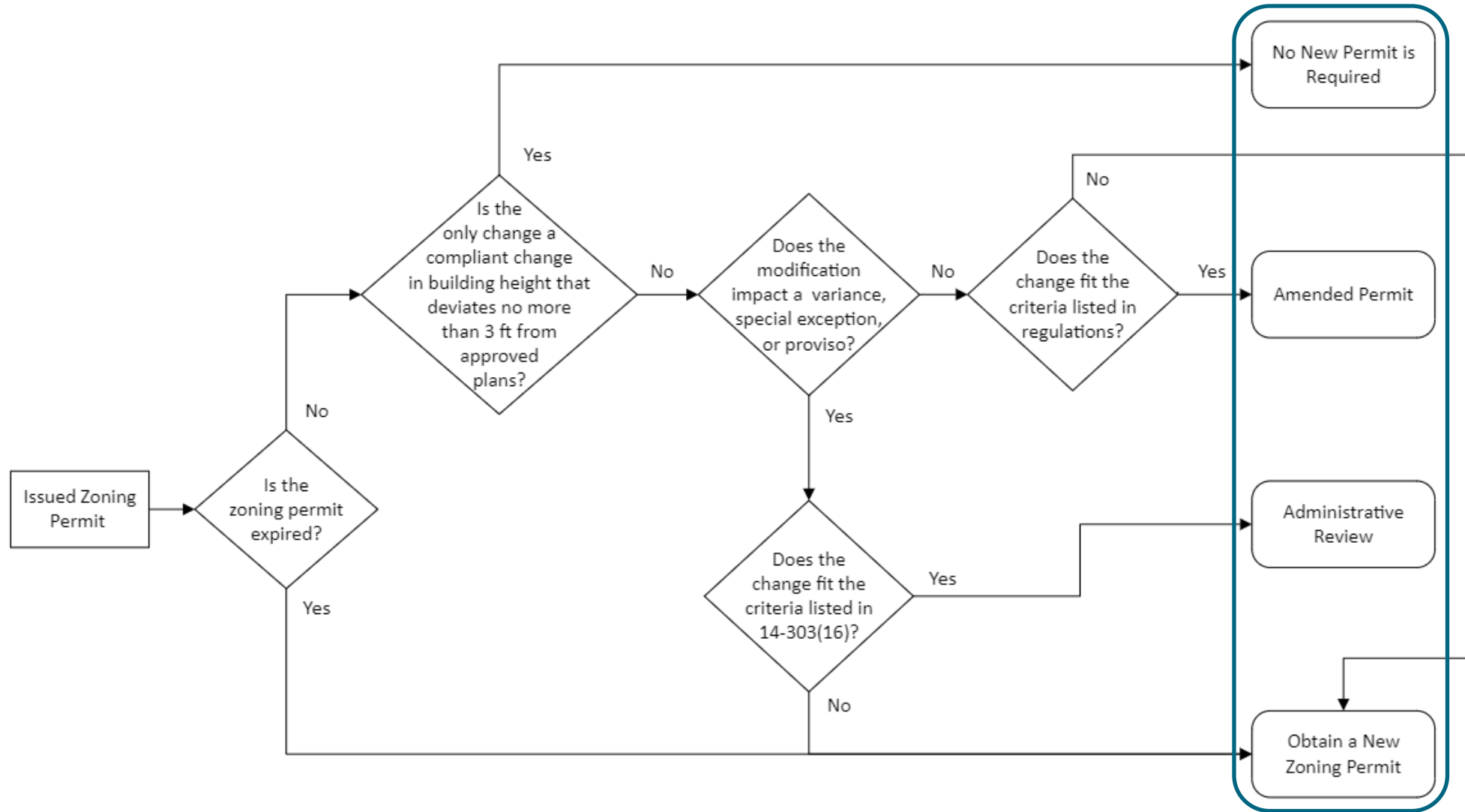


# Administrative Review Criteria

Changes affecting a variance, special exception, or proviso must meet the following criteria ([14-303\(16\)](#)):

1. Minor changes to reduce the footprint, GFA, or height of an approved structure; or
  2. Lessens the degree of impact related to dimensional variances; or
  3. Lessens the number of approved dwelling units; or
  4. Lessens the number or size of approved signs; or
  5. Makes comparable changes that reduce the intensity of the proposed use.
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# Changes to Zoning Permits – Paths Forward





# Amended Permit Process



# Amended Permit - Limits and Conditions

- Amendments to approved Zoning Permits are reviewed under the Zoning Code in effect at the time of the amended permit application is filed.
- Amendments must address the same subject matter as addressed in the original application and meet the criteria of L&Is [amended permit regulations](#).
  - L&I does not have the authority to issue an amendment outside of this criteria.





