



SITE EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Below is an overview of important issues to consider when evaluating a site for building your home. Blu will be happy to help you with any questions you have that go beyond the subjects addressed here.

Key questions to ask about the ‘buildability’ of your site:

Blu can build anywhere a typical stick-built home can be built. Moreover, Blu homes perform better than conventional homes in many conditions because our building structure is particularly strong, and our range of foundation systems is designed to manage in many especially challenging locations. Still, Blu’s intention is to help you get a beautiful, healthful home at a reasonable cost and the specifics of site selection can have a significant effect on cost with any style of home construction. Since Blu’s goal is to help the site selection process be as transparent as possible, here are a few key issues to think about when looking at various site options. In all cases we will be glad to work with you to minimize your site costs.

- **Price:** The price of the site itself will certainly be an important issue in your site selection. However, since the conditions of an inexpensive site may force a high set of costs during construction, to compare ‘apples to apples’ between many sites, you will need to compare several of the costs below, which can add significant unexpected costs.
- **Proximity to utilities:** The cost of getting your house hooked up to local utilities can be significant. If your site does not have city utilities, and access to them is challenging, meaningful costs can arise. Based on your priorities, Blu’s flexible designs can work around some costs but the following should still be considered.
 - o **Septic:** If you are not connected to city sewers, you may need to set up a septic system. While costs vary, this often costs **between \$8K and \$25K**. We have seen many in the \$12K range. Septic can be above ground (a “mound”) or below ground, depending on your soil conditions.
 - o **Water:** Again, if you’re not near city water, you can expect to have to build a well or other individual water source. This often costs from **\$6K to \$15K**.
 - o **Electric:** If your site has been built on previously, it’s likely you already have a solution for electric. If not, depending on ease of access, electric utility hookups can cost anywhere between **\$2K** to set up a new pole, to **\$20K** to trench electric lines hundreds of feet out to a new site.
 - o **Gas:** Again, the best news is a previous gas hook up or very simple access to a gas pipeline. If this isn’t the case, the good news is that there is a relatively inexpensive distributed solution – propane tanks. Still, even propane can cost a few thousand dollars to set up, and everything adds up!
- **Challenging locations:** Blu has projects in hurricane zones, high wind zones, flood planes, earthquake zones, high snow load areas, and many other challenging environments. Checking your local building code will tell you what building



requirements are specific to your site's environmental issues. Typically, reinforced foundations, strapping for high wind, tall piers for flood areas, etc., can add some extra costs. While these costs can be minimized with Blu's technology and designs, it's best to understand your site's specific requirements early.

- **Access:** A key consideration for you when considering your site choice is its relative ease of access. Beautiful and remote sites can require excavation, grading, and access creation that add costs when compared with more conventional sites. These costs can range in cost from **\$7K** for a simple driveway, to more than **\$50K** for long driveways over steep grades. While Blu loves remote sites as much as many of you, and has unique foundation designs that can minimize your costs, these lovely locations can require unavoidable, extra costs.
- **Pre site work:** On some sites there is work to be done before being able to build. Here are a few questions to consider.
 - o Will site require major tree/brush/debris removal? Costs for this can vary pretty widely.
 - o Will site require removal of existing structure(s)?
 - This can add anywhere between **\$10-30K** in costs. While Blu can organize the recycling of almost all the components of homes that get taken down for our projects, the costs to do this can be meaningful.
- **Environmentally-restricted areas:** Trying to build a house in a wetland, coastal area, endangered species area, historic preservation district, or other heavily regulated area can add unpredictability and time to the permitting process, as well as additional costs. While Blu's experience with these issues can help, it is best to expect additional challenges if facing these issues. See the zoning list below to get a sense of potential problem areas.
- **Architectural / aesthetic review:** One of the zoning issues worth evaluating is whether your site is in an area that has any kind of architectural/aesthetic review committee. Historic / local / neighborhood / township associations can have jurisdiction over the aesthetics of the home that you build. Although Blu can help to make sure your Blu home "fits" in your neighborhood, some types of changes can add costs. Knowing the requirements early can keep these costs down.

