Building Permit Application Requirements for Residential Structures

Construction drawings are necessary to obtain a building permit for most structures. Only complete applications that include construction drawings and other required documents as described below will be accepted for review.

Once plans are submitted any revision to the project that alters the original description must be approved. You must sign up to see a Zoning Counter Planner and a Building Technician to see if your project can be changed.

This checklist is provided to insure you have all materials necessary to submit for your project. This checklist will be used to review your application submittal for acceptance. **Plans will not be accepted if the checklist is not followed**.

An unlicensed person may prepare plans for one and two story, wood framed single family dwellings and accessory buildings with uniformly level floors in conformance with conventional construction provisions (CBC, Section 2308), however the Building Official may require some structural plans and specifications by a licensed engineer or architect. An architect or engineer, registered in the State of California as such, must prepare calculations, plans, and specifications for any other project.

An appointment is required to submit your building plans. Please contact the General Information Desk at (831) 454-3252 to schedule an appointment to submit your plans. Hearing impaired clients may call (831) 454-2123.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMITTAL

- No tape, no red ink, no pencil.
- 7 copies of plans (minimum sheet size 18"x 24", maximum size 36"x 48" blueprint or photocopy). No mixed sizes.
- Health clearance form: if new bedroom or change in footprint for parcels on septic.
- All documents which are prepared by state licensed professional(s) shall be stamped and wet signed (including revisions) before issuance of permits.
- 2 copies of structural design calculations and related details with signature of engineer in fresh ink on first page of each set of the calculations and all drawings directly related to the structural calculations.

Projects Outside Coastal Zone

- Modification Worksheet: if structural alterations to nonconforming structure or use, provide Modification Worksheet (2 copies): Available online by clicking here.
- Modification Plan (2 copies): Required if structural alterations to nonconforming structure or use reach 55%. If affected structure is within a riparian corridor, within five (5) feet of a vehicular right-of-way or within five (5) feet of a planned, public, vehicular right-of-way improvement, a Modification Plan is required for projects modifying 40% of the major structural components.

ENERGY COMPLIANCE DOCUMENTS FOR ADDITIONS WITH CONDITIONED SPACE

- 2 copies of an approved energy compliance method using either Prescriptive Package C or D or the Performance Approach showing that the building design meets the requirements of the current California Energy Code.

- Signatures of the energy compliance author, and the designer or the owner shall be on all copies of the CF-1R forms.
- MF-1R, CF-1R, WS-4R (if used) and WS-5R forms shall be incorporated into a plan sheet.
- 3 copies of soils reports when required. Click here for soils report requirements.
- 2 copies of a plan review letter with signatures of soils engineer in fresh ink.
- 4 copies of Zoning Permits, if one has been applied for and approved.
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Indicate if the proposed structure is in the State Responsibility Area (SRA), fire zone and the degree of hazard assigned by the State Fire Marshall's Office. See www.sccoplanning.com – Brochures.

FOR SINGLE FAMILY DWELLINGS AND SECOND UNITS

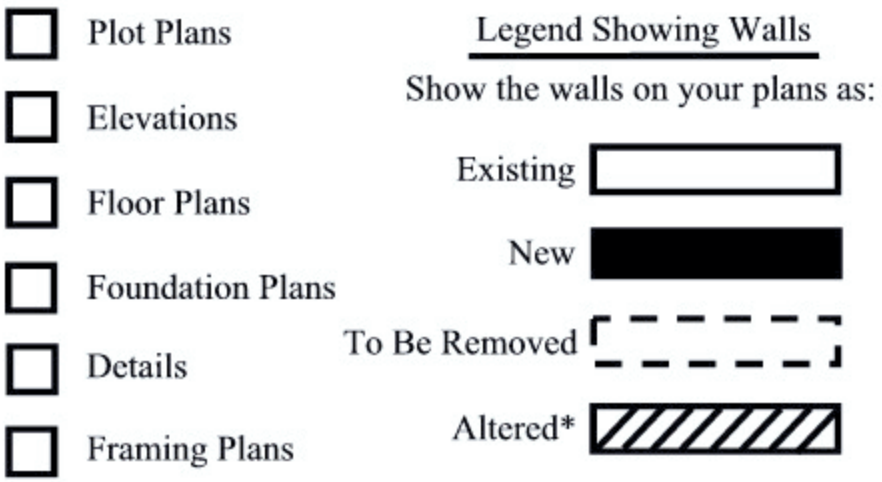
- Letter from public water source, declaring intent to serve parcel.
- Approval of water supply by Environmental Health if public water service is not available.
- Letter from special district certifying ability to provide sewer service (only for districts not administered by the Department of Public Works).
- Environmental Health Clearance form for parcels on septic (see Environmental Health Department from 8:00 am-9:30 am only, 3rd floor, room 312, or by phone 454-2022).

