



# PROJECT APPLICATION

## INFORMATIONAL PACKET

Planning Department staff are available to advise you in the preparation of this application. Call 415.558.6377 or email the Planning Information Center (PIC) at [pic@sfgov.org](mailto:pic@sfgov.org) for further information.

**Español:** Si desea ayuda sobre cómo llenar esta solicitud en español, por favor llame al 415.575.9010. Tenga en cuenta que el Departamento de Planificación requerirá al menos un día hábil para responder

中文：如果您希望獲得使用中文填寫這份申請表的幫助，請致電415.575.9010。請注意，規劃部門需要至少一個工作日來回應。

**Tagalog:** Kung gusto mo ng tulong sa pagkumpleto ng application na ito sa Filipino, paki tawagan ang 415.575.9010. Paki tandaan na mangangailangan ang Planning Department ng hindi kukulangin sa isang araw na pantrabaho para makasagot.

## WHAT IS A PROJECT APPLICATION?

A Project Application is the primary means by which the Planning Department collects information necessary to conduct environmental evaluation and determine Planning Code compliance and conformity with the General Plan for a proposed development project.

In order for the Planning Department to consider a Project Application accepted, the application must be accompanied by all required supporting materials (e.g. plan sets, letters of authorization, etc.) and all relevant supplemental applications. For projects that are required to submit a Project Application, project review will not begin unless a complete Project Application has been submitted and accepted by the Planning Department.

## WHEN IS A PROJECT APPLICATION NECESSARY?

Any project that is not eligible for same-day approval at the Planning Information Center counter must submit a Project Application. This includes any Building Permit Application that requires an intake for Planning Department review, including for environmental evaluation, and any application for a development entitlement.

Building Permit Applications that require intake by the Planning Department for review are those that require neighborhood notification pursuant to Zoning Administrator Bulletin No. 4, or that require environmental evaluation.

Environmental evaluation refers to projects subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA); these are primarily actions that require a discretionary decision by the City and are defined as a project pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15060(e) and 15378. All projects submitting a Project Application must complete the Environmental Evaluation Screening Form section and provide any necessary technical studies or supplemental applications as indicated in the screening form.

Development entitlements refer to any approval action by the Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, or Zoning Administrator that is required by the Planning Code before a project may secure a Building Permit. Examples include a Conditional Use Authorization, Downtown Project Authorization, or Variance.

## HOW DOES THE PROCESS WORK?

### Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA)

This step only applies to projects that propose a) 10 or more new dwelling units; b) creation or expansion of any group housing use; and/or c) construction of a new non-residential building or addition of 10,000 square feet or more. For more information, see the [PPA Informational Packet](#).

1. If applicable, a Preliminary Project Assessment (PPA) application must be submitted and the PPA letter must be issued before any Development Application (including for Environmental Evaluation) will be accepted.
2. Within 60 days of receiving a complete PPA application, Planning will issue a PPA letter identifying key planning code compliance, environmental review, policy, and design considerations for the proposed project. Applicants may request one follow-up meeting with Planning staff.
3. Once a PPA letter has been issued, applicants may file a Project Application for the project. The project should reflect the guidance provided in the PPA to the extent possible. Please note that PPA letters are valid for 18 months after issuance. Applicants seeking to submit a Project Application more than 18 months after PPA issuance will likely be required to submit a new PPA application.

### Project Application Review and Approval

1. Within 30 days, Planning will determine whether a Project Application submittal is complete or incomplete. Incomplete applications will be held until all required materials are provided. Once an application is complete, the application will be deemed accepted.
2. Within 90 days of the accepted date, Planning will issue a first Plan Check Letter identifying the specific outstanding Planning Code and environmental review issues with the project, and any other required materials or applications.
3. Once the requested applicant provides all materials, additional applications, and project modifications, Planning will determine whether this response to the first Plan Check Letter is complete or incomplete within 30 days.
4. Once a complete response has been received, the project will have a Stable Project Description. For **Housing Projects only** (those adding two or more net new units) will be assigned a Target Hearing Date within 6 to 22 months, depending on the level of environmental review. *Note that the 6 month time frame applies to a project for which no CEQA review is required; 9 months for a Categorical Exemption or other exemption; 12 months for a Negative Declaration (ND), Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or Community Plan Evaluation (CPE); 18 months for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR); or 22 months for a complex EIR.*
5. All other required hearings for the project (e.g. Historic Preservation Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission), environmental review, and any requested project modifications will be completed prior to the Target Hearing Date, at which time – or sooner if possible – the project may be approved or disapproved by the Planning Commission or Planning Department.