Key information for you to provide Blu:

By providing us with information early in the design process you can help us do a better job working to keep your satisfaction high and your costs low. A list of helpful documents and decisions follows. Please don't worry if you don't have and cannot get all the answers the questions below are looking for! We will help you work through this process. We do it all the time , and we know most of you don't!

Key documents to try to acquire:

- Assessors map/plot plan/site plan/survey Yes_____ No_____ NA_____



- Topographic map Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Aerial and site photos Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Any property records listing any key restrictions Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Septic plan(s) Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Subdivision plans Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Easements Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Appraisal report by realtor or property appraiser Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Soil survey/mapping Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____
- Ledge or estimated depths to bedrock Yes_____ No_____
 - NA_____

Key questions to ask about zoning:

- Is there allowable residential use?
- What are my property line setbacks?
- What is my lot coverage ratio?
- Can I build driveways or other ancillary structures like decking within setbacks?
 - o If so, what determines whether it counts as ‘ancillary’
- Are there over-lay districts that my property falls into that might cause extra permitting time and effort?
 - o Groundwater/aquifer protection
 - o Historic preservation
 - o Architectural review committees
 - o Wetlands
 - o Floodplain
 - o Inland and/or costal water resources
 - o Natural Heritage – endangered species
 - o Cultural Heritage – archeological and/or historic resources
- Any other site attribute of possible significance, either within site or within vicinity of site?

Key environmental considerations and checklist items to fill out:

If you have answers to any of these questions, it helps Blu in our initial energy use analysis and home siting process.

Sun/wind considerations

- Latitude of site _____°
 _____, _____”
- Best orientation for front of the house N____ NE____ E____ SE____ S____
 SW____ W____ NW____



- Shade cast by vegetation over building site? Yes_____ No_____
- Seasonal winds and breezes present Yes_____ No_____
- Unclear_____
- Shaded parts of plot Yes_____ No_____
- Unclear_____

Foundation design options. Check all that you would like us to consider for your home. Blu includes a pier foundation as standard in our pricing because for most conditions it is the most ecological, healthful, beautiful (when elegantly finished) and affordable option.

- Pier foundation (included) _____
- Slab-on-grade _____
- Crawlspace _____
- Basement _____
- Unsure _____

Grading design

- Site relatively flat _____
- Small grade on majority of site _____
- Medium grade on most of site _____
- Large grade on most of site _____
- Grade on only part of site _____ Large_____
- Medium_____ Small_____

Water management

- Standing groundwater Yes_____ No_____
- Adequate drainage Yes_____ No_____
- Potential for rainwater harvesting Yes_____ No_____
- Irrigation setup Yes_____ No_____

Access

- Adequate space for driveway or garage Yes_____ No_____
- Foreseeable entry sequence Yes_____ No_____
- Appealing presentation of the home to the street Yes_____ No_____

Utility Services Available

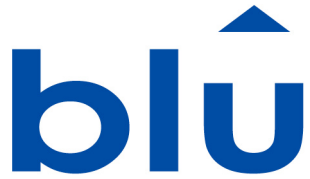
- Gas City_____ None_____
- Water City_____ Well_____ None_____
- Sewer City_____ Septic Tank_____ None_____
- Electric City_____ None_____

Aesthetic Appeal

- Privacy from neighbors Yes_____ No_____
- Views/Vistas Yes_____ No_____
- Aesthetic enhancement opportunities Yes_____ No_____
- Current outdoor lighting Yes_____ No_____

Planting/Garden Design

- Wooded lot Yes_____ No_____



- | | | |
|---|----------|---------|
| • Soil sufficient for gardening | Yes_____ | No_____ |
| • Location for composing | Yes_____ | No_____ |
| • Location for natives and/or ornamental planting | Yes_____ | No_____ |
| • Location for edible landscapes or herb gardens | Yes_____ | No_____ |
| • Option for orchard or vineyard | Yes_____ | No_____ |
| • Local animals that may eat from garden | Yes_____ | No_____ |

Other foreseeable strategies for maximizing potential enjoyment and environmental fit of home to

site_____