COVER PAGE TO INCLUDE

- Detailed vicinity map with major roads, cross streets, bridges, geographic features such as creeks, ocean, etc.
- Project information to include the project address, Assessor's parcel number, project description, occupancy group, and construction type.
- The names of the owner, architect, engineers.
- A list of all square footage of the project. (decks, retaining walls, porches, etc)
- Abbreviations & Symbols.
- Sheet Index.
- List current applicable construction codes.

FOR ADDITIONS/REMODELS

Clearly distinguish between new and existing construction on:



Modification of Major Structural Components, as defined in 13.10700-M
(In effect outside the Coastal Zone as of April 20, 2012)

The Major Structural Components of any given structure are defined as the foundation, floor framing, exterior wall framing and roof framing of a structure.

The following are not considered major structural components: exterior siding, doors, window glazing, roofing materials, decks, chimneys and interior elements including interior walls and sheetrock, insulation, fixtures, and mechanical, electrical and plumbing elements.

For information on how to measure structural modifications and a list of what is considered a modification and what is not, see counter handout, “Evaluating Modification of Major Structural Components.” The handout is also available online by clicking here.

STRUCTURAL ALTERATIONS, AS DEFINED IN 13.10.700-S:
(Effective inside the Coastal Zone pending Coastal Commission Certification of Ordinance #5119)

- Removal, replacement or addition of studs, headers, king studs, top plates, sill plates and trimmers.
- Wall furring (including sistering).
- The addition of framing above an existing top plate; or
- Elevation of the structure except for temporary elevation necessary to replace the foundation.

FIRE PROTECTION/WATER STORAGE TANKS

- Identify water source.
- Relation of existing and proposed tank(s) to property lines, rights of way and other structures indicated.
- Slope and grade adjacent to tank indicated
- Foundation designs for tanks greater than 5000 gallons or with greater than 2:1 width to height ratio.
- Locate fire hydrants within 250 feet of property line.
- Sprinkler systems plans and calculations shall be submitted directly to the local Fire District for new single family dwellings and additions over 50% of the original square footage of the single family dwellings, as well as fire alarm specifications, if proposed.
- All detached habitable structures will be sent to fire.
- All detached non-habitable structures over 500 square feet will be sent to fire.

SITE PLAN

- Assessor's parcel number.
- Small vicinity map.
- Scale 1" = 10 feet, 1" = 20 feet, 1/16" = 1 foot or other appropriate scale.
- North arrow.
- Entire property shown with dimensions of boundaries.
- Show existing and proposed structures with uses noted, topographic contours within 10' vicinity of improvements (buildings, swimming pools, driveways, septic tanks, etc.). Contour intervals of 2 feet. Call out any slopes greater than 30 percent in the area of the roadway and building site. If parcel is flat, label "parcel is flat". Topographic contour plan may be required to be prepared by a licensed land surveyor. See building height handout “Measuring Height”.
- Streams and drainage courses and distances to proposed development.
- Location and volume of earthwork, including both cut and fill (more than 100 yards of earthwork requires a grading permit).

- Building setbacks from all property lines, rights of way, and distances between all buildings.
- Lot size in square feet.
- Percentage of lot coverage.
- Off street parking (8'-6" x 18'-0" minimum per space).
- Emergency vehicle turnaround and fire lane identification may be required. See your local Fire Protection Agency.
- Location and width of all vehicular rights-of-way.
- Existing curb, gutter and sidewalk.
- Existing pavement width of street fronting the lot.
- Driveways. Driveway profile (for new driveways). Include bridges. Show berms, water bars, or other means to prevent road erosion.
- Existing and proposed walkways, patios or other impervious areas; show any impervious areas to be removed.
- Existing or proposed swimming pool and pool barrier details with pool area topography.
- Location of septic system and expansion area.
- Proposed locations of on-site sewer laterals, connections to existing sewers & clean outs.
- Connection lateral for fire protection.
- Floor area calculations County Code 13.10.323 (c).
- Domestic water and gas supply locations and pipe sizes.
- Location, height and length of site retaining walls.
- Requirements of California Disabled Access for projects of more than 20 units.

