

Building & Project Permits

Preapplication Meetings and Processes

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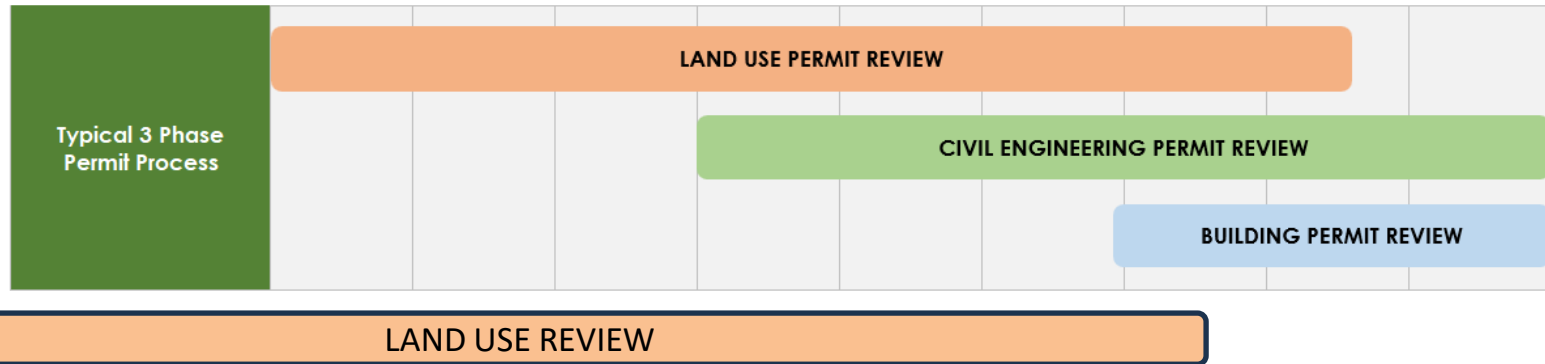


Agenda

- Overview - Phases of Permit Process
- Preapplication Meetings
 - What are they
 - How are they used
 - Advantages & Limitations
- Phased Approval & Construction
 - Description
 - How this is used
 - Advantages & Limitations



Three Phases of Permit Process



Discretionary Review Process

Critical Area Review (Steep Slopes, Flood Plain, Shoreline, Etc)
SEPA Review/Cultural Review (90 Days)
Archaeological Review
Conditional Use Permitting
Public Notices
Public Meetings
Public Hearings/Appeals
Outside Agencies Reviews
Hearing Examiner Decision
Council Approval (30 Days)



Technical Review Process

Utilities/Public Works
Grading/Stormwater
Traffic Impacts
Outside Agencies (Septic/Well/Etc)



Technical Review Process

Life Safety
Structural Stability
Energy Code Compliance

Building Permit
Issued In Final Phase

Building Permit
Cannot Be Issued
Until Land Use And
Civil Review Is
Approved

Preapplication Meetings

Purpose of Preapplication Meetings

- Opportunity for applicants to meet with city or county staff early in project planning
- Applicant submits initial project proposal for preliminary review
- Quality and completeness of submitted materials determine depth of feedback
- Identifies required permits, relevant development codes, and potential conflicts
- From our understanding, every jurisdiction in the state offers these or has the ability to



Preapplication Meetings

Department Reviews

- Planning & Zoning
 - Reviews compliance with land use and environmental regulations
 - Evaluates allowable uses, parking requirements, critical areas, design review needs, and density limits
- Engineering
 - Evaluates utilities and traffic considerations
 - Assesses sewer, stormwater, water supply availability, and needed upgrades
- Fire Department
 - Reviews access requirements for fire vehicles
 - Checks existing hydrant locations; identifies need for additional hydrants
 - Flags potential design conflicts affecting life safety
- Building Review
 - Evaluates basic building code considerations
 - Reviews building size relative to construction type, exits, and accessibility
 - Provides early guidance on major building design issues
 - Focus on life & safety



Preapplication Meetings

- Key Advantages
 - Early, cross-departmental review reduces uncertainty
 - Identifies land-use and environmental constraints upfront
 - Helps clarify code interpretation and required studies
 - Reduces likelihood of incomplete or noncompliant formal applications
- Challenges & Limitations
 - Preapplication fees rarely cover the staff time needed for comprehensive review
 - Only ~25% of projects with preapplications ever move forward, limiting staff capacity
 - Often insufficient project information is provided, resulting in only general guidance
 - Early feedback is advisory and may not be binding



Phased Approval & Construction

- Definition (IBC 107.3.3 – Phased Approval)
 - The building official may issue permits for specific portions of a project—such as foundations or structural elements—before full construction documents for the entire building are submitted.
 - Approval is based on adequate, detailed information demonstrating compliance for the portion under review.
 - Work proceeds at the permit holder's own risk, without assurance that the remaining phases will be approved.



Phased Approval & Construction

House Phased Approval is Used

- Common Applications
 - Allowing foundation, shoring, or early structural work to begin while full building design is still being completed
 - Enabling projects on tight timelines to mobilize contractors and begin site work sooner
 - Staggering submittals to focus early review on structural and civil elements
- Operational Considerations
 - Each phase must include sufficient documentation for code compliance
 - Later phases cannot proceed until subsequent submittals are approved
 - Coordination between design team, contractor, and building officials is essential to avoid rework



Phased Approval & Construction

- Key Advantages

- Allows early construction (e.g., foundations) to begin before complete project plans are submitted
- Speeds up the overall project timeline by overlapping design, review, and construction
- Enables building officials to focus early review on structural issues rather than full-code compliance
- Helpful for large projects with long lead-time materials or sequencing constraints

- Challenges & Limitations

- Developer assumes the risk that later design changes may require modifications to already-constructed work
- If a project stalls, partially built structures can become long-term eyesores or hazards
- Jurisdictions may face legal exposure if early approvals contribute to financial losses on projects that never advance
- Multiple phased submittals increase administrative complexity for staff