## WHO MAY SUBMIT A PROJECT APPLICATION?

Only the property owner or a party designated as the owner's agent may submit a Project Application for work on that property. [A letter of agent authorization from the owner must be attached.]

## HOW IS A PROJECT APPLICATION SUBMITTED?

The Project Application may be downloaded [here](#).

### **Building Permit Applications:**

For projects that do not require an entitlement action by the Planning Department, but require Planning Department review of a Building Permit Application, please present this completed Planning Application along with the Building Permit Application for intake at the Planning Information Center (PIC), 1660 Mission Street, Ground Floor.

### **Entitlement Applications (no Building Permit):**

For projects that require an entitlement action by the Planning Department, please complete this Project Application and any required supplemental applications and schedule an intake appointment to submit them. To schedule an appointment, please send an email request along with the intake appointment request form to: [CPC.Intake@sfgov.org](mailto:CPC.Intake@sfgov.org). Intake request forms are available [here](#).

## BEFORE YOU APPLY

### **The Pre-Application Process**

The following types of projects require a Pre-Application Meeting, provided that the scope of work is subject to Planning Code Section 311 or 312 Notification. When requested, Pre-Application meeting must occur prior to filing the first Planning entitlement application (i.e. Conditional Use Authorization, Variance, Building Permit).

- Projects subject to 311 or 312 Notification;
- New Construction;
- Any vertical addition of 7 feet or more;
- Any horizontal addition of 10 feet or more;
- Decks over 10 feet above grade or within the required rear yard;
- All Formula Retail uses subject to a Conditional Use Authorization;
- Community Business Priority Processing (CB3P); and
- Projects in PDR-1-B Districts subject to Section 313.

Please refer to the Pre-Application Meeting Instruction Packet available at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) or at the Planning Information Center (PIC) counter at 1660 Mission Street, First Floor, San Francisco for further details.

## PLAN SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

Please provide the following materials with the Project Application:

**Authorization:** If the applicant in this case is the authorized agent of the property owner, rather than the owner, a letter signed by the owner and creating or acknowledging that agency must be attached and is included in the Project Application.

**Drawings:** The application must be accompanied by plans sufficient for proper determination of the case. In most cases a site plan will be required, accurately showing existing and proposed structures on both the subject property and on immediately adjoining properties, open spaces, driveways, color curbs, transit facilities, parking areas, trees, and land contours where relevant. Typically, floor plans will also be required. Drawings of building elevations must be provided when exterior changes are proposed. All landscaping should be clearly shown on the plans. Certain types of the entitlements have additional special requirements under the Code and may require additional information to be submitted with the application; the Department staff will assist in determining what materials are required. A north arrow and scale shall be shown on each plan, and the scale should be 1/8"=1'-0" for site plans, 1/8" = 1' 0" for floor plans, and 1/4" = 1' 0" for elevations and plans showing layout of parking and loading. For additional information, please see the [Plan Submittal Guidelines](#) available at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) under the Permit Forms page.

**Photographs:** Include photographs showing the subject and surrounding properties.

**During your intake appointment**, please provide a digital copy of all documents submitted (may be provided via CD or USB drive) containing the application, project drawings and any other submittal materials that are available electronically.

## **Fees**

Please refer to the [Planning Department Fee Schedule](#) available at [www.sfplanning.org](http://www.sfplanning.org) or at the Planning Information Center (PIC) located at 1660 Mission Street, First Floor, San Francisco. For questions related to the Fee Schedule, please call the PIC at 415.558.6377.

Fees will be determined based on the estimated construction costs. Should the cost of staff time exceed the initial fee paid, an additional fee for time and materials may be billed upon completion of the hearing process or permit approval. Additional fees may also be collected for preparation and recordation of any documents with the San Francisco Assessor-Recorder's office and for monitoring compliance with any conditions of approval.

