



# THE LARGE PROJECT PRELIMINARY PLANNING APPLICATION GUIDE “THE PRE-APP”

City of San Mateo Planning Division  
330 West 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
(650) 522-7212

Community Development Department  
[www.cityofsanmateo.org](http://www.cityofsanmateo.org)  
[planning@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:planning@cityofsanmateo.org)  
Revised: JULY 1, 2021

**This application guide contains information about the City of San Mateo large project preliminary planning application process (“the pre-app”), including the neighborhood meeting and Planning Commission Study Session.**

The San Mateo City Council and Planning Commission have established a preliminary planning application review process to ensure that there is resident involvement early in the land development process. The process is intended to familiarize the surrounding property owners and residents, business owners, neighborhood associations and interested persons with the details of the proposed project. It also serves to obtain input from interested groups and the City Planning Commission early in the development process. If the proposed project qualifies as a project listed below, the large project pre-application neighborhood meeting and Planning Commission Study Session process is required pursuant to City Council Resolution # 98 (2008) “Adoption of a Pre-Application Planning Process.”

- ❑ New residential projects over 20 units in size.
- ❑ New non-residential buildings of 10,000 square feet or more.
- ❑ Additions of 10,000 square feet or more to existing non-residential buildings.
- ❑ Projects involving a Zoning Reclassification, Planned Development application or a General Plan Amendment, or subject to a Negative Declaration or an Environmental Impact Report under the California Environmental Quality Act.
- ❑ Projects where the applicant has requested the formal pre-application process.

**For projects not listed above, a neighborhood informational meeting is still required. Please consult with the Planning Division for additional information on the process for this meeting.**

---

## The Process

### STEP 1: SUBMIT PRELIMINARY PLANNING APPLICATION MATERIALS & FORM TO THE PLANNING DIVISION

The following items must be submitted to the City of San Mateo Planning Division for the preliminary planning application:

- The attached Planning Application submittal form. **This application must be signed by all current property owner(s).**
- Preliminary title report that is no more than a year old, showing the current property owner(s).
- The planning application deposit, which is \$25,000.00 (effective from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022)
- Written Description of the Proposed Project on the cover sheet of the plan set. For multi-family residential projects, please indicate whether the applicant wants to subdivide the property, including the creation of condominium units, with the formal planning application. A Tentative Parcel Map or Tentative Map is required.
- A digital submittal is preferred through a single PDF of the plans with a file size no larger than 10 MB. If a hard copy submittal is made, provide 6-8 bound and folded sets of full-size project plans, including CD or flash drive (will not be returned) with a single PDF file of the plans no larger than 10 MB.
- For Projects Requesting to Utilize State Density Bonus Law: Written Request for a State Density Bonus pursuant to Government Code Section 65915 and San Mateo Municipal Code. The Planning Application submittal shall include a detailed Residential Project Density Bonus Request Letter and Cost Reduction Evidence that identifies all requested “incentive(s) or concession(s),” “waivers or modifications to development standards,” and/or use of State Density Bonus law parking standards, and provides all the required items pursuant to San Mateo Municipal Code “Application Procedure.” State Law Section 65915(k) defines an “incentive or concession” as a reduction in site development standards or a modification of zoning code requirements or architectural design requirements that ... results in identifiable and actual cost reductions, to provide for affordable housing costs.” The City requires the submittal of documentation that there will be a “cost reduction” as a result of the requested incentive or concession in order to make the required finding that the requested incentive/concession results in a cost reduction (see State Code Section 65915(d)(1)).

### STEP 2: COORDINATE WITH THE PROJECT PLANNER TO SCHEDULE THE FORMAL PROJECT NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING DATE, TIME & LOCATION

The purpose of the Neighborhood Meeting is for the applicant to explain the proposal to the surrounding property owners, residents, business owners, neighborhood associations, and interested persons and receive their input. This meeting should accomplish three main goals:

- 
1. Establishment of a positive dialog between the development team and the surrounding property owners and residents, business owners, neighborhood associations and interested parties.
  2. Allow for project modification early in the process based on feedback.
  3. Avoid further delays during public hearings due to neighborhood opposition.

As project applicant, you host and conduct the meeting; the project planner will be present as a resource only. The following pages outline the steps involved in this process.

