

# TOWN OF LOOMIS

## PLANNING DEPARTMENT

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND EXPLANATION OF PROCESSING FOR VARIOUS PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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The Town of Loomis has many land use application types. Each application is intended to accomplish specific objectives necessary to implement the goals and policies of the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. A proposed project may require one or more of these approvals. The following is a brief explanation of each application type and the process for obtaining approval. This is an attempt to provide basic information on the applications and the approval process. Applicants are encouraged to consult the Town's Planning Department staff at 916-652-1840 or in person (between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.) for complete information regarding the respective applications and the approval process.

Staff recommends project predevelopment meetings with the Planning and Engineering Department. After staff consultation, a complete planning application, appropriate fees, and required submittal documents/maps must be submitted a minimum of 6 weeks prior to the next Planning Commission meeting. The Planning Commission regularly meets on the third Tuesday of the month.

**APPEALS:** All actions by Town staff or Planning Commission may be appealed within 10 days of the action. The appeal must be 1) in letter form, explaining what action is appealed and why the action is appealed, 2) filed with the Town Clerk within the 10 day appeal period, and 3) submitted with the appropriate fee.

**CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE:** A Certificate of Compliance is required when a determination is needed by any person owning real property or a vendee of that person pursuant to a contract of sale of the real property, determining whether the real property complies with the provisions of the Subdivision Map Act, Section 66499.35, and local regulations. The Planning Director and Town Engineer review the title reports and pertinent documents submitted pertaining to the subject property for compliance with the Subdivision Map Act. If in compliance then a Certificate of Compliance is approved and recorded at the Placer County Recorders Office.

**CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT:** A Conditional Use Permit is required when a proposed land use is listed as "conditionally permitted" by the Zoning Ordinance or a new building, greater than 500 sq. ft. addition, lapse in use without required parking for over one year, revision to a building's recent use requiring additional parking, or is proposed to be placed on a commercial or industrial site. Generally, use permits are required for uses that, due to some special characteristic or activity, would not be appropriate without specific conditions being applied. The Conditional Use Permit allows the Town to evaluate the impacts of a proposed use on the surrounding neighborhood or the Town and to impose appropriate conditions or site improvements to eliminate or minimize said impacts. Where adverse impacts cannot be minimized to acceptable levels, the Town may deny the Conditional Use Permit. A Conditional Use Permit requires a public hearing and approval by either the Planning Department staff or the Planning Commission.

**DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL:** Design Review approval is required on all building permits to be issued in the Commercial or Industrial zoning districts. The review by the Planning Commission may look at building arrangement, setbacks, walls and fences, building exterior appearance (color/materials), off-street parking, grading, drainage, traffic and circulation, landscaping, lighting and/or signs to insure compatibility and enhancement of the aesthetic appearance of buildings and sites within the town. Building permit applications for the subject projects may only be submitted after design review approval and will only be approved by the Town staff in conformance with the design review approval. Any revisions to the plans at the building permit stage may require additional public hearing review by the Planning Commission. Staff recommends that Design Review Applications be made by design professionals with very detailed information for the most efficient use of everyone's time. The Town is currently working on Design Guidelines to better assist applicants with their design processes. Until the guidelines are complete, the Planning Director may request additional fees for outside architectural assistance in reviewing application plans. Additionally, an applicant may request that initial guidance be provided to his professional design consultant through a meeting with staff, the Town's architectural consultant, the applicant and his consultant.

**EXTENSIONS:** Most application approvals last for only one or two years (as stated in the actual approvals). Prior to this expiration date, if the applicant has been unable to complete the conditions, he/she can request an extension from the Planning Commission. If the original approval required a public hearing, then a new public hearing will be required for the consideration of the extension. In order to submit for an extension, the applicant must submit a letter requesting the extension, stating the reasons why the extension is needed, and submitting the appropriate fees for the extension.

**GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENT:** The General Plan is a document and map which establishes goals, objectives, and policies to guide the physical development of the Town. All development within the Town must be consistent with the General Plan. State law limits the number of times the Town may amend the General Plan, so General Plan Amendments (GPA) are not processed at regular intervals. When a GPA is processed, a public hearing by the Planning Commission is required. The Planning Commission forwards a recommendation to the Town Council. The Town Council also holds a public hearing, and then decides whether to approve or deny the Amendment.

In order to approve a GPA, the Town Council must determine that the amendment is in the public interest. Issues such as land use compatibility, traffic, and other environment considerations are balanced with the benefits to the town in determining if the Amendment is in the public interest. The Town does not generally encourage General Plan Amendments other than through the General Plan Update process.

