ALLOWABLE VARIATIONS

The construction of pre-approved buildings is required to match the construction drawings, details, specifications, and program guide requirements to the greatest extent possible; however, some minor variations by homeowners when utilizing pre-approved plans can contribute positively to natural architectural variety (and practical construction challenges). **How much can you vary a HOME plan and still have city pre-approval apply?**

Generally, the program recommends a reasonable amount of variation be allowable, especially non-structural and interior minor changes that won't have code implications. These variations may be administratively approved if noted on the building permit set in red for clear building permit review. Some other allowable variations are always allowed, as outlined below.

We recommend that homeowners and builders check with the Allen County Building Department before making any changes to the pre-approved plans. Also note that the non-exclusive license to build the home provided by the program provides no liability protections if a homeowner or builder makes changes to the plan that cause the building to be out of compliance with any building, fire, or zoning code.

If you're interested in additional variations, please contact the project designers on the program website to hire them for custom variations.

Design Variations

- Some of the plans include an alternative design variation, such as an optional integrated suite or two elevation designs to choose from. These variations are included in the building permit set, and have been pre-reviewed by city staff.
- Plan configurations can be mirrored to work for your specific site. Note the mirrored plan condition clearly in both building and site permit sets, and request a mirrored construction plan set from the program website if your builder needs one.

Exterior Materials

- Siding, eaves, and exterior trim options are limited to those available for selection on each plan's pre-defined checklist of options. Indicate intended selections on building permit set.
- Porch railings and post designs are encouraged to be varied for architectural variety, as long as the proposed design meets code requirements.
- Porch railings may be removed if compliant with building code (generally under a 30" drop).
- Confirm paint color and material limitations with underlying historic district requirements if your lot falls within a historic district. Additionally, new homes in Local Historic Districts will require approval of a certificate of Appropriateness by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Roof

- Roof pitch may vary in allowable increments up to 2:12, either higher or lower, as long as code-required overall heights are maintained. (Note that zoning will control overall building height and fire code will limit eave height unless aerial access may be provided). If changes to roof pitch increase height to more than 40 feet, then a development standards variance approval by the Board of Zoning Appeals would be required.
- A garage or a shed roof addition to the side of the house may be added for parking. Indicate the size, height, and slope of the garage or carport shed roof in site plans.

Windows + Doors

- The location, proportion, and quantity of windows and doors may not be changed except as noted as optional in the building permit set.
- Window sizes may vary by up to 3" in width or height to accommodate varying window manufacturers' standards. For example, a specified 2'-4" x 5'-4" window can be substituted with a 2'-6" x 5'-6" window, as long as required egress is maintained.
- Window muntin patterns can be altered from what is shown in the building permit set. Projects in historic neighborhoods may be better suited for 1/1 windows, 2/1 windows, or other historically appropriate muntin patterns.
- Window and door trim details are only allowed within the standard provided details. Indicate intended selections on building permit set.
- Builders should confirm which windows will be required by code to have tempered glass before ordering windows and should note this on buidling permit plans.

Porches

- Porch depths may be adjusted to a minimum of 6' deep or a maximum of 12' deep. Note the modified porch depth clearly in both building and site permit sets.

Foundation + Walls

- Foundation details will require an engineer's design and stamp in the following non-typical conditions.
  - 100 Year Flood (Zones AE + VE) per latest approved FEMA maps
  - Non-typical soil conditions that would require custom design
- Accessible plans are shown with slab on grade zero step entries. Raising the house between 12" and 24" above the adjacent grade is acceptable (for a more historically compatible exposed foundation within a historic neighborhood, for example). If a fully custom foundation is preferred, the program plan from the sill plate up may still be considered pre-approved.
- Walls may be constructed using Structural Insulated Panels or other pre-engineered wall system that meets design intent and exterior detailing of pre-approved plans, as long as manufacturer engineering is provided with the building permit set.
- Minor variation of the interior layout for resident preference is acceptable, as long as the revised layout is materially similar to the pre-approved design (such as adjusting wall locations slightly or making small dimensional changes); the exterior of the building is unaffected; and all building code requirements are met. The builder inspector will ensure applicable codes are met during the inspection process.