## Amended Permit - Limits & Conditions (cont'd)


- Modifications to permits that were approved by variance or special exception are permissible provided that the application is consistent with the variance, special exception or proviso.
  - Example: A permit was issued for new construction. A variance was required because parking was required but not provided. The applicant wants to increase the height of the structure (not to exceed 10% of the approved height, 10 feet or a single-story).
- Applications subject to Civic Design Review (CDR) will be returned to the Civic Design Review Committee for approval.







## Amended Permit - Limits & Conditions (cont'd)

- A change in ownership does not necessitate a new permit and is not eligible for an amendment.
  - An expired or closed permit may not be modified. Please see [Code Bulletin: Expiration Periods Related to Zoning Permits](#) and [Zoning Permit Extension Information Sheet](#).
  - An amendment does not extend the life of the underlying approval.
  - Additional approvals by other departments may be required.
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# Amended Permit - Filing

- The Amended Zoning Permit application must always reference the original permit number.
- Amendments can be filed in person at the Municipal Services Building or online using eCLIPSE.



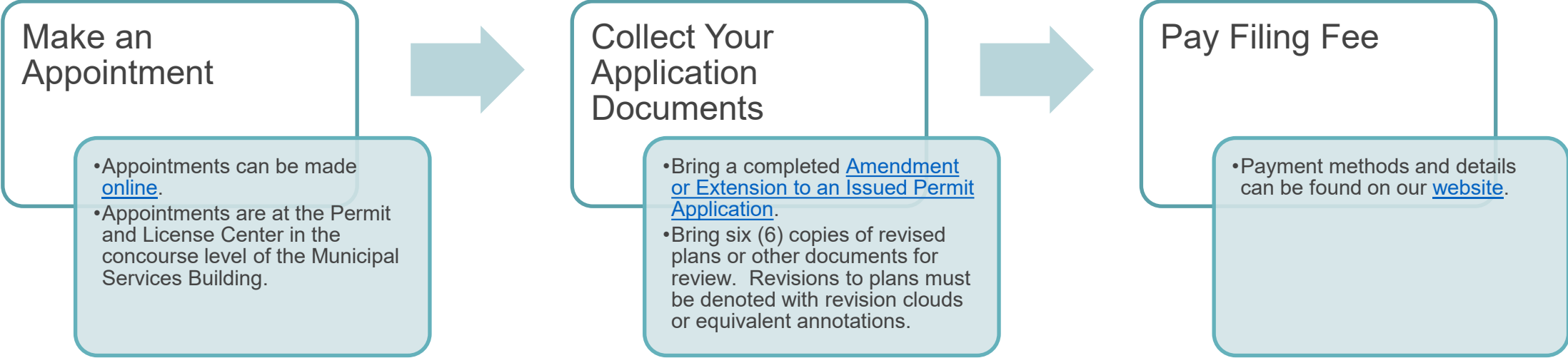
# Amended Permit – eCLIPSE

For applications filed through eCLIPSE, an amendment may be requested through eCLIPSE.



# Amended Permit – In Person

For applications originally filed with paper plans, these steps must be followed



Note: Customers can contact L&I for assistance in submitting an electronic amendment to a permit originally filed on paper.



