

General Procedures When You Apply for a Planning or Building Permit

How do I apply for a planning or building permit?



You apply at the Development Review Center (DRC), Second Floor, 455 County Center, Redwood City. Counter hours at the DRC are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Monday through Friday. No appointment is necessary.

The DRC handles permit applications for all unincorporated areas of San Mateo County. If your property is within the boundaries of any incorporated city or town, contact that city rather than the DRC.

For more detailed information about how the DRC will assist you with your project, we suggest that you read the booklet *A User's Guide to the Development Review Center*. You may pick up a copy at the DRC, or you may call us and we will be glad to mail you a copy.

What's the first step in this process?



The DRC has pamphlets that describe the steps required to secure a permit for each kind of project, e.g., building a house, remodeling a house, or requesting a variance. Before you fill out an application, study the pamphlet that applies to your project to determine which approvals you will need and what plans and other documents you must submit with your application.

Once you are familiar with your project's requirements, we recommend that you prepare some very preliminary plans and bring them to

the DRC counter so that we can review them before you submit your application. An informal meeting at this stage may save you considerable time and money later on. The goal of every staff member at the DRC is to help you get your project approved. After seeing very preliminary plans, the counter staff can help you by spotting potential problems and pointing out what kinds of changes, if any, you might have to make. Then you can create your formal plans and submit your application.

If you are new to San Mateo County, you may also wish to make an appointment to meet with staff as part of the County's Early Assistance Meeting Program. Early assistance meetings are designed to acquaint owner/builders, contractors, architects, and other professionals who are new to the area with our permit system, the different agencies involved, and the various costs and requirements. There is no charge for the meeting, which you can schedule with the Planning Division by calling (650) 363-1825. Meetings are currently available on Fridays at 8:30 a.m.

What happens after I apply?

The staff reviews your plans and routes them to several other departments for their review, including:

- Environmental Planning
- Health
- Building Inspection
- Fire
- Public Works
- Public Utilities

Once you have made any required changes and all departments have given their approvals, we will send you a card telling you that you may pay your permit fees and receive your permit.

What fees must I pay?



The fees for a permit, plan check, and other services vary depending upon a number of factors. You may get a current fee schedule and pay your fees at the DRC counter.

To give you an idea of the total fees required, the following are examples of some typical projects.

Building permit fees are calculated by several different methods. The method of calculation depends on the type of project. For example, new construction is calculated on a unit price per square foot of construction.

Note: The fees used herein are intended for use as an example only and may not actually represent accurate costs. Fee schedules can be provided to you by staff persons working in the Development Review Center.

Example: New single-family dwelling of 1500 square feet with an attached garage of 400 square feet:

Fee Type	Amount
Building Permit Fee (House), 1500 sq ft @ \$.54	\$ 810.00
Plumbing Fee (House), 1500 sq ft @ \$.11	165.00
Mechanical Fee (House), 1500 sq ft @ \$.12	180.00
Electrical Fee (House), 1500 sq ft @ \$.12	180.00
Building Fee (Garage), 400 sq ft @ \$.36	144.00
Electrical Fee (Garage), 400 sq ft @ \$.12	48.00
Subtotal	\$1,527.00
Plan Check Fee (65% of permit fees)	992.55
Geotechnical Review Fee	991.00
Energy Compliance Review Fee	53.00
Microfilm Fee (\$1.70 per page)	8.75
Filing Fee	10.90
Total Permit Fees (Building)	\$3,583.20

Planning fees also apply to development projects; for the most part, these are flat rate fees depending on the application type. For example, if the residence described above is constructed in the urban coastal area, the following fees apply:

Fee Type	Amount
Coastal Development Exemption Fee	\$ 107.00
Design Review District Fee	169.00
Environmental Review Fee	107.00
Total Permit Fees (Planning)	\$ 383.00

In addition to the above fees, school impact fees, road mitigation fees, fire department fees, and Environmental Health Division fees may apply. To determine whether these fees apply to your project, check with a permit technician.

Permit fees for interior remodeling or alterations are calculated by the valuation of the work to be done and, in the majority of the cases, involve no other departments or fees. When determining the valuation of a project, you should include all anticipated materials and labor. Even if work is done by you the owner, labor cost must be included in your valuation figure. Labor cost will be based on the Bay Area average as determined by the construction industry. This valuation is then compared to a permit fee schedule to determine a dollar value for the permit fee. This schedule is included in the fee schedule.