The project planner will work with you to select a date, time, and location for the neighborhood meeting based on the following requirements:

- Meetings must be held on Monday through Thursdays starting at either 7:00 p.m. or 7:30 p.m. and held at the project site, in a City or School District facility, or a similar public venue located within the project vicinity with sufficient parking and ADA access.

Meetings cannot be held on the following dates:

- Evenings of City Council or any City Commission meetings. Please check the city's website at <http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/index.aspx?nid=60> and <http://www.cityofsanmateo.org/index.aspx?nid=192> for the City Council, Public Works Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Community Relations Commission, Sustainability Commission and Planning Commission meeting dates.
- Legal holidays, common religious holidays or during the week of Thanksgiving and December 15th-January 1<sup>st</sup>.

The project planner will work with you to coordinate a public notice for the neighborhood meeting. Typically, the City will mail this notice, as the City generally prefers that a single notice be mailed that contains both the Neighborhood Meeting date and Planning Commission study session date. Should separate notices be necessary, the applicant is responsible for the preparation and mailing of the Neighborhood Meeting notice, with the City of San Mateo responsible for the preparation and mailing of the Planning Commission Study Session meeting notice. The notices must be mailed a minimum of 10 calendar days prior to the meeting.

The meeting notice(s) are required to be mailed to the following groups on the City's official public noticing lists:

- Property owners, residential tenants and business tenants within 1,000 feet of the project site;
- The City's "900 List" which contains nearly 100 Homeowner Associations, Neighborhood Associations, local utilities, media, and other organizations interested in citywide planning projects; and,
- The interested parties list which includes interested individuals who contacted the City regarding this site or project or requested to be added to the project notification list.

---

### **STEP 3: PREPARE AND HOLD THE PROJECT NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING:**

The applicant is responsible for bringing presentation-sized graphics of the conceptual project plans, including at minimum an existing and proposed site plan and exterior elevations of all sides of the proposed buildings.

The applicant will prepare the meeting sign in sheet. Please have all attendees sign in to ensure a complete record of attendees, including City staff and all members of the project team. Attendees are asked to provide their email and/or mailing address for future notices. A member of the applicant's team must take detailed notes from the meeting and prepare a Meeting Summary. The project planner will provide you with a sample Meeting Summary to replicate.

The meeting consists of the following schedule:

- The project planner will typically open the meeting by describing the purpose of the meeting and introducing the project applicants. The planner will remain throughout the meeting to answer any questions regarding development standards and the planning application review process.
- The applicant will then manage the remainder of the meeting. The applicant's presentation on the proposed project should include a description of the purpose of the development, the way the design has responded to various site planning and aesthetic issues and important design features. The applicant should then open the discussion to the residents, being available to answer questions or take comments. If questions are raised related to the application process or City development regulations that are more appropriately answered by the planner, he or she will answer those questions.
- Once discussion has finished, the Planning staff member will typically close the meeting by describing the next steps in the planning process.

### **STEP 4: PREPARE AND DISTRIBUTE A WRITTEN SUMMARY OF THE MEETING.**

The applicant must prepare and distribute the written summary of the meeting within **one week of the meeting**. The Meeting Summary should include a list of attendees, the major issues raised, any questions and answers discussed during the meeting. Please send the draft meeting summary and the sign-in sheet to the project planner who attended the meeting for final editing. The City will post the meeting summary on-line on the City's website. The applicant is responsible for emailing the meeting summary to all the meeting attendees who provided an email address. The applicant is responsible for mailing the Meeting Summary via USPS to the mailing address provided for those attendees without email.

### **STEP 5: THE PLANNING COMMISSION STUDY SESSION**

In addition to the neighborhood meeting, a pre-application Study Session with the Planning Commission is required. This will help identify issues that the Commission wants addressed prior to the formal hearing process for your project. Here is how it works:

- The Project Planner will typically set a date for the Study Session at the time the neighborhood meeting date is set. Typically, a project will be reviewed by the Commission approximately four weeks after the neighborhood meeting. Planning

---

Commission meetings are held virtually on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m.

- Staff will prepare a staff report analyzing significant issues and will distribute this report to you and the Commissioners prior to this meeting.
- Please be prepared to make a short (5-8 minutes) presentation and to respond to questions from the Planning Commission. The Commissioners will provide individual comments on the project for future consideration and revision.