# Amended Permit – Review Time & Fees

- Standard review times apply.
  - Amendments that are the result of an unforeseen field condition or constraints shall be reviewed in 10 business days. This should be noted in the application.
- Fees:
  - \$50 filing fee
  - \$23 per sheet



# Administrative Review Permit Process




# Administrative Review - Applicability

- Scope – Must affect a previous variance, special exception, or proviso
- Timing - An expired or closed permit is not eligible for Administrative Review. See [Code Bulletin: Expiration Periods Related to Zoning Permits](#) and [Zoning Permit Extension Information Sheet](#).
- Impact - Affecting a variance, special exception, or proviso and meeting the criteria of [14-303\(16\)](#).
  - L&I does not have the authority to issue an amendment outside of this criteria.





# Administrative Review - Notification

- The following notifications shall be made in advance of filing:
    - RCOs whose boundaries include the subject property
    - The District Councilperson for the subject property.
    - All interested parties that entered an appearance in the subject matter before the Zoning Board.
  - For a list of applicable RCOs and the District Councilperson, contact [RCO.Notification@phila.gov](mailto:RCO.Notification@phila.gov) or 215-683-4646.
  - For a list of parties that entered an appearance at the Zoning Board, contact [RCOZBA@phila.gov](mailto:RCOZBA@phila.gov) or 215-686-2429.
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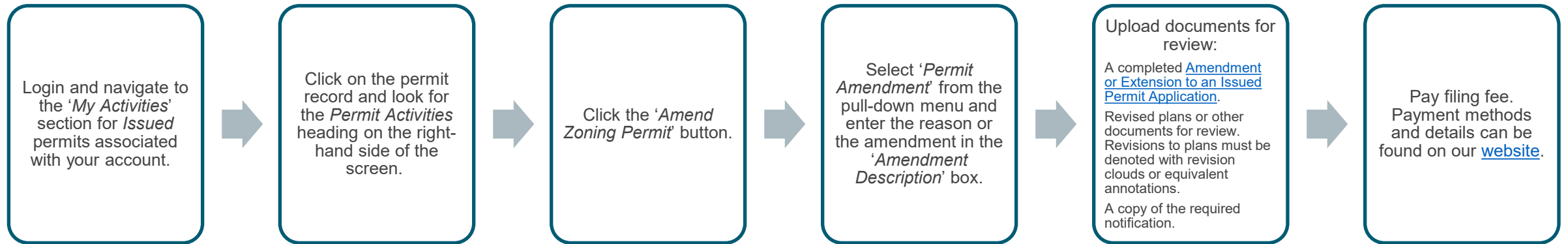


# Administrative Review - Filing

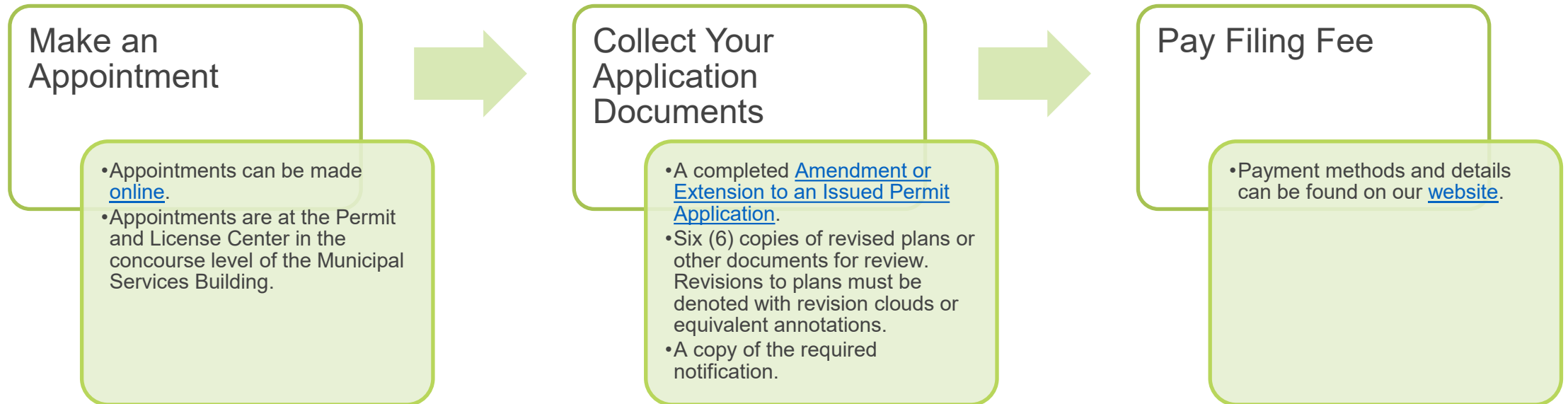
- The Administrative Review application must always reference the original permit number.
- Administrative Review application can be filed in person at the Municipal Services Building or online using eCLIPSE.

