COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING & SAFETY DIVISION

809 Center Street Room101
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
831.420.5120 **santacruzca.gov**

PLAN REVIEW REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL/MULTI-FAMILY STRUCTURES

Construction drawings of your project are necessary for you to obtain a building permit. A complete permit application and construction drawings will only be accepted for review. Plans and specifications as noted below must be supplied or corrected before your building application can be accepted.

All non-residential structures that are not exempt from the Architectural and Engineering Practice Acts must be prepared by a licensed architect/engineer. **Plans drawn by unlicensed persons will not be accepted.** Electrical, plumbing and mechanical contractors may prepare plans for work done in their respective specialty trades provided they perform the actual installation. All Licensed architects, engineers and contractors must be registered in the State of California. A licensed soils engineer will be required to prepare soils report unless waived by the Building Official. In addition, the City of Santa Cruz requires all contractors working within the city limits to have valid city business licenses/credentials. License and credentials will be checked by the Building Official to ensure validity.

A complete building plan submittal will be reviewed by the appropriate City agencies who will provide plan corrections or clarifications of additional requirements for approval (if any) by email. All deficiencies must be corrected and provided on plan prior to permit issuance. Upon plan review completion. notification will be provided to the noted applicant via email of plan approval and remaining applicable fees due.

NOTE: Many commercial and industrial projects (including all projects over $50,000 in valuation) require a discretionary planning permit prior to application for a building permit. Your application cannot be processed unless this step is completed. Check with the Planning/Zoning Division to determine whether such a permit is needed.

Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing Permits: Electrical, plumbing and mechanical permits for commercial structures will be issued only to contractors licensed to practice in the trade specialty. Only a licensed C-16 contractor may install fire systems.

RE: Workman's Compensation Insurance: We will verify state required Workers Compensation Insurance prior to the issuance of any permit. In addition, the city requires all contractors, including sub-Contractors to have a current *City Business License.*

Please have your permit application completed with Worker's Comp Insurance and City Business License number. If we cannot verify them, we cannot issue the permit. It's that simple.

General Requirements

Complete plan sets, structural & energy calculations, job specifications, product brochures, etc. for new structures and tenant improvements are to be submitted electronically. See City of Santa Cruz's *Electronic Submittal Requirements.*

Signature of designer/engineer and stamp on first page of two of the plan sets. [CBC Section 106, 107] All other sheets with different designer/engineer(s) must also include a suitable associated designer / engineer signature and stamp.

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Requirement for Cover Sheet

The cover sheet of the construction documents must include essential project data to facilitate the plan review process and provide a clear overview of the project. The following elements should be included on the cover sheet:

1. Project Title
2. Project address
3. Assessor's Parcel Number (APN)
4. Owner's Information (name, contact)
5. Design Team Information (architect, structural engineer, civil engineer, electrical engineer, mechanical engineer, landscape architect)
6. Project Description
7. Occupancy Classification & Construction Type
8. Existing/ Proposed/ Total Square Footage
9. Number of Stories.
10. Zoning Information
11. Flood Information
12. Reference of Associated Relevant Permits
13. Date of Plans

Requirements for Site Plan

1. Scale 1" = 10' or 20', 1/16", 1/8", 1/4" = 1' or other appropriate scales.
2. Property Boundaries- Clearly delineate the boundaries of the property, including dimensions and bearings. Identify adjacent streets and the location of any existing structures on adjacent properties.
3. Building Footprint: Indicate the location and dimensions of the proposed building(s) on the site plan, including setbacks from property lines. Show the orientation of the building with respect to the north.
4. Site Features- Include existing and proposed topography, including contours and elevations. Indicate locations of driveways, parking areas, walkways, and any other hardscaping features.
5. Utilities- Show the locations of all existing and proposed utilities, including water, sewer, gas, and electrical lines. Include connections to existing utility services, clean-outs, and manholes.
6. Landscape & Erosion Control-Provide a landscaping plan that complies with local regulations, including plant types and locations. Include erosion control measures to manage stormwater runoff and protect against soil erosion during construction.

