City of
SANTA BARBARA
PLANNING

PRE-APPLICATION (PRE) REVIEW

INFORMATIONAL AND SUBMITTAL PACKET

WHAT IS A PRE-APPLICATION?

Deciding if a project is worth pursuing can be difficult to figure out. As a result, the City offers the option to participate in informal pre-application meetings with staff or one of the City's design review bodies. Early consultation can reduce frustration and delay by helping you submit a complete application on the first try. Pre-application meetings can also help you understand what decision-makers will accept and thus minimize the risk of denial.

Typically, discussions center on the nature and scope of the project, the steps required in the process, an approximate time frame in which the project can be completed, and an approximation of fees. In general, you can expect a determination letter in about 4-6 weeks after submitting a pre-application.

WHEN IS IT REQUIRED?

For most projects, pre-application review is **optional**, but may be recommended, especially on Zoning Modifications or other complicated planning approvals. When requested, pre-application review must occur prior to filing the first planning application or building permit application.

The following types of projects require a **mandatory** pre-application review with the Pre-Application Review Team (PRT). The Team consists of members from multiple City Departments and Divisions who provide a coordinated review of development projects. See SBMC§ 30.205.030 for more information and a list of City team members.

- Annexations
- Conditional Use Permits
- Condominium & Hotel Conversion Permit
- Development Plans more than 3,000 sq. ft.
- General Plan & Zoning Amendments

- Certain Average Unit-Size Density Projects
- Local Coastal Program Amendments
- Specific Plans & Amendments
- Tentative Maps by the Planning Commission
- Transfer of Existing Development Rights

HOW TO SUBMIT

All building permit and planning applications, including all supporting plans and documents, are accepted online via our Accela Citizen Access Portal (ACA). More information: Electronic Submittals.

HOW DO I RESEARCH MY PROPERTY?

Early in the process of designing a project, *or planning a new business in an existing building, applicants should know the features and constraints of the property and research the City's rules and zoning regulations.*

Understand the Site

It is important to know what existing site features may restrict your development potential. Identify any significant natural features and structures. Obtain a title report and a recent survey to determine property lines, easements, and covenants. Look up the zone and other information through the City's mapping application, **MAPS**.

Research the Zoning

Use the City's interactive **Municipal Code** to research the allowed land uses and development standards for the zone. Keep in mind that some projects must also be found consistent with the City's General Plan or the Local Coastal Program. Applications should be designed in consideration of applicable Design Guidelines.

Review City Records

Review the **Property Record Database** and archived plans for your property. Don't assume that previous owners obtained proper permits for all existing structures and land uses. The City will look to you, as the present owner, to remedy any as-built discrepancies between the existing site conditions and the approved plans on file.

Talk to Staff

Application forms and other information is available on the **Planning Central** web page. City Staff are available at the **public counters** located at 630 Garden Street to answer general questions about the process, fees, and project timelines.

Assemble a Team of Experts

Choose the members of your **building team** carefully as this is the single most important step in designing a project. A land use planner can help identify the best use of your property. A licensed architect or engineer prepares plans for larger projects. For minor projects, a building designer or draftsperson may be an option.

PRE-APPLICATION SERVICES

The City offers multiple types of pre-application services to choose from. Carefully review the list and select the service that best suits the needs of your proposal. Some variations in the process may occur based on the particular request.

Design Review Consultation

Design Review Consultation is a request for **one** optional design review hearing prior to submitting a formal Planning Application. Applicants are encouraged to submit sketches or conceptual plans for initial feedback on broad issues such as general architectural style and the project's size, bulk, and scale.

Planner Consultation

Planner Consultation is a focused review of plans or project description to address specific planning questions regarding the proposed use, required approvals, parking requirements, support for a modification, or the likely studies required in order to conduct environmental review. It may include records research or an informal meeting with Planning Staff.

Preliminary Plan Check

Preliminary Zoning Plan Check is a preliminary staff review of conceptual plans and permit history for compliance with zoning requirements. It is typically used to review plans for zoning compliance prior to submitting complete construction drawings for a building permit when no other planning review is required for the project.

PRT

Pre-Application Review Team (PRT) is the most comprehensive level of review and includes a letter prepared by the City's multi-departmental review team, a site visit, and applicant meeting. Any project that would benefit from a coordinated review are encouraged to use this service. It is a required step for projects that require mandatory pre-application review.

Staff Determination

Staff Determination. Specific planning requests such as slope calculations, creek bank determinations, and historic resource evaluations may be made prior to submitting a formal application.

Zoning Letters

Zoning Letters are a simple report that includes a general overview of record research on property data, permit history, nonconforming buildings, discretionary approvals, and active enforcement cases. This service is often desired by financial institutions when refinancing or during real estate transactions.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

WHAT TO SUBMIT

This document includes a comprehensive list of information that is required to submit a pre-application. All forms must be completed, signed, and submitted as a PDF attachment to your electronic submittal. The application must be accompanied by all required supporting materials or it will be rejected.

FEES

Payment of fees is required for all pre-applications.