#### **NEXT STEP: FORMAL PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMITTAL**

After the completion of the large project preliminary planning application review process, a formal planning application may be submitted. Please see the separate Planning Application guide book for submittal requirements and forms.

---

# Planning Application Form

City of San Mateo Planning Division  
330 West 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94403-1388  
Ph: (650) 522-7212

## **Applicant Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Property Owner Information (If different than applicant):**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please provide the above information for each additional property owner or applicant, if applicable, on a separate sheet of paper.*

## **Project and Property Information**

Project Address(es):

Assessor Parcel Number(s):

Brief Project Description:

---

## Property Owner Authorization

I **certify that as the property owner**, I authorize the filing of this planning application. I understand that pursuant to the City of San Mateo Municipal Code, conditions of project approval are binding upon both the applicant and the property owner(s). I agree to implement the Planning Application Conditions of Approval subject only to the right to object at public hearing on this application.

### Property Owner's Statement

I hereby certify that I am the owner of record of the property described in the above Project Location and that I approve of the requested action herein. I have read the above Deposits and Maximum Job Cost/Charges and understand that the Planning charges reflect the actual staff time spent and other costs associated with the processing of this application(s). I understand that my initial deposit is an estimate of these charges and not a fee, and I agree to abide by the billing policy stated below. I also understand that overdue invoices are subject to San Mateo Municipal Code Section 3.64.020 Penalties and Interest.

---

Property Owner's Signature

---

Date

---

Print Property Owner's Name

---

Property Owner's Signature

---

Date

---

Print Property Owner's Name

I **certify that I am authorized by the property owner(s) to file** this Planning Application **and submit, herewith, this authorization**. I understand that pursuant to the City of San Mateo Municipal Code, conditions of project approval are binding upon both the applicant and the property owner(s). I agree to implement the Planning Application Conditions of Approval subject only to the right to object at public hearing on this application.

---

Authorized Agent's Signature

---

Date

**NOTES: DEPOSITS AND MAXIMUM PLANNING APPLICATION COSTS/CHARGES**

1. City Council Resolution directs that Planning charges reflect the actual costs of staff time spent on each project and all direct costs (including but not limited to noticing, copying charges, and consultant staff time) associated with the application. Staff time is charged at the rate of \$275.00 per hour (through 6/30/2022) for all planning applications. The applicant is responsible for paying 100% of the costs of all staff/consultant time and all costs incurred pursuant to any appeal.

Upon submittal of your project, a deposit in the amount indicated in the City Fee Schedule is required for this application at the time of the submittal. If the total deposit is not expended when the final decision is made on your project, the balance will be refunded to you. If 70% or more of the initial deposit is expended during processing, you will receive an invoice for an additional deposit. All outstanding invoices must be paid prior to any neighborhood meeting or study session. Prior to submitting a new application, the applicant is required to pay all past due fees.

2. The applicant shall pay the actual cost of any consultant services required to process a planning application. Consultants are used by staff for the preparation of environmental documents, project design review, traffic studies, parking studies or historic resource analysis.

3. SMMC 3.64.020 Penalties and Interest. Any fee imposed by this chapter shall be due and payable within thirty days after the bill is mailed by the City. The fees shall be delinquent if not paid within said thirty days. Any person who fails to remit any fee within the time required shall pay a penalty of ten percent of the amount due, per month to a maximum of three months, plus interest at the rate of 1-1/2 percent per month, or fraction thereof, computed from the delinquent date of the fee until and including the date of payment.

**PROPERTY LOCATION**

Project Address(es):

Assessor Parcel Number(s):

**PROPERTY OWNER'S CONTACT INFORMATION FOR FUTURE INVOICES**

Name:

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Email:

Phone:

**PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNED STATEMENT**

I hereby certify that I am the owner of record of the property described in the above Project Location and that I approve of the requested action herein. I have read the above Deposits and Maximum Planning Application Costs/Charges and understand that the Planning Division charges reflect the actual staff time spent and other costs associated with the processing of this application(s). I understand that my initial deposit is an estimate of these charges and not a fee, and I agree to abide by the billing policy stated above. I also understand that overdue invoices are subject to San Mateo Municipal Code section 3.64.020 Penalties and Interest.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Property Owner's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Property Owner's Name