Requirements for Civil Sheets

All construction projects submitted for plan review must include detailed civil sheets that comply with the requirements set forth in the 2025 California Building Code (CBC) and Santa Cruz Municipal Code. The civil sheets must provide comprehensive information about site development and infrastructure. The following elements should be included:

1. Site grading plan [CBC 1803]
2. Drainage plan
3. Utility Plan
4. Pavement Design
5. Erosion Control Plan
6. Landscape Plan
7. Construction details; retaining walls, drainage structures pavement sections boundary, topographic surveys

Lee Butler, Director of Community Development
Larry Riordan, Chief Building Official

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Requirements for ADA Compliance

All construction projects submitted for plan review must adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards to ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Compliance with these standards is critical and must align with the 2025 California Building Code (CBC) and Title 24, Part 2. The following elements should be included in the plans:

1. Accessible Routes
2. Accessible Entrances
3. Parking Spaces
4. Restroom Facilities
5. Signage
6. Elevators
7. Seating and Tables
8. Service Areas

Requirements for Floodplain

All construction projects located within designated floodplain areas must adhere to the floodplain management requirements established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the 2025 California Building Code (CBC). The following elements must be included in the plans:

1. Flood Zone Determination
2. Base Flood Elevation
3. Floodproofing Measures
4. Site Grading and Drainage
5. Fill Material
6. Floodplain Development Permit
7. Emergency Access
8. Elevation Certificates

Requirements for Foundation Plan

All foundation designs must comply with the 2025 California Building Code (CBC), specifically Sections 1800 through 1807, which outline the requirements for foundation systems. The following elements should be incorporated into the foundation plans:

1. Soils Investigation / Soils Report [2025 CBC 1803]
2. Proposed Foundation Type [2025 CBC 1803.5]
3. Foundation Design [2025 CBC 1808]
4. Foundation Connections [2025 CBC 1808.8]
5. Retaining Walls [2025 CBC 1807.2]
6. Construction Materials [2025 CBC Chapter 19]
7. Waterproofing and Damp-proofing [2025 CBC 1805]
8. Under-slab Plumbing, Electrical, and Duct runs [2025 CBC 1907]
9. Stamped and Signed Engineer's Calculations [2025 CBC 107.1]

Requirements for Floor Plan

All construction projects submitted for plan review must include detailed floor plans that comply with the 2025 California Building Code (CBC) and local regulations. The floor plans must provide comprehensive information about the layout and design of the building. The following elements should be included:

1. General Layout
2. Dimensions
3. Exits and Egress
4. Accessibility Features
5. Window and Door Locations
6. Furniture Layout
7. Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing (MEP) Elements
8. Finishes and Materials

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Framing Requirements

All framing designs must comply with the 2025 California Building Code Sections 2300 through 2313, which outline the requirements for structural framing systems. The following elements should be incorporated into the framing plans:

- Framing- Details framing for each level of structure including floor framing, roof framing, and wall framing.
- Specify that framing must be inspected prior to covering or enclosing any structural elements. Clearly indicate the size, spacing, and type of framing members, including beams, joists, studs & headers.
- Material Specifications- Specify the materials to be used in framing, including wood species, grades, and treatment.
- Load Considerations- Clearly identify all loads that the framing system must support, including dead loads, live loads, and any lateral loads due to wind or seismic activity.
- Connections & Fasteners- Detail all connections between framing members, including the use of appropriate fasteners, brackets, and connectors.
- Shear Walls & Bracing- Incorporate shear walls or bracing systems as required to provide lateral stability against wind and seismic forces. Clearly indicate the location and design of shear walls and bracing on the framing plans.
- Fire-Resistance- Specify fire-resistant materials and assemblies where required by the CBC, particularly in multi-family or commercial structures. Include details on fire-rated walls, ceilings, and floors as applicable.
- Insulation & Energy Compliance- Indicate the type and location of insulation within the framing to comply with California Energy Code requirements. Ensure that framing details allow for proper energy efficiency and thermal performance.

