



Community Development Department

11 English Street

Petaluma, CA 94952

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Building Division

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HOW TO GET A BUILDING PERMIT

A Building Permit is required for any of the following: new construction, addition, change or repair to a building (including re-roofs, fireplaces, swimming pools, carports, etc.). Only a licensed contractor or an owner-builder may obtain a building permit. You may file a single building permit application for all work on a project including building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, etc.

You may be required to obtain Planning Division approvals such as design review or a use permit, which you must apply for prior to applying for your building permit. Please check with a planner to determine if a planning process will be required.

The first step is to fill out a Building Permit Application form and file the application with the Building Division. Unless otherwise noted, your application needs to include **five (5)** complete sets of plans.

The plans must include the following:

- ❖ **Plot Plan:** Draw the perimeter of the entire parcel. Show all parcel dimensions to scale. Show all existing and proposed buildings. Show the front, side and rear dimensions. Show the lot lines, distance to property lines and other buildings. Show finish and existing ground slope. Show all easements, envelopes, and special requirements of the subdivision as shown on the final map and improvement plans.
- ❖ **Floor Plan:** Show all dimensions, locations, size and use of each room. Show the locations and size of windows and doors. Show electrical outlets, plumbing and heating fixtures, floor area and window area and furnace size on plans. Show energy features and compliance requirements.
- ❖ **Foundation Plans:** Show all dimensions on plan, including interior footings and fireplace support. Label porches, patios, planters, garage, etc. Show post straps and tie-downs where required.
- ❖ **Elevations:** Show all elevations, North, South, East and West showing all openings, exterior finish, original and finish grade, stepped footing outline, roof pitch and material.
- ❖ **Framing:** plans for floors and roof.
- ❖ **Cross Section:** Provide true section through building showing structural elements, fireplace section, and other sections as needed. Earth-to-wood clearances and floor to ceiling heights.
- ❖ **Details:** Submit foundation, floor, walls and roof details, beam connections, support of beams at fireplace, etc., special details as required.
- ❖ **All plans require signature of person responsible. A licensed professional must sign certain specific plans or conditions.**

Other information required:

- ❖ Two sets of signed energy calculations, when appropriate.
- ❖ Two sets of structural calculations, when suitable.
- ❖ One set of specifications and engineering calculations, when appropriate.
- ❖ One soils report, if applicable and the soils engineer's foundation plan review letter.

Please note: The absence of a submittal requirement may cause delays in the plan check process, and may cause plans to be returned due to insufficient information.

CONDITIONS TO BE MET BEFORE A BUILDING PERMIT IS ISSUED

- ❖ Any required planning actions, such as design review or a use permit, must be complete and any conditions of approval addressed.
- ❖ Any conditions of approval (such as right-of-way dedications, etc.,) must be met and any associated fees must be paid.

FEES

All plan check and permit fees are based on the value of the project (labor and materials). The project total is the value of all the construction the permit is issued for. This includes all finished work, roofing, electrical, plumbing and heating, air conditioning, elevators, fire extinguishing systems, overhead, any other permanent work or equipment, paving and profit.

The types mentioned below are not all inclusive.

Fees Due When Filing Application:

- ❖ A plan check fee will be required when submitting for a building permit. The remainder of the fees will be due at time of issuance.

Fees Due When Permit is Ready to Issue:

- ❖ Prior to picking up your permit, you may need to pay school impact fees to the affected school district. You will be required to provide a receipt of proof of payment to the building division at the time of permit issuance. Also, the remainder of the Building Permit Fees will be due.
- ❖ Before obtaining your building permits on commercial projects, you must pay any Development Impact Fees. For residential projects, Development Impact Fees are due prior to final inspection or the setting of a gas meter.

Please see our handout which outlines the Development Impact Fees.

BUILDING PERMIT ISSUANCE

The Building Division will contact you when your plans have met all related conditions of approval and are ready to issue. You will be asked to come to the office, pay the remaining fees and pick up your permit. An owner-builder must sign the form in person. Contractors may authorize an employee to sign building permit applications. This authorization must be given in writing. If the owner or contractor intends to hire anyone to work on the project, he/she must provide a certificate of Workers' Compensation Insurance. This certificate needs to name the City of Petaluma Building Division as the certificate holder. This certificate, with a current expiration date, must be on file before a permit can be issued. Contractors must present evidence of a current contractor's license (pocket card) and must have a current City of Petaluma business license at the time of permit issuance. An approved copy of the plans must be kept at the job site.

TIME LIMITS

You must pick up your permit within **90 calendar days** from the date it was marked ready-to-issue. You may submit a written request for a one time extension before the 90th day. If this period ends without the permit being picked up, your application will be expired and your plan check fee will be non-refundable. After the permit has been issued, you will have 180 calendar days from the date of issuance to start work and call for an inspection. You may submit a written request to the Chief Building Official for an extension on the building permit deadline before the 180th day.

INSPECTIONS

At each stage of construction, you will be required to call or fax a request to the Building Division for an inspection. The Building Division requires **one business day** advance notice for all inspections. Inspections can be requested for either morning or afternoon, but specific times cannot be guaranteed. The types of inspection required are on the back of your copy of the Building Permit.

CHANGES TO APPROVED PLANS

After a permit has been issued, any changes to the plans must be approved by the Building Division. Two sets of the proposed changes must be prepared by the architect, engineer or plan preparer and brought to our offices for review.

SUMMARY OF PROCESS (15-20 WORKING DAYS)

1. File permit application with plans, and pay initial plan check fees
2. Plans are reviewed by a Building Plan Checker – referred to other departments if necessary
3. Plan Checker informs of any corrections that may be required by written letter.
4. Plans are corrected and resubmitted.
5. Plans undergo a second plan review ***(10-15 WORKING DAYS)***
6. When all corrections are completed, plans approved and building permit ready for issuance.
7. Pay remaining fees and pick up permit.
8. Start construction – call for inspections.
9. Construction of the proposed work is inspected by the Building Inspector during all phases of the project.

Upon successful completion of the final inspection and, if required, a certificate of occupancy will be issued. If a certificate of occupancy is not required, the signature of the inspection of the building permit indicating the final inspection was approved will become the approval to occupy.