

YOUR GUIDE TO THE BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS

In the *City of San Luis Obispo*

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| City phone numbers to keep handy: | Building & Safety Division | 781-7180 |
| | Planning Division | 781-7170 |
| | Public Works Department | 781-7200 |
| | Fire Department | 781-7380 |

We have designed this guide with the newcomer to the permit process in mind. It details the steps involved in obtaining a building permit – from preliminary review through final approval. This information will help people who have had little or no experience with the building permit process. Experienced building professionals will also find information about the amount of processing time required useful for their scheduling.

Building Permits: When are they required?

Generally, you need to obtain a building permit from the City whenever you construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, remove, improve, convert, or demolish a building or other structure. A building could be anything from a tool shed to a house. If you have a question about permit requirements for your project, call the Building & Safety Division at 781-7180.

A Building Permit may include building, grading, plumbing, mechanical and electrical permits. The City processes the various permits required as one total package. The permit process requires payment of fees at two different times. The plan review fee must be paid when your permit application is accepted. All remaining fees must be paid when the City issues your building permit, which includes permit fees, applicable utility connection fees and school district fees. Fee estimates can be obtained by calling the Building & Safety Division.

Preliminary Review: Before you apply

We encourage you to call or visit us at the Building & Safety Division before you submit your building permit application. We will answer your questions and let you know if your proposed project is within the City's development guidelines. You may be referred to other staff members to determine if your project will require any Planning approvals before you can apply for a building permit. Approval may require action by the Architectural Review Commission or the Planning Commission.

If your project will require a Planning approval, you must file a planning application and pay required fees at the Planning Division of the Community Development Department. Those fees are separate from the building permit fees. Required planning approvals must be granted before you are allowed to apply for a building permit.

You may also want to discuss your project with the Public Works Department, the Fire Department, or the Health Department to determine if there will be any special requirements. Staff may suggest ideas to make the building permit process easier for

you. Asking us questions at the outset may save you processing time. We're glad to take the time to help you – it's part of why we are here.

Do You Need to Hire a Professional? Ask us.

The City is committed to explaining the process as clearly and concisely as possible. However, the permit process can be complex, even for those experienced with it.

Depending on the size and type of your project, you may need the services of a licensed professional. In fact, State law may require that a portion or your entire project be prepared by a licensed architect or engineer. Our best advice is to check with the staff in the Building & Safety Division to determine if the services of a licensed professional will be needed.

Applying for a Permit

You may apply for a building permit when the plans for your proposed project are complete and Planning approvals, if required, are granted. To apply, you must turn in an **application package** at the **Building & Safety Division** of the City's **Community Development Department**, consisting of:

- ❖ A completed application form
- ❖ The plan review fee
- ❖ Copies of required plans
- ❖ Supporting documentation (structural, energy, soils analysis)

The application form is available at the Building & Safety Division counter. The information included on the plans and the number of copies will vary, depending on the specifics of your project. Please see "**Permit Application Requirements**" at the end of this guide.

The Review Process: What happens next?

After your application is submitted, we will review your plans. Depending on the nature of the project, the review could involve several departments. The Building & Safety Division will determine compliance with building, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, energy conservation, disabled access codes, and water allocation regulations. The Fire Department will check for compliance with fire safety requirements. The Public Works Department will check for compliance with flood control, drainage, driveways, and public improvement requirements. The Planning Division will verify compliance with use, parking, lot coverage, building height, setback, and density requirements.

Obtaining a Permit: How long will it take?

The City reviews plans submitted with applications on a first-come, first-served basis. However, we are committed to processing your plans as quickly and efficiently as possible. If your project has received all required Planning approvals **and your application package is complete**, the City's goal is to complete the initial plan check within the following time frames, with any significant deviation from these times to be communicated to the applicant directly by the responsible plan reviewer:

| Category | Initial Plan Check Time | Project Examples |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| minor project | 4 weeks | single family home, commercial or residential remodel, tenant improvement |
| standard project | 6 weeks | commercial, industrial or multi-family residential project |
| major project | 8 weeks | hotel, shopping center, large housing or industrial project |

Corrections, Clarifications, and Changes

The Building & Safety Division will notify you when the initial plan review for your project is completed. If the plans cannot be approved as submitted, we will provide you with lists of necessary corrections from all departments which reviewed your plans.

Minor corrections can be made on the original plans submitted. However, if major changes are necessary, or if minor corrections are numerous, you will be required to correct the base drawings and resubmit copies of the revised plans. Initial submission of thorough and complete plans will help avoid numerous revisions.

When revised plans are submitted, they will be distributed to the departments that generated the initial corrections for a second review. Plans submitted for recheck will generally require less processing time than required for the initial check. The City's goal is to process rechecks within two weeks of the resubmittal date.

Issuing the Permit

After the City determines that the plans satisfy all code requirements, you will be notified of the approval and asked to pay all remaining fees. Upon payment, we will issue a building permit. You can then begin construction.

Inspections

We will inspect your project as work progresses. You will be given an "Inspection Record" card with the permit, and you must have it available during all inspections. The card must be signed by an inspector after each phase of your project is completed, but before you begin the next phase. In addition, you must keep one copy of the approved plans at your construction site to assist you, your contractor and the inspector during construction. Building & Safety Division staff will conduct an inspection on any weekday you request, **provided you call 781-7180 to request an inspection by at least 5:00 p.m. THE DAY BEFORE you wish the inspection to take place.**

Completing Your Project

Although it is essential that you complete the inspection process, you do not have to finish your project during any fixed time period. From the day you pick up the permit, you are allowed 180 days (six months) to begin work on your project. Once construction begins, you must continue to work on your project to avoid permit expiration. When

work is completed, you must obtain approvals from all departments listed on the "Blue Card" (issued to you with the permit) before final inspection by the Building & Safety Division. With final approval, we will issue "utility releases" allowing electricity and gas services to be connected, as well as a certificate of occupancy, if required for your project.

