

# Preliminary Review



City of San Jose  
Dept. of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement  
[www.sanjoseca.gov/planning](http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning)



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Planning, Building and Code Enforcement  
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Para mas informacion,  
por favor llame (408) 535-3555

For more information  
call (408) 535-3555

**I'M READY, NOW WHAT?** An appointment is required to submit a preliminary review. Please call (408) 535-3555 to set up an appointment. At the time of your appointment, please check with the front desk receptionist located on the 1st floor.

**NEXT STEP?** Submit development application or submit another preliminary review application.

**WHAT IS PRELIMINARY REVIEW?**

Preliminary review is a **voluntary, fee-based service** that provides applicants with information regarding the City’s codes, policies and development review processes. It is intended to be a time saving process by providing necessary information and initial feedback on potential projects prior to submittal of a formal application. Anyone can submit a Preliminary Review on any property.

In filing for preliminary review, you are encouraged to provide any information that may be helpful for staff to understand your project concept and the information you need to proceed. Generally, the depth and completeness of staff responses to your specific questions depend on the amount, depth, and accuracy of the information you provide with your request.

A Project Manager assigned to your project will contact you with comments and recommendations after it has been reviewed within fourteen (14) working days (single-family & focused review), (21) working days for enhanced review, and thirty (30) working days (comprehensive review). When possible, your future project application will be assigned to the same Project Manager who reviewed your preliminary plans.

**IS PRELIMINARY REVIEW A DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION?**

No. Your submittal for preliminary review does not constitute a formal development application with the City. Only after you have submitted a complete development review application, including environmental clearance and paid the appropriate filing fees, will your project be considered “on file.”

**HOW LONG ARE PRELIMINARY REVIEW RESPONSES GOOD FOR?**

The Department’s policy is to honor commitments made to prospective applicants in response to a preliminary review. However, a different response may result from a formal application for the same project if, for instance, the City Council changes development policies, operational conditions of surrounding streets change, or more complete information regarding environmental

studies is available. Since preliminary review responses are based on analyzing a snapshot of design and policy factors that may change over time, it is not realistic to condition their validity on time. Therefore, it is imperative that prospective applicants file formal applications as soon as preliminary review is completed.

**WHAT CHOICES OF PRELIMINARY REVIEW DO I HAVE?**

Prospective applicants may choose between three preliminary review options: **existing single-family property review** (planning only), **focused review** (planning only), **enhanced review** (planning only) and **comprehensive review** (multi-departmental). An applicant may choose existing single-family or focused review when the information requested relates to planning issues only. If it also requires an architectural or site review of plans, an enhanced review is the option. When it involves other departments or divisions, the applicant should choose comprehensive review.

The chart below illustrates the types of services from each of the preliminary review options provides:

	single-family	focused review	enhanced review	comprehensive review
staff analysis	✓	✓	✓	✓
feedback	✓	✓	✓	✓
site review			✓	✓
architectural review			✓	✓
initial site check				✓
inter-departmental coordination				✓
inter-departmental meeting with applicant				✓

**WHAT SHOULD I SUBMIT?**

- Provide Preliminary Review Exhibits**—exhibits are useful in communicating the applicant’s project concept to staff. Listed below are examples of exhibits you may submit to facilitate the review of your project.
  - Assessor’s Parcel Number and Map.
  - Existing site plan (with current uses)
  - Proposed site plan (with parking analysis, if applicable)
  - Conceptual elevations
  - Conceptual landscaping modifications and existing tree locations
  - Photographs of Site and Surroundings.** Photographs are very important for preliminary reviews of all projects. They are particularly encouraged for infill projects which involve existing structures to show the context of the surrounding neighborhood. Photos may be numbered to correspond to numbered views on the site plan.
  - Any other documents that may assist staff to answer the questions you want resolved through the preliminary review process such as an operations plan.
- Complete Preliminary Review Questionnaire** - applicants are required to complete this questionnaire to the best of their ability and to indicate any inapplicable items. A well-completed application will help Planning staff understand your proposal and which other departments and divisions to involve in its review.
- Copies** - applicants are required to submit the following sets of preliminary site plans for each project concept that involves physical site development (continued on back page):
  - Existing Single Family Property Review (planning only)- 2 sets.
  - Focused Review (planning only) - 2 sets.
  - Enhanced Review (planning only) - 3 sets.
  - Comprehensive Review (multi-departmental)– Ten (10) full-size plan sets measuring 24-inches x 36-inches plus Two (2) legible black line plan set, reduced to 11-inches x 17-inches.