**HARDSHIP MOBILE HOME:** Allows mobile homes on single family residential lots for use in close care and supervision of a handicapped person occupying either the principal dwelling or the accessory dwelling. A letter from a doctor diagnosing the medical need is required. The application is reviewed by the Planning Director and will require approval from the South Placer Municipal Utility District, for sewer service, Placer County Water Agency for public water, and/or Placer County Health Department if the property is serviced by septic and/or well. The permit shall be extended annually by the Planning Director, provided continued compliance to Ordinance No. 159, with a maximum approval period of five (5) years. Any extension request which exceeds five years, must receive conditional use permit approval by the Planning Commission.

**LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT:** A lot line adjustment is a process by which it is possible to sell property to an adjoining owner, or to reconfigure parcels under one ownership, without recording a parcel map. State law defines the Lot Line Adjustment as follows: A lot line adjustment between two or more existing parcels, where the land taken from one parcel is added to an adjacent parcel, and where a greater number of parcels than originally existed is not thereby created, provided the lot line adjustment is approved by the local agency. Of the new lots created, neither one can become more non-conforming with respect to the town's zoning requirements than it was prior to the adjustment. The Planning Director and Town Engineer hold a public hearing on the proposed lot line adjustment and determine whether the lot line can be adjusted. If they approve the application, the Engineer checks the new lot descriptions, a resolution is adopted and the applicant's Title Company completes the recording of the transaction.

**MINOR LAND DIVISION:** By this process, one or more contiguous pieces of property are divided into four or fewer parcels for sale, lease or financing. A tentative map for the subdivision, usually done by a licensed engineer or licensed land surveyor, is reviewed by the Planning Commission at a public hearing. If approved, Minor Land Divisions are subject to conditions which must be met to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer prior to recording the parcel map. An applicant has two years in which to complete these conditions but prior to expiration may request an extension period or periods not exceeding a total of five years from the Planning Commission.

**REZONING:** A rezoning is required to change the zoning classification of a specific parcel. This involves an amendment to the Town's Zoning Map. Any rezoning must be consistent with the General Plan, all of its written goals and the General Plan Land Use and Circulation Elements. It requires a public hearing by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission forwards a recommendation to the Town Council. The Town Council also holds a public hearing and then decides whether to approve or deny the amendment.

**SECOND RESIDENTIAL UNIT:** Ordinance 134 allows second residential units on lots of 15,000 sq. ft. or larger subject to: 1) approval from Placer County Environmental Health Department if the property is serviced by septic and/or well, 2) approval from South Placer Municipal Utility District and/or Placer County Water Agency if the property is serviced by sewer and/or public water 2) payment of required development fees, 3) approval by Planning Commission on lots less than 1 acre, and 4) approval by Planning Director for lots over 1 acre.

**SIGN REVIEW:** Most new signs and face changes to signs need sign permit approval. In some areas of Town, interior lighting of signs is not allowed. Most commercial allowable signage is based on the length of the building facing the street on which it will be located, generally one (1) sq. ft. of signage for one (1) lineal foot of building frontage length.

**SUBDIVISION APPROVAL:** By this process, one or more contiguous pieces of property are divided into five or more parcels for sale, lease or financing. A tentative map for the subdivision, done by a licensed engineer or licensed land surveyor, is reviewed by the Planning Commission at a public hearing. If approved, Subdivisions are subject to conditions which must be met to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer prior to being placed on a Council agenda for approval of the Tract Map. An applicant has two years in which to complete these conditions but prior to expiration may request an extension period or periods not exceeding a total of five years from the Planning Commission.

**VARIANCE:** A variance is required to allow a project to deviate from the development regulations (excluding permitted and conditionally permitted uses) of the Zoning Ordinance. A variance may be granted only if it is determined that there are special (physical) conditions; such as location, topography, size or shape peculiar to the subject property which are not the making of the property owner or the applicant. The applicant must demonstrate that strict enforcement of the code will result in unnecessary and undue hardship, and that approval of the variance will not grant him/her a special privilege that other owners of similar property do not enjoy.

**ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENTS:** The Zoning Ordinance establishes detailed regulations for the physical development in the Town. The Town has been divided into various land use districts (such as residential, industrial and commercial), each with specific regulations. The Zoning Ordinance specifies the land use regulations such as permitted and conditionally permitted land uses, allowable density, maximum height, and building setbacks within each district.

A Zoning Ordinance amendment involves a revision the Town's written zoning standards, and requires a public hearing by the Planning Commission. Any zoning text revision must be consistent with the elements of the General Plan, and all of its written goals and policies. A Zoning Map Amendment is a change in the land use designation on the Zoning Map for a specific parcel(s). The Planning Commission holds a public hearing reviewing the amendment. If approved, the Planning Commission forwards a recommendation of approval to the Town Council. The Town Council also holds a public hearing, and then decides whether to approve or deny the amendment.