

How to Apply for an Architectural Review

How do I know whether I need an architectural review of my project?



Anyone who requests a building permit in any of the three designated state scenic corridors must either have an architectural review or be granted an exemption from architectural review. These corridors are located along Interstate 280 south of Millbrae, along Highway 1 south of Half Moon Bay, and along Skyline Blvd. south of Highway 92. You can review a General Plan map at the Development Review Center that shows you the exact locations of these scenic corridors.

Why is an architectural review necessary?

An architectural review ensures that different projects within a district or along highways blend harmoniously with the existing environment and neighboring structures, thus preventing an unsightly structure from destroying an area's character, and reducing the value of existing properties and the livability of the area.

What takes place during the architectural review process?

In addition to the materials you would normally submit with your building permit, you must also do a site-line analysis and submit drawings or sketches showing the front, side, and rear elevations of your project. The Planning Commission reviews these documents to determine which elements of your project are visible from the surrounding area and how well these elements blend in. The commissioners may approve your drawings or require you

to make some changes before they give their approval.

What kinds of projects qualify for an exemption?

New structures which are not visible from Skyline Boulevard and minor additions to existing structures, provided that the expansion is no greater than 10% of the existing floor space.

How do I apply for an exemption from architectural review?

Submit a statement to Planning explaining why you are requesting the exemption, the circumstances of the site and the reason why the new structure will not be visible from Skyline Boulevard or detract from the visual quality of the scenic corridor. With your statement, submit the following:

- ✓ Architectural elevations of the proposed structure.
- ✓ A site plan of the property showing five-foot contours, major vegetative cover and the location of the structure drawn to scale. (You can obtain a photographic map with 20-foot contours from the Department of Public Works.)
- ✓ Any photographs, maps, plans or other material that will support your request.

How do I apply for an architectural review?



Submit an application to Planning that identifies the property, describes the site and the building, and lists any permits or approvals you think you will need in connection with this project. Submit the following with your application:

- ✓ An Environmental Information Form
- ✓ Proof of property ownership
- ✓ If you do not own the property, evidence that the owner agrees with your application

- ✓ A list of people who own property within 300 feet of yours, one stamped, addressed legal-size envelope for each person, and a mailing label for each person
- ✓ A location map
- ✓ A site plan.
- ✓ Line-of-site drawings or photos
- ✓ Building elevations
- ✓ Floor plans
- ✓ 8 1/2" x 11" transparencies of maps and plans
- ✓ Self-addressed post cards so that the County can notify you of your application's status
- ✓ Fees.

How long does the process take?



Generally, the process takes from 3 to 4 months.

What fees must I pay?



You must pay a flat fee plus an Environmental Review fee and any fees for required district permits. You may need to pay coastal development fees if your property is in the coastal zone.

What's the next step in this process?



Read the pamphlet **General Procedures When You Apply for a Planning or Building Permit**. This pamphlet explains the general procedures for applying for a permit, paying fees, calling for inspections, and other related matters. Then you should also review the following documents, which contain other information that you may need:

How Environmental Assessment May Affect Your Project

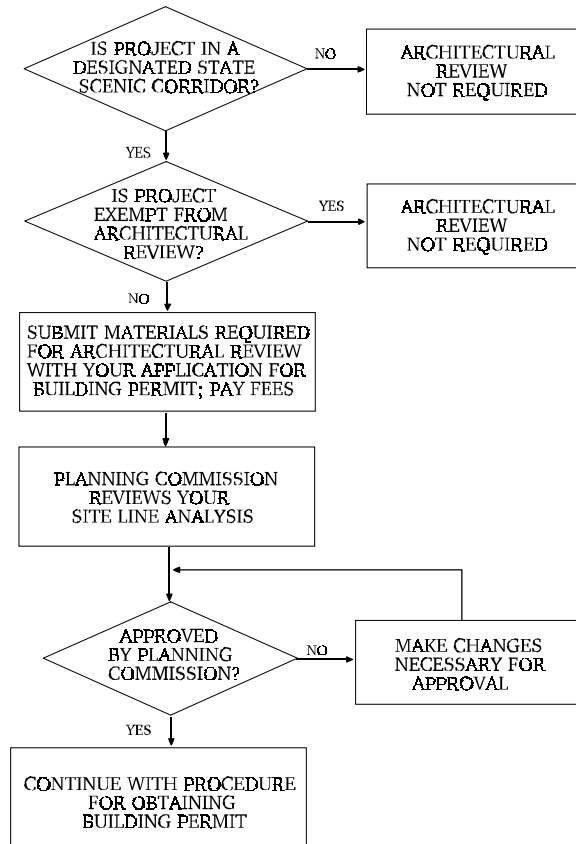
How to Apply for a Coastal Development Permit

Standards for Architectural and Site Control in Skyline Scenic Corridor

After you have become familiar with these pamphlets, we recommend that you prepare some very preliminary plans and bring them to the DRC counter so that we can review them. An informal meeting at this stage may save you considerable time and money later on.

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 or are unfamiliar with our permit system, with the different agencies involved, and the various costs and requirements. There is no charge for the meeting, which you can schedule by calling (650) 363-4161.

Architectural Review Process



San Mateo County
Planning and Building Division

How to Apply for an Architectural Review

Planning and Building Division

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