

CITY OF DUNSMUIR

GUIDELINES FOR RESIDENTIAL CONSTRUCTION

Congratulations on your decision to build a new home or addition in Dunsmuir! This guide is intended to help you understand what you will need to do to obtain a City building permit and get going with your construction project. While no guide can completely cover every aspect of every project, this one is intended to help you prepare most of the items the City will need from you and make your dealings with the City as painless as possible. Please keep in mind the many items that you will need to complete before you get a building permit. And, as with any complex project, patience and perseverance should see you through to a happy, well-built new home or addition.

Where do I start?

Your first stop at the City regarding your new project is best made before you purchase the property. You should discuss your project with the City Planner. The planner will help you check zoning codes for the areas you plan to build and tell you what your “setbacks” (area of the lot where you cannot put a building) are. The planner will also look for any special conditions that may affect your project. The planner may ask several questions regarding your project in order to provide complete information. Please feel free to ask the planner questions about how the City will process your project; the more you can learn early on in your project the better off you will be.

What do I need to submit for building plan review?

Complete and accurate plans for review, as well as a complete permit application, will help speed up both the permit process and your construction. The City checks building plans in an effort to ensure the work will meet the minimum standards set in the State Building Codes (currently the 2001 California codes). While there can and likely will be challenges that will need to be fixed during construction, correcting problems while they are still on paper is far more cost effective than fixing things in the middle of construction.

Incomplete plans or failure to pay the plan review fees will delay review of your plans. Please make every effort to make sure your plans are ready before submitting them to the City. A complete submittal will include:

- Two complete sets of building plans (blueprints) signed in ink by the person responsible for preparing them. (Also stamped if prepared by a licensed professional.) Plans need to be to scale and fully dimensioned (showing all the dimensions of the building and building elements).
- If building with a truss roof and/or floor, two complete sets of **legible** truss engineering (you get these from your truss manufacturer). Please make sure all supporting truss engineering details are included, such as: truss layout plan, special

bracing details such as at gable walls, details for any fill areas (areas where the roof framing will be conventional, such as where two roof lines meet), or any other special details that the truss system calls for.

- Two sets of a plot plan that accurately shows the property you are building on, property lines and dimensions, location of street, easements, etc., where the buildings will be placed on the lot, and any other site information that may be needed. You must be able to show the inspector where the property lines are. If the property lines and/or corners cannot be found, you may be required to have the property surveyed by a licensed surveyor.
- Some projects may require two sets of a grading plan and permit if substantial quantities of earth are being moved. As a general rule of thumb, if you need to work the property such that the work entails cut or fill exceeding one foot of depth, you may need a grading plan. You can get further details from your engineer or the building inspector.
- Depending on the design and layout of your new home or addition, you may need to have your engineer prepare reports for submittal such as foundation analysis, lateral analysis or structural calculations. Consult your engineer regarding these items. When needed, two sets of engineering reports, stamped and signed by the engineer, need to be submitted with your plans.
- Obviously, your plans need to clearly show what you are planning to build, including information regarding the electrical, plumbing, mechanical (heat and air) systems, as well as structural and construction details.
- Two sets of energy compliance calculations (signed by the preparer). Energy calculations are an analysis, required by state law, of how much energy your new home or addition will use. These calculations take into account the size and type of heating, air conditioning, and hot water systems you will install, the amount of window area, the type of insulation you will use, etc., to ensure that you have a reasonably energy efficient home. There are many certified energy consultants that can help you with energy calculations.

Are there special design requirements in Dunsmuir?

The main special requirements that apply to all projects are a residential snow load requirement of 70 pounds per square foot, design for seismic zone 3, and wind load design for 80 mph. Other design requirements you may need to address will typically be dependent on your building or site, such as soils engineering, foundation design, lateral or structural design. Discuss your plans with your engineer to see if these types of analysis will be needed. All construction projects except single family residences are required to complete the City's architectural design process. The planner will inform you if this is a requirement for your project.

How do I get sewer and water to my property?

Most lots in the City are served with sewer and water. This means that there are sewer laterals and water services lines onto the property. However, there are still a few properties that do not have service available to them. For lots that don't currently have mains to them, the city code requires that any property that is within 500 feet of a main can be served, but that the property owner must construct the mains to and across the frontage of their property. For lots more than 500 feet from mains special circumstances apply. In those cases, please discuss your project with the city planner. For those lots that lack laterals or services, please contact the city planner.