Requirements for Structural Engineering

All construction projects must adhere to the structural engineering requirements specified in the 2025 California Building Code (CBC). The following elements should be incorporated into the structural engineering plans:

1. Structural Analysis- Provide a comprehensive structural analysis that evaluates the building's ability to resist all applicable loads, including dead, live, wind, and seismic loads.
2. Structural Details- Include detailed structural plans that outline the design of all structural elements, including foundations, framing, and load-bearing walls. Clearly indicate member sizes, materials, and connection details in the structural drawings.
3. Material Specification - Specify the materials to be used in the structural design, including concrete, steel, and wood, and ensure they comply with the relevant standards outlined in the CBC. Include information on material properties, grades, and manufacturing standards.
4. Connections & Details - Provide detailed connection designs for all structural elements, ensuring they are capable of transferring loads as required. Include connection details for beams, columns, shear walls, and other critical structural components.

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5. Seismic Design - Ensure that the structural design complies with CBC Chapter 16, which outlines seismic design requirements for buildings based on their occupancy and location. Incorporate appropriate seismic detailing, including the use of shear walls, braces, and moment-resisting frames.
6. Load Path - Clearly illustrate the load path from the roof to the foundation, showing how loads are transferred through the structure.
7. Construction Sequence - Outline the construction sequence and any temporary bracing or support required during construction to maintain structural integrity. Provide details on how the construction process will minimize risks associated with load-bearing elements.

Fire Protection System Requirements

All framing designs must comply with the 2025 California Building Code Chapter 23, including Sections 2301 through 2308., which outline the requirements for structural framing systems. The following elements should be incorporated into the framing plans:

All construction projects must comply with the fire protection systems requirements specified in the 2025 California Building Code (CBC) and Santa Cruz Fire Department regulations. The following elements should be incorporated into the fire protection plans:

1. Fire Sprinkler Systems
2. Fire Alarm Systems
3. Standpipe Systems
4. Fire Extinguishers
5. Fire Resistance Ratings
6. Emergency Access and Egress
7. Smoke Control Systems
8. Outline of Testing and Maintenance Procedures

Electrical Plan Requirements

All electrical systems must comply with the requirements specified in the 2025 California Electrical Code (CEC) and local regulations. The following elements should be incorporated into the electrical plans:

- Provide detailed electrical plans that clearly indicate the layout of all electrical components, including outlets, switches, lighting fixtures, and electrical panels. include necessary notes and legends for clarity.
- Include load calculations to demonstrate that the electrical system is designed to handle the anticipated demand. Ensure that calculations account for all fixed and movable loads, including lighting, receptacles, and HVAC systems.
- Specify the service entrance location and type, including details on the size and rating of the service equipment.
- Provide details on grounding and bonding methods in accordance with CEC Article 250.
- Specify wiring methods and materials to be used, including conductors, raceways, and cable types.
- Include details on lighting layouts, including fixture types, mounting heights, and controls. Specify panelboard locations, circuit assignments, and overcurrent protection devices.
- Indicate the location and type of receptacles and outlets, ensuring compliance with CEC requirements for spacing and accessibility. Include GFCI and AFCI protection as required by the code
- Detail the installation of smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms in accordance with CEC Section 710.