BUILDING HEIGHT SURVEY (WHERE APPLICABLE)

- Roof plan shall be superimposed over contour mapping. Provide spot elevations as described in building height handout "Measure Height", stamped and signed.
- Topographic contour plan may be required to be prepared by a licensed land surveyor.

DRAINAGE PLAN/EROSION CONTROL PLAN (may be included on SITE PLAN)

- Scale 1" = 1 foot, 1" = 20 feet, 1/16" = 1 foot or other appropriate scale.
- Show and label existing and proposed drainage features, (e.g. curbs, channels, dikes, ditches, swales, rain gutters, splash blocks, energy dissipaters, storm drain inlets and pipe systems, french drains, culverts, creeks, etc.)
- Show topography and use arrows to show pathways of runoff
- Show offsite pathways and destination of runoff. Note evidence of erosion or flooding.
- For new developments and additions over 500 square feet within GROUNDWATER RECHARGE or water SUPPLY WATERSHED ZONES, show proposed onsite retention system.
- For more detailed information, please refer to the Drainage Guidelines pamphlet.
- Proposed erosion control measures.
- Revegetation proposal for all exposed soil surfaces including cut and fill slopes.
- Sediment containment measures and special precautions for winter operations (October 15 through April 15).

ELEVATIONS

- Scale 1/4" = 1 foot, 1/8" = 1 foot on large structures or other scale with department approval
- Four elevations labeled North, South, East, West, except for interior remodels with no exterior changes.
- Ground elevation including natural and finished grade (corresponding to contours on plot plan).

- Height of structure on all elevations. Finished floor elevations at each floor and spot elevations at the high and low exterior grade elevations and the highest point of the building.
- Existing and proposed elevations for additions

FLOOR PLAN (one for each floor, including basement)

- Scale 1/4" = 1 foot. North arrow.
- Dimensions and arrangement of rooms and partitions.
- Use of each room. (See current bedroom definition). County Code 13.10.700B
- Calculated square footage of heated and unheated spaces and decks.
- Electrical plan (may be on separate sheet) including location and amperage of service entrance, subpanels, locations of appliances, lights, fixtures, outlets (including GFI's) switches and smoke detectors. Lighting and switching shown on plan that compiles with the energy documentation submitted, see MF-1R form.
- Location of proposed plumbing fixtures and water heaters, including size, type and location.
- Window and door schedules showing size, material, type of operation and special features such as emergency escape or safety glazing.
- Location, size and type of space heating systems.
- Locate shear walls and other lateral bracing. Cross reference to shear wall schedule and/or details.
- FOR ADDITIONS: Existing and proposed floor plans; existing and proposed square footage; electrical plan including location and amperage of service entrance and subpanels, lights, outlets, or switches; all existing and proposed plumbing fixtures (labeled “new” (replaced) or “existing”.
- FOR REMODELS: Existing and proposed floor plans, existing and proposed room labels and all existing and proposed plumbing fixtures.

FOUNDATION, FIRST FLOOR FRAMING

- Scale 1/4" = 1 foot. North arrow
- Layout of foundation wall and concrete slabs with dimensions.
- Size and location of footings, piers, posts, beams, air vents, access holes, integral footings and structural reinforcement.
- Species, grade size, direction and spacing of floor joists and/or beams.
- Hold-down locations and types according to requirements developed in structural calculations.
- FOR ADDITIONS: Adequate structural ties between existing and new foundations.
- FOR SECOND-STORY ADDITIONS: Demonstrate existing foundation is suitable to support additional loading.
- Anchor bolt size and spacings.
- Underfloor access, size and location.
- Underfloor ventilation, calculate required amount and indicate location.
- Water tank foundation (see water storage above).
- Cross-reference to details and connection specifications.

SECOND FLOOR FRAMING PLAN

- Scale 1/4" = 1 foot. North arrow.
- Material, size, spacing, species and grade of all wood members.
- Attic access, size and location.
- Cross-reference to details and connection specifications.

CEILING FRAMING PLAN

- Scale 1/4" = 1 foot. North arrow.
- Material, size, spacing, species and grade of all wood members.
- Attic access.
- Cross-reference to details and connection specifications.