Example: Kitchen remodel with a valuation of \$15,000:

Fee Type	Amount
Building Permit Fee (\$15,000 val.)	\$ 320.00
Plumbing Fee (minimum)	32.00
Electrical Fee (minimum)	32.00
Subtotal, Permit Fees	\$ 384.00
Plan Check Fee (65% of permit fees)	249.60
Microfilm Fee (\$1.75 per page)	1.75
Filing Fee	10.90
Total Fees Due	\$ 646.25

Typically, no planning fees are associated with this type of project.

In many cases, the necessary planning approvals are applied for in advance of the building permit application.

The following example of a **"Planning only"** application involves a new residence and access road in the rural coastal area. Total costs of all planning permits to construct a new single family residence shall not exceed \$2,156.

Fee Type	Amount
Coastal Development Permit Fee	\$ 1,300.00
Planned Agricultural District Permit Fee	1,706.00
Environmental Review Fee	833.00
Subtotal, House Only	3,839.00
Grading Permit Fee (graduated fee)	1,300.00
Geotechnical Report Review Fee	991.00
Total Planning Fees	\$6,130.00

In addition to the above fees, there are also review fees for the Fire Department and Environmental Health Division fees.

Since January 1987, State law has allowed school districts to levy impact fees on all new residential, commercial and industrial development. If your project lies within a district that levies such a fee, you must pay the fee directly to the district before we can issue a building permit. For more details, see our handout entitled **School Impact Fees**.

When do I pay the fees?

You must pay the fees for plan check, microfilm, Planning, Health, energy check, Geotechnical, and filing when you submit your application. You must pay the permit fee and road mitigation fee when we issue you the permit.

How long will it take for my application to be approved?

Approval time depends on several factors, including the complexity of your project, the number of approvals required, seasonal workloads, appeal periods, and whether your plans will require changes.

If you are applying for a building permit for a very minor repair project that requires no other kinds of permit, the approval time may be a matter of days or weeks.

If your project requires Planning approval, the approval time may be considerably longer so that, for example, the County can notify neighboring property owners and hold the required public hearings. If your project is in the Coastal Development Zone or requires an environmental review, even more time will be required.

We urge you not to make a timetable for yourself or with any contractors until you have determined the approximate time it will take for your approvals. When you apply for your permit, the Permit Technician will probably be able to give you an estimate.

Once I have my building permit and I begin construction, how do I arrange for a building inspection?



To schedule an inspection, call our automated phone system at 306-8415. Call at least two days in advance. To schedule an inspection you must have your permit case number and a copy of the inspection codes which are located on the rear of your job site inspection record. For a detailed description on how to use the automated phone system, please refer to the handout entitled **Hello System**.

To find out the approximate time that a scheduled inspection will take place, call the Building Inspection Section at 599-7311 between 8 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. on the day of the inspection.

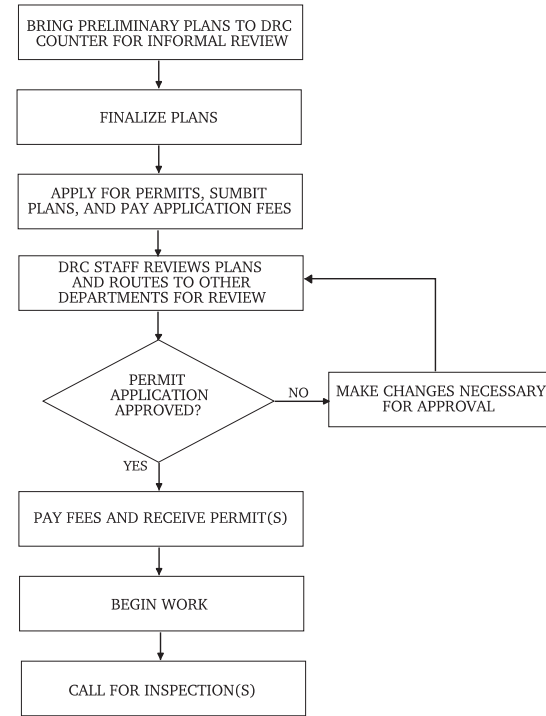
To ask a question about when you will need your next inspection, ask your building inspector or call Building Inspection between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Which documents must I have available during an inspection?



Any approved plans that you were required to prepare for your project and the form entitled "Inspection Record," which you will receive at the same time you receive your approved building permit.

Planning or Building Permit Process



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Planning and Building Division

455 County Center, Second Floor

Redwood City, California 94063

(650) 363-4161

FAX (650) 363-4849

PUBLIC SERVICE EXCELLENCE

