

RIGHTSTART

RESIDENTIAL CHECKLIST

A Complete Pre-Construction Checklist for All Residential Projects

This checklist covers the key prerequisites for responsibly planning a residential project before a building permit is submitted. It applies to custom homes, additions, renovations, ADUs, and specialty structures.

Not all items apply to every project. Applicability depends on project type, scope, site conditions, and jurisdiction. This checklist defines planning prerequisites only; it does not include construction means, methods, procurement, or pricing.

RightStart ends with a permit-ready package. Permit submission and construction begin afterward.

Most of these items require professional coordination, proper sequencing, and experienced oversight. Stellan Eoin Builders offers RightStart Agreements to manage this entire process—reducing the risk of missed steps, sequencing errors, and last-minute surprises. **Learn more at stellaneoin.com or contact us directly.**

ALL RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS

1. Property & Land-Use Verification

- ☐ Confirm property ownership and legal description
- ☐ Verify zoning classification and permitted residential uses
- ☐ Identify setbacks, height limits, lot coverage, and FAR
- ☐ Review overlay districts (historic, floodplain, hillside, conservation, form-based)
- ☐ Identify recorded easements (utility, drainage, access)
- ☐ Evaluate fire separation distance requirements
- ☐ Determine whether variances or zoning board approvals may be required
- ☐ Review HOA / architectural control requirements (if applicable)

2. Architectural Documentation

(Scope and level of documentation varies by project type and jurisdiction.)

- ☐ Floor plans and spatial layouts
- ☐ Exterior elevations
- ☐ Roof plan
- ☐ Building sections
- ☐ Window and door schedules
- ☐ Architectural site plan (building placement, setbacks, access)
- ☐ Finish schedules and material specifications (as required)

3. Structural Engineering & Evaluation

- ☐ Foundation design (new or modified)
- ☐ Structural framing plans
- ☐ Beam, header, LVL, and steel specifications
- ☐ Lateral force-resisting system
- ☐ Point load and bearing calculations
- ☐ Retaining wall engineering (where required)

4. MEP Engineering

- ☐ Mechanical load calculations (Manual J/S/D or equivalent)
- ☐ HVAC system layout, sizing, and duct design
- ☐ Electrical service sizing and panel load calculations
- ☐ Plumbing schematics and fixture layouts (as required)

- ☐ Gas piping layout and BTU calculations (if applicable)
- ☐ Ventilation strategy (bath fans, range hoods, whole-house)

5. Energy & Performance Compliance

- ☐ Energy compliance documentation (RESCheck or equivalent)
- ☐ Envelope performance specifications (windows, doors, insulation)
- ☐ Air sealing strategy and details
- ☐ Ventilation and indoor air quality strategy
- ☐ HERS rating or energy program enrollment (if pursuing ENERGY STAR, etc.)
- ☐ Blower door test coordination (if required)

6. Administrative & Financial Readiness

- ☐ Contractor licensing and insurance documentation
- ☐ Impact fees and connection fees identified
- ☐ Preliminary construction budget alignment
- ☐ Pre-construction schedule outline
- ☐ Third-party stakeholder requirements reviewed (lender, insurer, HOA)
- ☐ Document coordination and version control established

NEW SITE WORK — Ground-Up, Additions & ADUs

These items apply when new ground is disturbed, new foundations poured, or new utility connections established.

7. Surveys & Site Data

- ☐ Boundary survey
- ☐ Topographic survey
- ☐ Existing conditions survey (structures, pavements, utilities)
- ☐ Utility location verification (water, sewer, gas, electric)
- ☐ Tree survey (where required)
- ☐ Flood elevation certificate (if in or near floodplain)
- ☐ Slope or hillside analysis (where applicable)

8. Septic, Sewer & Water

- ☐ Septic feasibility testing and field layout (must occur before site disturbance)
- ☐ Septic system type selection (conventional, aerobic, advanced treatment)
- ☐ Septic system approval and permit
- ☐ Septic field protection and setback coordination with building design
- ☐ Sewer availability letter and capacity confirmation (if municipal)
- ☐ Sewer tap fee identification and application
- ☐ Well permitting and location approval (if applicable)
- ☐ Well water quality testing
- ☐ Well pump sizing and pressure tank requirements
- ☐ Water service availability and meter sizing
- ☐ Backflow prevention requirements (if applicable)

9. Utilities & Service Capacity

(Required where service is new, modified, or increased.)

- ☐ Electrical service evaluation and transformer capacity
- ☐ Gas service availability and meter sizing

- ☐ Temporary power pole coordination (if required)
- ☐ Temporary water source (if required)
- ☐ Utility provider pre-approval requirements identified
- ☐ Utility easement verification and coordination

10. Geotechnical & Site Conditions

- ☐ Geotechnical / soils report
- ☐ Bearing capacity and foundation suitability
- ☐ Rock depth and excavation feasibility
- ☐ Groundwater and drainage considerations
- ☐ Floodplain development compliance review (if applicable)
- ☐ Retaining wall feasibility (where grade changes exist)

11. Civil / Site Engineering

- ☐ Grading plan
- ☐ Grading permit (where required)
- ☐ Drainage and stormwater management plan
- ☐ Stormwater or hydrology calculations (if required)
- ☐ Erosion and sediment control plan
- ☐ Site utility routing and connection plans
- ☐ Driveway design and culvert sizing (where required)

12. Site-Related Approvals

- ☐ Site plan or design review approval
- ☐ Third-party plan review (where required)
- ☐ Driveway or access permit
- ☐ Right-of-way or street cut permit (where required)
- ☐ Tree removal permit (where required)
- ☐ Private road or shared driveway agreement (if applicable)
- ☐ Mailbox location and address assignment

EXISTING BUILDING — Renovations & Additions

These items apply when work connects to, modifies, or impacts an existing structure.

