



USE PERMITS

Article 42 of Zoning Ordinance

WHAT IS A USE PERMIT?

The City's Zoning Ordinance regulates land uses allowed within different areas called Zoning Districts. Within each district, the City allows some land uses and activities and prohibits others. Some uses could be allowed in a district but need to be evaluated on a location specific basis to determine whether they are appropriate. The City classifies such uses as conditional uses, these uses must obtain a Use Permit, subject to a Zoning Administrator public hearing, to fully analyze the proposed use and address any potential impacts on the surrounding area.

Note: Temporary Use Permits are a separate topic. See dedicated informational handout [here](#).

I. APPLICATION PROCESS

Processing times are approximate and depend on several factors, including completeness of application and materials, environmental review, and public hearing schedules.

Step 1 – Staff Consultation and Application Submittal. The City encourages potential applicants to meet with a Planner for a preliminary review of the proposed use prior to submittal. Once the City accepts the signed application form, submittal materials, and application fee, the City will review the application for completeness.

Step 2 – Completeness Review. The City will review the application for completeness within 30 days of payment or a resubmittal. If the application is incomplete, the City will provide a letter detailing the information needed to make the application complete. If the application is complete, the application proceeds to Step 3.

Step 3 – Application Review. Depending on the type, size and location of the project, it will either be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) or require further environmental analysis. If the project is exempt, the City will schedule a public hearing with the Zoning Administrator for the project and the application would proceed to Step 4. If the project is not exempt, the City would need to evaluate the application in accordance with CEQA requirements. Non-exempt project would be evaluated at a public hearing by the Planning Commission.

Step 4 – Public Hearing. A public hearing requires notice to property owners and residents within 300 feet of the proposed use, as well as in the newspaper (San Mateo Daily Journal) and on the City's website at least 10 days prior to the hearing. The Agenda Packet for the public hearing will be posted at least 72 hours prior to the hearing.

At the hearing, the applicant or designee must be present to answer any questions or concerns which may arise. Members of the public may also be present to provide comments and input.

Once action is taken on the application, there is a 15-day appeal period during which the applicant or any interested party may appeal the decision.

II. USE PERMIT SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

The City maintains discretion to require additional information depending on the nature of the proposed use. The City may require additional clarifying materials as the proposal is more fully developed.

All Projects	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Planning Application. Must be completed and signed.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Owner's Authorization (if applicant is different than property owner). The owner's authorization is a signed statement from the legal property owner authorizing the project applicant to apply for Use Permit approval on the property.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Title Report issued within past 6 months and reflects current ownership. The Title Report indicates easements or other land restrictions, and these items must be depicted on the site plan.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Application Fee. Application fees may be subject to change. Link to current Application Fees .
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Description of Use(s) Proposed. Must include the following. The City maintains discretion to require additional information in the description of the use depending on the use, site conditions, and site surroundings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Hours of operation (which days of week, which hours of each day) <input type="checkbox"/> Maximum Number of Employees <input type="checkbox"/> Estimated Maximum Number of Customers per day and per hour <input type="checkbox"/> The description shall identify if the proposed use would emit noise, vibration, light, glare, odor, or involve use of toxic substances, hazardous materials, or any materials that could affect general public health and safety or sensitive receptors, and whether these activities occur inside of a building. <input type="checkbox"/> Biosafety Level(s) proposed (if the use proposed is life sciences)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Statement of Justification. This is a statement explaining how the proposed project is compatible with surrounding uses, will not create a nuisance or be detrimental to the immediate neighborhood or city overall, and any proposed methods to mitigate any potential adverse impacts. It provides a narrative explaining how the project meets the findings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Response to Findings. Submit, in your own words, how the project meets the required Use Permit Findings (Article 42.4) – see handout here .
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Plan Set. The plans shall be in PDF form and include the documents specified below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan (Drawn to scale and dimensioned). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Include property lines and all existing and propose structures (in some cases, the application may require a separate existing and proposed site plan for the City to evaluate).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Off-street parking and loading facilities, driveways, curb cuts, and direction of travel. <input type="checkbox"/> Locations of landscaped areas, existing and proposed trees showing where any tree removal will occur. <input type="checkbox"/> Location of outdoor equipment (including mechanical equipment, electrical equipment, signs, lighting, and fencing). <input type="checkbox"/> Location of Fire Department access roads, service mains, and fire hydrants. <input type="checkbox"/> Building Elevations. Required for new buildings and existing building faces that would be altered. Include siding material(s), roofing material(s), color, trim, and architectural features. <input type="checkbox"/> Floor Plans. Interior spaces (labeled and dimensioned from exterior walls) <input type="checkbox"/> Space Allocation Plans. The space allocation plans shall identify how different areas would be used. If there are multiple uses proposed, it will calculate the area of each.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Context Map. Aerial map to show existing/approved uses within a 300 ft radius of the subject site.
Hazardous Waste Sites	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environmental Site Assessment. An environmental site assessment (Phase I or Phase II depending on the project) may be required if the proposal occurs on a hazardous waste site identified on the Cortese List or Department of Toxic Substances Control EnviroStor Map . Contact City Staff prior to requesting any reports or submitting an application if this is the case.
Research and Development / Life Sciences Uses	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Map of Sensitive Receptor Uses within 300-foot radius of proposed use. A “sensitive receptor use” means facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly and people with illnesses. Examples include, but are not limited to, childcare facilities, recreational facilities, medical facilities, places of assembly, schools, and/or senior care facilities.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Biosafety Plan. A preliminary Biosafety Plan shall be prepared in accordance with California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Division 1, Chapter 4, Subchapter 7, Group 16, Article 109, Section 5199(f)(4) and submitted with the entitlement application submitted to the Planning Manager/Designee.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Evacuation Plan. A preliminary Evacuation Plan shall be prepared and submitted with the entitlements application and submitted to the Planning Manager/Designee.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Preliminary Medical Waste Management Plan. A Preliminary Medical Waste Management Plan shall be prepared in accordance with the San Mateo County Medical Waste Program that includes types and amounts of medical waste activities, types of treatment, regulated off-site transporter information, back-up offsite regulated off-site transporter information, treatment of waste pharmaceuticals, and similar requirements with the entitlement application and submitted to the Planning Manager/Designee.