ROOF FRAMING PLAN

- Scale 1/4" = 1 foot. North arrow.
- Material, size, spacing, species and grade of all wood members.
- Cross-reference to details and connection specifications

STRUCTURAL CROSS-SECTION (separate drawing required for each major framing type)

- Scale 1/4" = 1 foot or 1/2" = 1 foot.
- Show original natural grade inside and outside building footprint. (See building height handout "Measuring Height").
- Footing, foundation and finish grade in relation to framing.
- Crawl space clearance, ceiling height.
- All floor, decks, wall, ceiling, roof framing, blocking and lateral bracing with size and spacing of members.
- Finishes for floor, walls and ceilings.
- Roofing, (Class "B" or better is required), roof sheathing and attachment specifications.
- Exterior wall materials and attachment specifications.
- Insulation R-values.
- Upper and lower ventilation for all ceilings and attic areas.
- FOR ADDITIONS: Show adequate structural ties between existing and new construction.

DETAILS

- Scale 1/2" = 1 foot or 1" = 1 foot.
- Footings, piers, grade beams.
- Connections of framing members. Include metal connector types and sizes.
- High strength connections, including supporting engineering specifications.
- Nailing schedule for shear walls.
- Stairs, handrails and guardrails (include rise and run of stairs, height of handrail and guardrails with spacing of members in guardrails).
- Spas. (Show dedicated outlet or disconnect and locking cover or pool barrier).
- Shear transfer details (blocking and nailing at horizontal-to-vertical diaphragm connections).
- Shear collector details at openings and reentrant corners according to requirements developed in structural calculations.
- 2 copies of equipment brochures with ICC or UL listing numbers or approved agency listing (woodstove, manufactured fireplace, heating system, air conditioning unit, spa equipment, water tank specs, etc.)
- Shear wall layout plan locating the seismic tie-down devices, the size and spacing of anchor bolts, and the plywood size and nailing pattern shown on the plan.
- For two or more units with a common wall: fire and sound resistive construction assemblies between units.

ENGINEERING IS REQUIRED FOR:

- Retaining walls which retain more than 4 feet of material or have a surcharge from other structures or driveways/roadways.
- Load-bearing beams, including glu-lams.

- Large or high strength timber connections.
- Non-standard foundations, including pier and grade beams.
- Trusses -provide engineered details and layout plans from the manufacturer for prefabricated trusses. County Code 12.10.325 (b) architect or engineer of record will provide a letter stating trusses conform to the building structure.
- Construction other than conventional, wood framing, per CBC 2308.
- Swimming pools.
- Buildings of other non-standard construction, including split-level buildings and buildings of unusual shape, per CBC.2308.
- Grading more than 2,000 cubic yards.
- Bridges.
- Water storage tanks over 5,000 gallons (to include foundation and anchorage to foundation)
- Special Inspection and testing schedule agreement and statement of special inspection. (Forms are available at this department).
- New, Repair, or replacement of decks over 12ft high.
- Contour mapping when required per building height handout.

GRADING PERMIT INFORMATION AND SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Grading approval is required for the projects which include:

- Moving more than 100 cubic yards of Earth,
- Fills greater than two feet in depth,
- Any amount of fill placed on slopes of 20% or greater,
- Fills which are used for structural support,
- Creating a cut slope greater than 5 feet high, or
- All shoreline protection projects, including seawalls and rip-rap, even if less than 100 cubic yards of material will be moved.

Planners at the Zoning Counter will determine if your grading approval can be processed as part of a building permit, rather than a separate discretionary grading permit. If your grading project is listed above and if it qualifies to be processed as part of your building permit, then up to seven copies of grading plans will be required at the time of your building permit application submittal.

Click here for Grading Plan Requirements.

EROSION CONTROL PLAN

Click here for Erosion Control Plan Requirements.

LETTERS, REPORTS, and CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

- Two copies of all technical reports and/or letters, if such reports/letters have been completed. (e.g.: geotechnical, geologic, hydrologic, biotic, etc).
- One copy of each "Conditions of Approval" for all associated environmental, development, or land divisions permits.

APN:
APPLICATION:
INCOMPLETE (date):
STAFF COMPLETE (date):

Your complete building application will be reviewed by the appropriate county agencies. You will be advised by letter of completion of the review process and any further requirements by the reviewing agencies. All deficiencies must be corrected before your building permit can be issued. When more than one agency requires correction of plans the resubmission shall address the requirements of all agencies. Partial responses to portions of the deficiency letters are not acceptable. It is only necessary to resubmit the plan sheets or documents that have been changed from the prior submittal. Fees will be recalculated after approval from all agencies for any additional charges from reviewing agencies.

The County of Santa Cruz does not discriminate on the basis of disability and no person shall be denied the benefits of its services based on disability. The Planning Department is located in an accessible facility. If you need special assistance, please contact the Planning Department.