

Planning Application Process

1. Once an application is submitted, staff will review the project for consistency with the applicable Zoning Code requirements and other County Improvement Standards.
2. If sufficient information has been provided, staff will distribute the application for a 15-day comment period to applicable County departments and outside agencies for comments and proposed project conditions.
3. Separately, pursuant to the requirements of State law (AB52), staff must provide a 30-day comment period to Native American tribes for projects requiring review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to determine if they desire to consult on an application due to potential cultural resources impacts.
4. Once comments are received, staff will schedule the application for the Subdivision Advisory Committee (for land division applications only).
5. Staff will evaluate an application and determine whether it is a “Project” under CEQA or considered exempt. If an application is determined to be a “Project” under CEQA, staff will prepare an Initial Study in accordance with State law. Staff may determine additional detailed information is required to evaluate a project and this can include special studies such as noise, greenhouse gas emissions, drainage, traffic or cultural resource studies.
6. An environmental review (Initial Study) can result in one of the following determinations:
 - a. The project will result in a less than significant impact to the environment and a Negative Declaration will be prepared.
 - b. The project could have significant impacts; however, these impacts can be reduced by incorporating special conditions (mitigation measures) into the project to reduce potential impacts to a less than significant level and a Mitigated Negative Declaration is prepared.
 - c. The project may have significant impacts on the environment and an environmental impact report (EIR) is necessary.
7. Once an environmental document is prepared, it must successfully complete either a 20 or 30-day public comment period (EIRs have different review requirements).
8. Once an environmental document successfully completes its public review period, the project can be scheduled for a public hearing before the Planning Commission. A staff report and proposed project conditions must be prepared. A 10-day public hearing notice must be advertised in the newspaper and notice provided to all persons requesting it or owning land within 400-feet from the exterior boundaries of the subject parcel.
9. Certain applications such as use permits and tentative maps can be approved by the Planning Commission; however, general plan amendments, rezoning and variance applications are required to be approved by the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission’s role is to

provide a recommendation. Projects approved by the Planning Commission are subject to a 10-day appeal period to the Board of Supervisors before the decision can be considered final.

10. Projects requiring Board of Supervisor approval, following the Planning Commission hearing, will be scheduled for the next available Board meeting for consideration. An updated staff report will be prepared and a new 10-day public hearing notice must be advertised in the newspaper and notice provided to all persons requesting it or owning land within 400-feet from the exterior boundaries of the subject parcel.
11. For approved projects, applicants must implement and adhere to the project conditions and pursue other necessary permits such as building, septic, well, grading and encroachment permits.