☐ **Fees**

Payment via check, electronic check, or credit card is required before project review or processing. Once the application is submitted, City staff will follow up electronically with an invoice for the total fee amount. Fees may be paid online, mailed, faxed, or dropped off at 630 Garden Street for processing. If paying by mail or fax, a Fee Payment Submittal Sheet is required. For more information, click on How to Pay Invoiced Fees.

The fees for most pre-applications cover an estimated average review time. If the scope of the pre-application request exceeds that estimated review time, additional fees may apply.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographs are required for all pre-applications, except Zoning Letters.

☐ **Photographs**

Submit current color photographs of the site from the street, each elevation of the buildings, and adjacent properties.

PROJECT PLANS

Plans are required for Design Review Consultation, Pre-Application Review Team (PRT), and Preliminary Zoning Plan Check. Plans are optional, but may be beneficial, on any other request.

☐ **Project Plans**

A basic site plan is required. See the Project Plan Submittal Requirements handout for the required contents of plan submittals. All other plans (floor plans, elevations, etc.) are optional, however, the more information you provide, the more thorough the response.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Supporting Materials are required for certain pre-applications, as noted below.

☐ **Applicant Letter**

Required on all Pre-Application Review Team applications only. Provide a letter addressed to Planning Staff describing the project. Include a description of the existing and proposed land uses and the proposed business operations, if applicable. Include in the applicant letter a

justification of the project including background, a list of discretionary approvals being sought, and indicate the significant issues and problems as you understand them. Provide information about any previous or concurrent applications relevant to this request. *For subdivisions only,* provide the existing and proposed net and gross lot area in square feet for each lot, confirm General Plan consistency, and minimum lot size (including slope density when applicable) for each lot.

Slope Calculation Plan

Required on Slope Calculation Determinations only. Submit a separate scaled slope calculation plan prepared by a licensed Civil Engineer, Land Surveyor, or Architect with the following information: net lot area, scale, contour intervals, length of each contour, and the combined length of all contours in feet. Provide the Slope Calculation as described in SBMC §28.15.080 or §30.15.030, Determining Average Slope. Plans must be signed by the preparer.

Top of Bank Plan

Required on Creek Bank Determinations only. Submit a topographic survey prepared by a licensed Land Surveyor or Civil Engineer of the project site, showing the appropriate contours as described in SBMC §30.15.040, Determining Area of a Watercourse, or Coastal Land Use Policies Chapter 8.1. Include a line delineating the top of bank with dimensions to any existing or proposed development. Include cross sections showing both banks. Provide the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year flood surface elevations of the site, where available, to assist in the determination. Plans must be signed and sealed by the preparer.

Preliminary Title Report

Required on Pre-Application Review Team applications only. A preliminary title report for all involved parcels, issued at most recent sale or financing (preferably within 3 months of the application date). The preliminary title report must show ownership and all easements; copies of easement documents may also be required.

Transfer of Existing Development Rights (TEDR) Information

Required for all Pre-Application Review Team applications that include a TEDR request. Provide a preliminary title report for both sending and receiving sites. Identify the location and parcel numbers of the sending and receiving sites. Identify the category of non-residential floor area being transferred (Demolished, Approved, Vacant). Provide any supporting information regarding the proposed transferred floor area pursuant to SBMC Chapter 28.95 or 30.195.

1 PRE-APPLICATION FORM

RECORD INFORMATION

Application Date:

PRE RECORD # (if known):

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Project Address:

Zone:

Assessor Parcel Number (APN):

Avg. Slope:

General Plan/Coastal Land Use Plan Designation:

Existing Use:

Proposed Use:

LAND USE INFORMATION	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Number of Residential Units:		
Nonresidential Floor Area (sq. ft.):		
Number of Parking Spaces:		

APPLICANT'S INFORMATION

Name:

Company:

Address:

ZIP:

Email:

Phone:

PRE-APPLICATION SERVICE REQUESTED

☐ Design Review Consultation ☐ Planner Consultation ☐ Preliminary Plan Check ☐ PRT ☐ Staff Determination ☐ Zoning Letter

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Provide a brief summary of the proposed project and include any specific questions.

② APPLICANT'S AFFIDAVIT

Under penalty of perjury the following declarations are made:

a. The undersigned is the applicant or authorized agent of the applicant.

b. The information presented is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

c. **Public Record.** I understand that any information provided becomes part of the public record and can be made available to the public for review and posted to the City's website.

d. **Recommendations Are Advisory.** I understand that comments and recommendations from pre-application review are not a recommendation for approval or denial of the application by City representatives. Any recommendations that result from pre-application review are considered advisory only and shall not be binding on either the applicant or the City.

e. **Expiration.** I understand pre-application review comments are valid for a period of 12 months, which may be extended for a period up to 24 months. If a project is substantially revised, or if applicable policies, regulations, or procedures change that could affect the recommendations or conclusions of the pre-application review, a new pre-application review may be required prior to formal application submittal.

f. **Site Visit.** *If requested as part of this pre-application,* I hereby authorize City of Santa Barbara to conduct a site visit of this property as part of the City's review of this pre-application.

APPLICANT:

_____   _____
Applicant's Signature   *Date*

_____   _____
Applicant's Name (printed)   *Title (Architect, etc.)*