# Preparing for Your First Engineering Consultation

A first consultation goes faster when the engineer knows what you want to change, what you need to decide, and what records you already have. A short description and a few labeled files are enough to start the conversation.

## Describe the project and the deadline

Give the property address, including the unit or building if relevant. Describe what you see or what you want to change in everyday language. Say whether you are exploring an idea, preparing to submit for a permit, or already under construction. Give the date you are working toward and explain what sets it, such as a purchase deadline or a reviewer's due date.

### Example inquiry

| What to include | Fictional example |
|---|---|
| Property and stage | 123 Example Lane, Lakewood, Colorado. Early planning for a rear addition. |
| Decision | We want to compare a one-story addition with reworking the existing kitchen. Can a consultation help us decide what to study first? |
| Deadline | We hope to select an option before our January design meeting. |
| Attachments | Current floor-plan sketch, dated rear-yard photos, and a prior permit record. Existing structural drawings are unavailable. |

## Gather records you already have

Send the newest plans or sketches you can find and note their date. Include earlier engineering reports, surveys, contractor proposals, and complete written permit comments if they are relevant. A wide photo shows the setting. A closer photo should still include something that locates the detail. Give each image a date and a room or location. RES Project Preparation Guide · RES Project Photo Guide

## Make access and decision roles clear

Tell the engineer which areas are accessible, who can arrange entry, and whether the property is occupied. Mention locked rooms, finished surfaces, or limited attic or crawlspace access. Photograph existing openings from accessible positions. List records you are still looking for and who is responsible for each decision.

## List open choices and prepare the inquiry

Name two or three priorities and mark which are essential. For the addition example, staying in the house during part of the work might matter more than a particular framing material. Ask what a first conversation or visit can clarify, what information would be needed later, and how to share large or sensitive files. Use Before You Contact RES as a final checklist.

### Inquiry notes

Property and best contact

Decision, deadline, and attachment filenames

### What to do next

Unsure what to commission? Read Site Visits, Letters, Reports and Drawings.

Already received a request from a reviewer? Use How to Respond to a Permit Comment Asking for Engineering.