13. Existing Conditions Assessment

- ☐ Existing building documentation review (original drawings, permits)
- ☐ As-built verification of existing conditions
- ☐ Structural condition assessment of existing construction
- ☐ Existing foundation evaluation (for additions)
- ☐ Existing electrical capacity verification
- ☐ Existing plumbing capacity and condition verification
- ☐ Existing HVAC capacity and condition verification
- ☐ Hazardous materials assessment (asbestos, lead-based paint)
- ☐ Roof condition assessment (if affected by work)

REGULATORY APPROVALS — All Projects, Varies by Scope

14. Jurisdictional Approvals

- ☐ Variance or zoning board approval (if required)

- ☐ Historic or overlay district approval (if applicable)
- ☐ Utility authority approvals (water, sewer, stormwater)
- ☐ Fire marshal review (where required)
- ☐ Health department review (septic, well — if applicable)

Trade Permits *(State or local depending on jurisdiction.)*

- ☐ Electrical permit
- ☐ Plumbing permit
- ☐ Mechanical/gas permit

SPECIALTY SYSTEMS — When Applicable

Include these items when the corresponding feature or system is part of the project scope.

15. Optional Systems & Features

Pool / Spa

- ☐ Pool permit application and engineering
- ☐ Pool barrier and safety compliance
- ☐ Pool electrical bonding and equipment coordination
- ☐ Pool/spa gas heater sizing and venting

Whole-House Generator

- ☐ Generator sizing and load calculations
- ☐ Transfer switch specification and location
- ☐ Fuel source planning (natural gas, propane tank)
- ☐ Generator placement and setback compliance
- ☐ Sound attenuation requirements (if applicable)

Solar PV

- ☐ Structural provisions for roof-mounted array
- ☐ Electrical provisions (inverter location, panel capacity)
- ☐ Utility interconnection agreement
- ☐ Solar permit application

EV Charging

- ☐ Circuit and panel capacity for Level 2 charger
- ☐ Conduit routing to garage or parking area

Low-Voltage / Smart Home

- ☐ Structured wiring plan (data, voice, video)
- ☐ Smart home system pre-wire requirements
- ☐ Security system pre-wire or full installation scope
- ☐ Audio/video distribution pre-wire
- ☐ Central panel or closet location

Outdoor Living / Kitchen

- ☐ Outdoor kitchen gas, electrical, and plumbing rough-in
- ☐ Outdoor fireplace or fire pit gas connection
- ☐ Landscape lighting conduit and transformer provisions
- ☐ Irrigation system (stub only vs. full install)

Other Site Features

- ☐ Fence permit and setback compliance

- ☐ Detached structure permit (shed, workshop, etc.)
- ☐ Driveway gate and access control provisions

Tennessee-Specific Requirements

- ☐ Radon mitigation strategy (county risk level dependent)
- ☐ Termite pre-treatment coordination (IRC requirement)

ADU-SPECIFIC — Accessory Dwelling Units

These items apply when building an ADU, guest house, or accessory living structure.

16. ADU Requirements

- ☐ Zoning ADU allowance and lot size requirements verified
- ☐ Owner-occupancy requirements confirmed (if any)
- ☐ ADU size limitations verified
- ☐ Parking requirements for ADU
- ☐ Setback requirements for accessory structures
- ☐ Separate utility metering requirements
- ☐ Separate address assignment (if required)
- ☐ Rental registration requirements (if applicable)
- ☐ Short-term rental restrictions verified (if applicable)

HISTORIC DISTRICT — When Applicable

These items apply when the property is in a designated historic district or is individually listed.

17. Historic Review Requirements

- ☐ Historic review board pre-application consultation
- ☐ Certificate of Appropriateness application
- ☐ Material and method approval requirements
- ☐ Window and door replacement restrictions
- ☐ Roof material requirements
- ☐ Addition compatibility requirements (massing, setback, materials)
- ☐ Demolition review (if removing any portion)
- ☐ Secretary of Interior Standards compliance (if pursuing tax credits)
- ☐ Historic tax credit documentation (state and/or federal)

FINAL RIGHTSTART DELIVERABLES

18. Permit-Ready Package

- ☐ Coordinated architectural permit set
- ☐ Structural engineering package
- ☐ Civil / site engineering package (where applicable)
- ☐ MEP documentation as required
- ☐ Septic approval or sewer confirmation
- ☐ Well permit (where applicable)
- ☐ Utility confirmations and meter applications
- ☐ Energy compliance documents
- ☐ Completed jurisdictional approvals
- ☐ HOA / ARC approval (where applicable)
- ☐ Permit application package assembled

RightStart ends here. Permit submission and construction contracting follow.

Feeling overwhelmed? That's normal. A RightStart Agreement puts one experienced team in charge of coordinating the applicable items—so you don't have to manage it yourself.

Let Us Handle This For You

Through a RightStart Agreement, Stellan Eoin Builders, LLC takes responsibility for coordinating applicable prerequisites—surveys, engineering, septic, permits, and jurisdictional approvals—in the correct sequence, with experienced oversight.

You get: one accountable team, reduced risk of missed steps, no wasted design dollars, and a permit-ready package that's organized from day one.

The process culminates in a construction-ready proposal—a defined scope of work based on a final design shaped by real constraints and kept in budget alignment from the start.

Ready to Start Right?

Head over to **stellaneoin.com** and send us a line via the Contact Us button. Or email us directly at **quotes@stellaneoin.com**. You can also call us at **(615) 212-9005**—if we don't answer, leave a voicemail and we'll get back to you.

Stellan Eoin Builders, LLC • Tennessee License #BC 73150

Serving Middle Tennessee with professionalism, discipline, and integrated pre-construction leadership.