## **Environmental Evaluation**

All Project Applications must include an Environmental Evaluation Screening Form. This form will determine if further environmental review is necessary. With the Project Application, include any necessary environmental supplementals, technical studies, and/or other information required based on your project and the requirements outlined in the screening form. If your project received a PPA letter from the Planning Department, , also address all necessary information specified in the Environmental Planning section of that letter. A separate fee may be required for further environmental review.

## Planning Commission Hearing Material

This timeline includes a deadline for project sponsors to submit material to staff to be included in the Commission packet. If the Sponsor does not submit the necessary material by the deadline, the project will be continued to a later hearing date.

- Three weeks prior to hearing: Project Sponsor submits draft project graphics (plans, renderings etc) to project planner.
- Two weeks prior to hearing: Project planner submits Draft staff report (must include draft attachments) to Team Leader for review.
- Ten days prior to hearing (5 p.m. on Monday): Deadline for submittal of all other sponsor material and public comment to be included in Commission packets
- One week prior to hearing: Project planner delivers complete Commission packets to the Commission Secretary.

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### To file your Project Application, please either:

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## WHAT APPLICANTS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- A. The Planning Commission encourages applicants to meet with all community groups and parties interested in their application early in the entitlement process. In many cases, this is required as part of the Pre-application process. Department staff is available to assist in determining how to contact interested groups. Neighborhood organization lists are available on the Department's website. Notice of the hearing will be sent to groups in or near the neighborhood of the project. The applicant may be contacted by the Planning Department staff with requests for additional information or clarification. An applicant's cooperation will facilitate the timely review of the application.
- B. The Commission requests that applicants familiarize themselves with the procedure for public hearings, which are excerpted from the Planning Commission's Rules and Regulations below.

**Hearings.** A public hearing may be held on any matter before the Commission at either a Regular or a Special Meeting. The procedure for such public hearings shall be as follows:

1. A thorough description of the issue(s) by the Director or a member of the staff along with the Planning Department's recommendation.
  2. A presentation of the proposal by the Project Sponsor(s) team (includes sponsor or their designee, lawyers, architects, engineers, expeditors, and/or other advisors) would be for a period not to exceed 10 minutes, unless a written request for extension not to exceed a total presentation time of 10 minutes is received at least 72 hours in advance of the hearing, through the Commission Secretary, and granted by the President or Chair.
  3. A presentation of opposition to the proposal by organized opposition for a period not to exceed 10 minutes (or a period equal to that provided to the project sponsor team) with a minimum of three (3) speakers. The requestor should advise the group that the Commission would expect the organized presentation to represent their testimony, if granted. Organized opposition will be recognized only upon written application at least 72 hours in advance of the hearing, through the Commission Secretary, the President or Chair. Such application should identify the organization(s) and speakers.
  4. Public testimony from individuals may speak for a period not to exceed 3 minutes.
  5. Director's preliminary recommendation must be prepared in writing.
  6. Action by the Commission on the matter before it.
  7. In public hearings on Draft Environmental Impact Reports, all speakers will be limited to a period not to exceed three (3) minutes.
  8. The President may impose time limits on appearances by members of the public and may otherwise exercise his or her discretion on procedures for the conduct of public hearings.
- C. **Private Transcription.** The Commission President may authorize any person to transcribe the proceedings of a Regular, Special or Committee Meeting provided that the President may require that a copy of such transcript be provided for the Commission's permanent records.
  - D. **Opportunities for Appeal**  
Actions by the Planning Commission, Historic Preservation Commission, or Zoning Administrator are final, unless appealed as follows:
    - Conditional Use Authorizations and any CEQA document (e.g., an Environmental Impact Report) are appealable to the Board of Supervisors within 30 days.
    - Certificates of Appropriateness, Large Project Authorizations (Downtown or Eastern Neighborhoods), Office Allocations, or Permits to Alter may be appealed to the Board of Appeals within 15 days.
    - Variance Decision Letters may be appealed to the Board of Appeals within 10 days.



## San Francisco Planning

**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

Call or visit San Francisco  
Planning

**Central Reception**

1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco CA 94103-2479

TEL: **415.558.6378**

FAX: **415 558-6409**

WEB: **<http://www.sfplanning.org>**

**Planning Information Center (PIC)**

1660 Mission Street, First Floor  
San Francisco CA 94103-2479

TEL: **415.558.6377**

Planning staff are available by phone and at the PIC counter.  
No appointment is necessary.