# Administrative Review – eCLIPSE

For applications filed through eCLIPSE, an administrative review may be requested through eCLIPSE



# Administrative Review – In Person



Note: Customers can contact L&I for assistance to submit an electronic amendment to a permit originally filed on paper.



# Administrative Review – Review Time & Fees

- 20 business days
  - Zoning Administrative Adjustments are not eligible for accelerated review
- Fees: \$200



# Administrative Review - Review

- Administrative Reviews of approved Zoning Permits are reviewed under the Zoning Code in effect at the time the administrative review application is filed.

# Administrative Review - Approval

L&I may not render a decision of “Approval” until at least 10 days after the application is filed.

Upon approval, the Department and/or ZBA must notify all parties on the contact list of application. Any party may request a hearing before the ZBA within 14 days of such notice.

A Permit cannot be issued until:

- At least 14 days has passed and no hearing has been requested.

**OR**

- A requested hearing has concluded.



# Administrative Review - Denial

- If a request for administrative review is denied by the department, the applicant is able to appeal the decision.
- The ZBA will determine whether the decision was rendered improperly.






# Summary





# Changes to Zoning Permits – Take Aways

- The major difference between an amended permit and an administrative review is whether the proposed change is modifying an aspect of the project that was the subject of a variance, special exception or proviso.
  - Administrative Review and Amended Permits are intended to approve minor changes.
  - If the proposed change significantly deviates from the original approval, a new permit may be required.
- 



## Changes to Zoning Permits – Take Aways (cont'd)


- Only valid, non-expired permits can be modified and the issuance of an amended permit does not impact the expiration of the permit.
- Amendments and Administrative Reviews are reviewed under the Zoning Code in effect at the time the amended permit application is filed.





# Resources

# Resources

- Information Sheets:
  - [Zoning Permit Amendments Information Sheet](#) 
  - [Zoning Permit Extension Information Sheet](#)
- Code Bulletins and Regulations:
  - [Code Bulletin: Expiration Periods Related to Zoning Permits](#)
  - [Regulation: Amendments to permit applications](#)
- Applications:
  - [Zoning Administrative Adjustment Application](#)
  - [Amendment or extension to an issued permit application](#)

# Contacting L&I

- L&I's website has multiple resources for contacting the department.
- Hover over "About" then click "Contact Us".
- You can submit questions or schedule appointments.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL [phila.gov/departments/department-of-licenses-and-inspections/about/contact-us/#license-questions](https://phila.gov/departments/department-of-licenses-and-inspections/about/contact-us/#license-questions). The page header includes the City of Philadelphia logo and navigation tabs for Services, Programs, Departments, Tools, and Publications. A secondary navigation bar contains Home, About, Licenses, Permits & certificates, and Inspections. The 'About' dropdown menu is open, showing options for Mission, vision, and values; Divisions and boards; Leadership; and Contact us. The 'Contact us' option is highlighted with a red box. Below the navigation, a 'Jump to:' section lists several links: District offices, Notice of completion of repairs, License questions, Permit and code questions (highlighted with a red box), and Property certifications.



# L&I Newsletter

- Stay up to date with L&I related updates by signing up for our newsletter.
- Go to [L&I's website](#) and scroll down to “Sign up for our newsletter”

## L&I monthly newsletter

Our newsletter keeps you up-to-date on permits, licenses, and more. Sign up to get new issues every month, or read archived issues online.

[LEARN MORE](#)





# Continuing Education Credits

- Poll must be completed to receive CEU's.
- CEU's will be sent via e-mail.



# Thank You! Questions?

To build and sustain a safer Philadelphia, L&I embraces best practices in technology and customer service. We enable the public to access information, secure required approvals, and comply with building safety requirements in a convenient, reliable, and transparent manner.

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