So, I pay for the City to put in my laterals. Is that my only sewer and water cost?

Unfortunately, the cost of the lateral is not your only expense. In addition to paying for the lateral installation, you will also be charged connection fees on your building permit. Connection fees for a new residence are currently \$2742.00 for sewer and \$1042.00 for water. These fees make up the largest component of your building permit fees. As more buildings are added to the system, there is greater demand for sewer and water. The connection fees are collected and are used for future projects to help ensure the City can continue to meet sewer and water demand. Of course, you will also need to sign-up with the Finance Department for monthly sewer, water and garbage service.

What about inspections?

The City Inspector must inspect all work done during construction before it is concealed. The permit card you receive when your permit is issued shows the stages where you must call for inspection. Keep in mind though, if you get stuck, you can call for the inspector to stop by to discuss your project with you anytime he is available. If you aren't sure if you need an inspection, don't guess! Please call the inspector and ask. Photographs, affidavits, etc. will not be accepted in lieu of inspection. The inspector will help explain when you should call for inspection. The inspector is available in Dunsmuir on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays by appointment. You need to schedule your inspection by calling 530.938.4441 at least one day before the inspection.

How can I find my property lines?

Not many lots in Dunsmuir have current survey stakes that can be identified and relied on. A survey stake will typically be an iron pipe located at the lot corners and will have a round "washer" or cap set in the top that bears the registration number of the surveyor who placed it. By law, only licensed surveyors can place property monuments (stakes). If survey stakes are not in place, you will need to have the property surveyed and stakes set before your first inspection. This allows us to check and make sure your building is properly placed on your lot.

What if I want to change things after my plans are approved?

Hopefully your building plans will be complete and you will not need to make changes during construction. Occasionally though, changes are wanted or need to be made during construction. The best thing to do is discuss any changes with your building inspector before you commit to making the change. The inspector will advise you whether you need to submit revised plans and/or engineering for your changes. If revisions to your plans are needed, you will need to have the changes reviewed and approved by the City before you make the changes in your construction.

What do my building permit fees cost?

This can be a difficult question to answer as so much depends on your project. Fees depend on the size of house you will be constructing and other project specific information.

The plan review and inspection fees for your building and encroachment permits vary depending on the size and value of work. The building inspector can help you estimate the building permit fees if you know the size of your house.

How long will it take to get my building permit?

A lot depends on you. The best way to ensure you get through the plan review process quickly is: make sure that your plans are complete, all the reports, engineering, and associated items are included with your plan submittal (each time you submit). Keep in mind that it usually takes at least two plan submittals to get everything right (after initial plan review, things that need to be corrected will be identified and a set of plans returned to you for correction and re-submittal). Each submittal generally takes about two weeks for review and response.

You can also speed the process up by making plan corrections and re-submitting promptly. Just be sure that you or your designer has addressed all of the concerns noted. If you don't understand the plan check corrections, don't guess. Call and ask about them.

You should plan about 3 to 5 weeks to get through the plan submittal, review, and approval process and get your building permit. Many projects take less time than this, and a few a little more.

What about my other utilities?

Installation of the other utilities needed for your lot (electricity, phone, cable TV, etc.) need to be arranged with the company providing the utility.

This sounds so complicated. What can I do to make this process smooth?

As with your building plans, planning for the process is important for the success of your project. We understand that dealing with permits and the City's requirements is only a small part of your overall project, but it is an important part. Meeting early with your engineer, the city planner and building inspector to discuss your project can help. Early planning and budgeting for all the elements that have to be put in place before the permit is issued will make a big difference in getting your project going.

The building and planning departments are happy to discuss your project with you and answer your questions about your project. While you can make an effort to "go it alone" by managing your entire project yourself, most of our customers who do not have expertise in construction find it valuable to hire professional assistance for some or all elements of their project. Many professional building designers, architects, engineers, and contractors are available to assist you in your project. These people generally have experience and understanding of the process, codes, standards and other aspects of the permit and construction process that can help guide you.

We hope this guide is informative and will help you get started on the right foot. Below are the City address and a list of some phone numbers that may be useful to you.

DUNSMUIR CITY HALL

5915 Dunsmuir Avenue
Dunsmuir, CA 96025
Phone (530) 235-4822
Fax (530) 235-4824

Interim City Manager	Jefferson Spencer
Building Inspector	Dave Smith
Contract Planner	Rico Tinsman