

BUILDING PERMIT PROCESS GUIDE

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 required amount of processing time useful for their scheduling.

Building Permits: When are they required?

Generally, a building permit from the City is required 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. Additionally, if there are any code violations against the property, you are generally required to obtain a permit to correct the violations including minor property code violations. A Building Permit may include building, grading, plumbing, mechanical and electrical permits. The City processes the various permit types required as one total submittal package. If you have a question about permit requirements for your project, call the Building Division at 441-4155 or visit our webpage by clicking [here](#).

Preliminary Review: Before you apply

We encourage you to call or email us before you submit your building permit application for a formal review. 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 Development Services – Planning to determine if your project will require any approvals before you can apply for a building permit. You are encouraged to contact Planning first to determine the feasibility of your project and whether or not your project will require Planning approval before you can apply for a building permit. Approval may require action by the Design Review Committee, Historic Preservation Commission or the Planning Commission. Some Planning approvals must be granted before you are allowed to apply for a building permit, and others must be granted before the building permit can be issued. Our office is located at 531 K Street and you can email the Building Counter at building@ci.eureka.ca.gov to answer any questions.

If your project will require approval through a planning process, you must file a separate planning application and pay required fees to Planning. Those fees are separate from the building permit fees. Projects located within the inland portion of the City that requires Design Review must obtain Design Review approval prior to submitting for a building permit.

You may also want to discuss your project with the Public Works - Engineering Division, the Fire Department, Health Department or the North Coast Air Quality Management District to determine if there will be any special requirements.

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 Division to determine if the services of a licensed professional will be needed. Click [here](#) for our handout regarding projects that require a licensed design professional, or contact Building staff. Our best advice is to check with Building to determine if the services of a licensed professional will be needed prior to submitting plans.

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 submit a digital copy of your complete application package to **Development Services – Building**, by email at building@ci.eureka.ca.gov. Please find our electronic submittal instructions [here](#). Your complete digital submittal should consist of:

- ❖ Completed and signed application, that includes valuation for the construction
- ❖ Submittal checklist and related forms applicable to your project
- ❖ Complete set of plans with all sheets signed by the preparers
- ❖ Supporting documentation (structural, energy compliance documentation, soils analysis, etc.)

Once your digital submittal is received staff will pre-screen for completeness and either provide instructions for formal hard copy submittal at the counter or if incomplete will provide a list of missing items or information. Please note that this process may take up to 3 business days.

The application packet is available at the Building Division counter, as well as on-line in the Forms link of our website at https://www.ci.eureka.ca.gov/depts/development_services/building/forms.asp. The information required on the plans and the number of copies can vary, depending on the specifics of your project. Please choose the appropriate construction submittal application checklist that matches your scope of work: [Residential Checklist](#) or [Non-Residential Checklist](#). Please note, you will be required to pay a plan review fee at the time of submittal. In most cases plan check fees are calculated at 65 percent of the building permit fee and are in addition to and separate from the building permit fee.

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 Division will determine compliance with building, plumbing, mechanical, electrical, energy conservation, disabled access compliance, and Cal Green codes. The Fire Department will check for compliance with fire life safety requirements. The Engineering Division will check for compliance with flood control, drainage, stormwater, parking and driveway standards and public improvement requirements. Planning will verify compliance with zoning regulations including authorized uses within zone districts, required parking, and property development standards such as lot coverage, building height, setback, and density requirements. The Utilities Operations Division will review for backflow prevention and/or wastewater compliance.

Obtaining a Permit: How long will it take?

The City reviews applications on a first-come, first-served basis. However, we are committed to processing your plans as quickly and efficiently as possible. The City's goal is to complete the initial plan check within the following time frames:

Category	Initial Plan Check Time	Project Examples
Minor Projects	1 week	Residential alterations and small additions, residential solar, repair and replacement permit.
Large Projects	3 weeks	Tenant improvements, new commercial and additions, changes of occupancy, new residential and additions
Resubmittal(s)	1-2 weeks	Resubmittals to initial plan reviews and deferred submittals for projects already approved.

Corrections, Clarifications, and Changes

You will be notified when the initial plan review for your project are completed by each Division reviewing your project for approval. If the plans cannot be approved as submitted, the City Departments/Division will provide you with a list of necessary corrections that are required for your plans for approval. (Plan review comments will be provided by each reviewing Division directly)

Minor corrections can be made on the original plans submitted with permission by the person who prepared them. However, if major changes are necessary, or if there are numerous corrections, you will be required to correct the base drawings and resubmit copies of the revised plans. Submitting thorough and complete plans initially will help avoid numerous revisions.

When revised plans are submitted, they will be distributed to the departments that generated the initial corrections for subsequent 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 one week for minor projects and two weeks for large projects.

Issuing the Permit

After the City determines 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

Once the permit is issued, inspections can be scheduled through our office and we will inspect your project as work progresses. Your permit is issued with an "Inspection Record" or an inspection permit card, and you must have the inspection card and the approved plans 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. Building Division staff will conduct an inspection on any weekday you request, provided **you call 441-4043 to request an inspection no later than 8:00 am the day of your inspection. Inspection requests after 8:00 am will be scheduled for the next business day or any day you specify.**

Completing Your Project

From the day you pick up the permit, you are allowed One Year 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 “Job Card” before final inspection by the Building Division. With final approval, we will authorize “utility releases” allowing electricity and gas services to be connected and provide a certificate of occupancy, if one is required for your project.

Why is the permit process so complex?

The process of issuing a building permit may seem complex, which it is. It involves many City departments and sometimes outside agencies, and it may include a separate Planning process. The City is required by law to enforce numerous Federal, State and local construction and development regulations to ensure that your project is safe and is an asset to the community. We have provided a flow chart which is intended to help you understand this complex process.

How to contact the City or other Interfacing Agencies:

City phone numbers:	Building	441-4155
	Planning	441-4160
	Engineering	441-4194
	Humboldt Bay Fire Department	441-4000
	Utility Operations	441-4362
	Backflow Protection information	832-5111
	Cannabis Program	268-1971
PG&E	Electric and Gas	(800) 743-5000
Humboldt County	Environmental Health	445-6215
North Coast Unified Air Quality	Asbestos NESHAP	443-3093

Building Department Workflow