Why is the permit process so complex?

The process of issuing a building permit may seem complex. It involves many city departments and outside agencies, and it may include a separate Planning process. We are required by law to enforce numerous State and local construction and development regulations to insure that your project is safe and is an asset to the community.



City of San Luis Obispo
 Building & Safety Division
 919 Palm Street
 San Luis Obispo, California 93401
 (805) 781-7180

permit application Requirements

Submission of a permit application package to the Building & Safety Division must include sufficient plan sheets and supporting documentation to allow a complete review and analysis by City staff during the initial plan check. **Incomplete submittals will not be accepted.** The following list is intended to provide the applicant with a general guideline of what may be required in a Permit Application Package. The applicant should direct questions to the Building & Safety Division to determine the minimum information required specific to their project.

Project Address: _____ Sprinklered (y/n) _____

Project Description: _____

Planning Approvals: _____ Flood Zone: _____

1. Plan Content (See reverse for more detail.) Applicable items must be drawn to scale, fully dimensioned, and packaged together as a plan set.

| <u>Required</u> | <u>Provided</u> | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Project Data |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Structural Plans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Site Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Building Elevations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grading/Drainage Plan (Not required for alterations and remodels) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Electrical, Mechanical and Plumbing Plan(s) (May be included on floor plans for residential projects and commercial alterations) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Foundation Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Landscape Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Floor Plan(s) Existing & Proposed (Include additional 8 1/2 x 11 copy for County Assessor) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fire Sprinkler Plan |

2. Supporting Documentation (2 copies of each)

| <u>Required</u> | <u>Provided</u> | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Structural Calculations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Specifications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Energy Conservation Documentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Truss Details and Calculations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Soils Investigation and Recommendations (Generally not required for residential additions) |

3. Number of Plan Sets (Copies only; applicant retains the original)

| <u>Required</u> | <u>Provided</u> | <u>Type of Project</u> | <u>Plan Sets</u> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single Family Residences and Duplexes | 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Apartment Buildings | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Residential Additions, Alterations & Remodels | 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Retaining Walls, Garden Walls | 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | New Commercial Buildings | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Commercial Additions | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Commercial Alt, Remodels, Tenant Imp | 4 |

city of san luis obispo plan content detail

Plans submitted to the Building & Safety Division as part of a Permit Application Package must include applicable plan pages with the plan content detail shown below. Generally, a complete plan set for a new building will include all details listed; a residential remodel will require the least amount of plan detail. When work relating to a listed plan detail is anticipated, it should be included in the plan set. When in doubt, call the Building & Safety Division at 781-7180 and request clarification.

Project Data:

Required Provided

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Zoning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Occupancy Classification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Occupant Load |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Allowable Area Analysis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Type of Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parking Calculations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Number of Stories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Energy Conservation Compliance Method |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Street Address |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Legal Description |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Owner's Name & Address |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Structural Observation Requirements |

Site Plan:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | North Arrow/Scale |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Vicinity Map |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Frontage Improvements (existing and proposed) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Utility Services (existing and proposed) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Public Water, Sewer, Storm Drains (size, location) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Site Drainage Improvements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Lot Dimensions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Setback Dimensions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Existing & Proposed Grades (City Datum) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Contours or Spot Elevations (City Datum) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Finished Floor Elevation (City Datum) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Existing On-site Trees (trunk/canopy diameter, species) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Parking Layout (per City Parking & Driveway Standards) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Retaining Walls |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Exiting Plan |

Grading/Drainage:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Benchmark (City Datum) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Existing & Proposed Contours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grading Notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Soils Report Recommendations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Erosion Control |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Drainage Plan |

Foundation Plan:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Footing Size/Dimensions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Footing Reinforcement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Anchor Bolt Placement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Slab Reinforcement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Special Soil Concerns |

Floor Plan(s):

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Room Dimensions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Window Sizes/Locations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Door Sizes/Locations (hardware schedule) |

Structural Plan:

Required Provided

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Floor & Roof Framing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Building Sections |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Shear Wall Requirements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Diaphragm Requirements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Details |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Typical Sections |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Floodproofing Details |

Building Elevations:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Site Section (hillsides, creeks) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Roof Slope |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Roof Covering Material/Rating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Wall Covering Material |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Building Height |

Electrical, Mechanical & Plumbing Plan(s):

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Electric Service Size & Location |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Panel Schedules |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Single Line Diagram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Outlets, Switches, Lights |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | HVAC Equipment Location, Size, Model |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Commercial Kitchen Hood Details |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Pipe Sizes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Grease Interceptors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Water Heater Location, Size, Model |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Location of Fire/Smoke Dampers |

Landscape Plan:

Recycled Water Planning Area - Yes / No

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Locations & Type of Ground Cover |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Planter Details |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Location, Size & Specie of Trees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Irrigation Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Back Flow Prevention Device |

Solid Waste Management:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Recycling Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Trash Enclosure Location |

Fire Protection Plan:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Location of Main Electrical/Gas Shutoff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Location of Underground |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fire Dept. Connection & PIV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fire Sprinkler Plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fire Hydrants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fire Dept. Notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Fire Alarm Plan |