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Plumbing Plan Requirements

All plumbing systems must comply with the requirements specified in the 2025 California Plumbing Code (CPC) and local regulations. The following elements should be incorporated into the plumbing plans:

- Provide detailed plumbing plans that clearly indicate the layout of all plumbing fixtures, piping, and appliances. Ensure that all plans are drawn to scale and include necessary notes and legends for clarity.
- Include a fixture schedule that lists all plumbing fixtures, including sinks, toilets, showers, and water heaters, along with their specifications and flow rates.
- Detail the design of the water supply system, including pipe sizes, materials, and layout. Provide calculations to demonstrate that the system can adequately supply water to all fixtures, including considerations for pressure loss and demand.
- Include design details for the DWV system, indicating pipe sizes, materials, and slopes. Ensure compliance with CPC requirements for venting and drainage to prevent sewer gas intrusion and maintain system integrity.
- Specify backflow prevention devices where required, especially for irrigation systems and commercial applications.
- Provide details on sewage disposal systems, including connections to public sewers or septic systems. Ensure compliance with local health department regulations for wastewater management.
- Include details on the hot water system, including the location and type of water heater, insulation of hot water pipes, and recirculation systems if applicable.
- If applicable, provide details on the design and installation of gas piping systems, including sizing, materials, and connections to gas appliances.

Mechanical Plan Requirements

- Provide detailed mechanical plans that clearly indicate the layout of all mechanical equipment, ductwork, piping, and controls. Include necessary notes and legends for clarity.
- Include specifications for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, including the type of system (e.g., split system, packaged unit) and equipment specifications. Provide calculations for heating and cooling loads to demonstrate that the system is appropriately sized for the space.
- Detail the design and layout of ductwork, including sizes, materials, and insulation requirements.
- Specify ventilation requirements for the building, including outdoor air intake and exhaust systems in compliance with CMC Chapter 4.
- Provide details on mechanical piping systems, including plumbing connections for water heating, hydronic heating, and other mechanical systems.
- Indicate energy-efficient design features in mechanical systems to comply with the California Energy Code. Include details on programmable thermostats, variable speed drives, and other energy-saving technologies.
- Detail the control systems for HVAC, including thermostats, sensors, and automated controls.
- Specify the design and layout of exhaust systems for kitchens, bathrooms, and other areas requiring ventilation.

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Energy Conservation Requirements:
All construction projects must comply with the energy conservation requirements specified in the 2025 California Energy Code (CEC). The following elements should be incorporated into the energy conservation plans:

1. Energy Compliance Forms
2. Envelope Performance
3. Lighting Efficiency
4. HVAC System Efficiency
5. Water Heating System Installations
6. Renewable Energy Systems (Photovoltaic, solar water heating)
7. Ventilation and Exhaust
8. Building Automation Systems (based on occupancy & time of day)

Requirements for Green Building (CityGreen and/or CalGreen)
For information regarding the Green Building Program, please visit the Green Building Program web page.

Requirements for Food Handling Establishments
Additionally, electronic submission is required to the Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Department at consumerplancheck@santacruzcountyca.gov.

County Health and City Department plan reviews are not concurrent. Stamped approved County Health Dept. plans must be included within the plan submittal to City of Santa Cruz Building & Safety for review.

Requirements for Commercial Hood Installations:

- Please obtain the County Environmental Health-stamped approved plans. These must be included with your current plan set for review.
- Type of Hood- Clarify on plan type of Hood to be installed. Include Manufacturer's specifications and installation instructions
- Hood Location- Clearly indicate the location of the hood in relation to cooking equipment.
- Exhaust System- Provide details on the exhaust duct system, including duct material, size, and layout.
- Make-Up Air- Include provisions for make-up air to replace the air exhausted by the hood system, ensuring that it complies with CMC and CFC requirements.
- Fire Suppression System- If applicable, detail the installation of an automatic fire suppression system in accordance with NFPA 96 and local fire department requirements. Include information on the type of suppression agent to be used and the layout of nozzles.
- Grease Filters- Specify the type and installation of grease filters to be used in the hood system.
- Controls & Safety Features- Include details on control systems for the hood, including interlocks with cooking equipment and fan controls.
- Electrical & Gas Connections- Provide details on electrical and gas connections for the hood system, ensuring compliance with applicable codes and safety standards.

Acknowledgment – *Your signature below indicates acknowledgment of review of the above document in its entirety.*	
Property Address:	Date:
Name:	Signature: