



## INSTRUCTIONS:

# DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING APPLICATION (DCP) FILING INSTRUCTIONS

1. **CASE FILING INSTRUCTIONS:** A portion of these instructions are provided in a checklist format for the convenience of applicants in completing the Department of City Planning (DCP) Application and gathering necessary application materials. It is not a complete statement of filing requirements as specific entitlement applications may require other specialized information. Additionally, review of the application by assigned planning staff, including review of reports received from other departments or agencies after the application filing, may generate the need for additional reports, studies or other exhibits.

### a. General Instructions.

- i. Read all instructions carefully and submit all materials requested. Incomplete applications, insufficient, unclear or inconsistent data will cause delays.
- ii. To aid in the preparation of the application, applicants are encouraged to visit DCP's website at <http://planning.lacity.org> for information on the general plan, community plans, zone code, property information, application forms, staff assignments etc. Property specific information such as addresses, zoning, specific plans/overlay districts, case numbers and ordinances can also be accessed from City Planning's Zoning Information and Map Access System (ZIMAS) at <http://zimas.lacity.org>.
- iii. It is recommended the applicant use the interactive online forms available at the DCP website. Otherwise all forms and attachments must be typed or printed (illegible materials will not be accepted).
- iv. Applicants are encouraged to first visit the Department of Building and Safety to discover if there are other issues or necessary approvals associated with the project/site which must be resolved prior to filing. The design of the proposed project may require alterations in order to comply with the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) and/or additional entitlement requests may be needed.
- v. If you have questions about completing your application or the application process, please visit or call one of the following Development Services Center (DSC) Public Counter; office locations, telephone numbers:

**DSC Metro (Figueroa Plaza)**  
201 N. Figueroa St – 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles – CA 90012  
TEL:213-482-7077

**DSC Valley (Marvin Braude Building)**  
6262 Van Nuys Blvd Suite 251  
Van Nuys – CA 91401  
TEL: 818-374-5050

**DSC West Los Angeles**  
1828 Sawtelle Blvd  
Los Angeles - CA 90025  
TEL:310-231-2598

- b. **Application Package.** Planning staff will screen the application package to determine whether all documents and materials listed herein as applicable to the request (i.e. depending on the location, type of project or requested action) have been submitted. To facilitate the filing process materials should be organized in the order listed below.

- c. **Filing Fee.** Fees must be paid at the time of filing the application per Article 9 of the LAMC. A Fee Estimator tool can be found on City Planning’s website, you may also visit the DSC.
- d. **Appointment System.** The DSC provides case filing and condition clearance services by appointment. Once you have a completed application package, please request a filing appointment via the “Development Services Centers” portion of City Planning’s website. Select “Make an Appointment” and you will be prompted to request a preferred location, date and time for the appointment. Requested appointment times are not definite, and are not confirmed until you receive an e-mail from City Planning with the assigned planner and appointment time.

2. **DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING (DCP) APPLICATION.** The Department of City Planning application form ([CP-7771.1](#)) must be completely and is required for most applications.

- a. **Project Location.** Include the entire street address range of the project site as shown in ZIMAS; if a property address is not indicated in ZIMAS, provide a Bureau of Engineering address referral form (even if the site has a postal address).

For the legal description, include all contiguously owned properties even if the proposed project site is only one of several parcels owned by the same property owner. If the legal description is complex or if it contains a lot cut reference (i.e. “Arb.” number) attach metes and bounds of the property (from Title Report, Grant Deed or an engineer survey).

- b. **Project Description.** The narrative portion of the project description must include all aspects of the request, including but not limited to use, proposed construction, height, FAR, parking, hours of operation, number of seats, signage, etc. and may be provided as an attachment. The description must include all phases and plans for future expansion.
- c. **Actions Requested—Authorizing Code Section.** Every entitlement is governed by a LAMC Section that allows one to achieve the requested project. *For example, LAMC 12.24.W.1 permits all C and M zoned properties to request the right to sell and dispense alcoholic beverages; LAMC 16.05 allows one to build a project which contains more than 50 dwelling units; or LAMC 11.5.7 requires one to request review for compliance with a specific plan.*
- d. **Actions Requested—Code Section From Which Relief is Requested.** This section will not always be applicable to your request. A Code Section would only be cited if you are requesting to deviate from a specific limitation. *For example LAMC Section 12.08.C.3 requires a 15-foot rear yard setback for the R1 Zone. If you wish to request a reduced rear yard setback you would cite the LAMC Section which requires that particular setback.*
- e. **Actions Requested—Narrative.** The action(s) requested is the type of entitlement case requested (zone change, variance, conditional use, zoning administrators adjustment, project permit compliance, design review, site plan review, etc.). Additionally, describe the important detail of the request by identifying the code requirement and/or deviation requested. In the case of a conditional use, the category under Sec. 12.24 must be described. *For example, “A Zoning Administrator’s Adjustment to allow a 10-foot rear yard setback in lieu of the required 15-foot rear yard setback in the R1 Zone in conjunction with the addition of a second bathroom to the rear of the existing house.” “A Conditional Use Permit to allow an elementary school use, grades K-5, in the R1-1 Zone”, or “A Coastal Development Permit and Mello Determination to allow the demolition of a duplex and the construction of a new 6-unit apartment building within the Single Jurisdiction Coastal Zone”.*

- f. **Related Department of City Planning Cases.** The subject property may have a long list of previous cases. In this section you must list all the case numbers on the property;

please list first and distinguish the ones that are directly related to the subject request and/or will be helpful in analyzing the application. *For example, if you are applying for a new CUB because the previous grant expired, identify the previous ZA case approved.*

Additionally, in this section of the DCP application, the applicant must provide information regarding any intent to develop a larger project and/or file a subdivision application subsequent to the current application. If the request is for a Plan Approval for an existing entitlement, the applicant must also indicate the pertinent case number and the type of Plan Approval being requested.

- g. Other Agency Referrals/Reference.** In some cases other agencies may have a role in the proposed project. If you have submitted your project for review to another agency, provide applicable permit, application, or referral numbers. *For example housing development projects proposing a Density Bonus must coordinate with the Housing and Community Investment Department, projects that would result in the removal of existing or planting of new street trees must coordinate with Public Works-Street Services Bureau, or properties cited for code violations must coordinate with the department issuing the citation etc. (Such referrals are noted in Section 5.)*
- h. Project Team Information.** Provide names and contact information for all members of the project team. Note that an Applicant must have a vested interest in the project. For instance, if you have been hired to file the case on behalf of a client, you would be the Agent/Representative and not the Applicant. On the bottom of the page 4, indicate the primary contact of the project.
- i. Signatures.** Original signatures are required of the property owner and the applicant; the Notary Public's signature and stamp must also be original. If the property owner is the same as the applicant, they must sign the Property Owner Affidavit and the Applicant Declaration; only the signature on the Affidavit will need to be notarized. If the applicant is not the property owner, separate signatures from both are required; however only the property owner's signature will need to be notarized.
- j. Proof of Ownership.** All owners of all property involved must provide a notarized signature to verify the application is being filed with their knowledge. Ownership will be verified against the records of the City Engineer or, in the case of annexations, the County Assessor. In certain circumstances, the signature on the DCP Application form must be supported by Proof of Ownership, which can be provided where applicable below.
  - Ownership Disclosure.** If the property is owned by a partnership, corporation, LLC or trust, a disclosure identifying the agent for service or process or an officer of the ownership entity must be submitted. The disclosure must list the names and addresses of the principal owners (25% interest or greater). The signatory on the DCP application must appear in this list of names. Include a copy of the current partnership agreement, corporate articles or trust document as applicable.
  - Letter of Authorization (LOA).** Occasionally, a LOA from a property owner granting someone else permission to sign the DCP Application may be provided. Please carefully refer to the Property Owner Affidavit portion of the DCP Application (form [CP-7771.1](#)) for current policies regarding LOAs and their content.
  - Grant Deed.** Provide a Grant Deed if the ownership of the property does not match City Records and/or if the application is for a Coastal Development Permit. The name on the Grant Deed must correspond exactly with the ownership listed on the DCP Application (i.e. no nicknames).
- k. Neighborhood Contact.** Adjacent property owners may, but are not required to, submit signatures in support of your request. Support of your request by Neighborhood Councils or other community groups or business associations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce etc.) is

not required but may also be submitted. An Optional Neighborhood Contact Sheet is on the last page of the DCP Application.

- 3. **DCP AUTHORIZATION TO FILE.** Depending on the location, type of project or status of the requested action, the following documented authorization may be required before the application can be accepted for filing:
  - a. **Project Planning Referral Form (PPRF).** This form ([CP-7812](#)) is required if the application is a zone change, public benefit alternative compliance, density bonus off-menu, conditional use for greater than 35% density bonus, zone variance or small lot subdivision request and/or if the site is located in a Specific Plan or Overlay Zone (e.g. CDO/DRB/POD/NOD/CPIO/SN etc.).
  - b. **HPOZ Authorization Form.** This ([CP-3523](#)) form is required if the zoning identifies the site as being in a HPOZ Overlay Zone (*for example R1-1-HPOZ*).
  - c. **Management Team Authorization.** Authorization from City Planning's management team is required if the application includes a request to amend the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles. Refer to the General Plan Amendment form ([CP-7723.1](#)) for procedures and requirements for this review.
  - d. **Expedite Fee Agreement.** If City Planning's Expedited Processing Section (EPS) has accepted the application for accelerated processing they will provide the applicant with a form to be submitted with the application. The form must be signed by EPS staff and dated within 90 days of the date the application is submitted to the DSC for filing. The form must also be signed and notarized by the project applicant.
  
- 4. **FINDINGS/JUSTIFICATIONS.** In order to approve an application, the decision maker must decide if the facts presented in the record are such to justify the request or to establish any specific findings (i.e. criteria for approval) established by the LAMC. If the application includes multiple requests, specific findings or justifications are required for each requested action.
  
- 5. **RELATED DOCUMENTS/REFERRALS.** Depending on the location and type of project, the following documents/forms are required prior to filing your application at the DSC.
  - a. **Specialized Instructions Forms.** The Department of City Planning has developed Specialized Requirement forms for various types of entitlements. If your proposed project falls under one of the categories for which there is a specialized form you must complete the form and include it in your application. Forms are listed alphabetically in the Forms section of the Department's website.
  - b. **Citywide Urban Design Guidelines Checklists.** These checklists are required for most multi-family residential ([CP-4046](#)), commercial ([CP-4044](#)), or industrial ([CP-4045](#)) projects with new construction, addition or exterior alteration to existing buildings or structures. It is recommended that the applicant consult with the planner assigned to the area in which the project is located prior to completing these lists.
  - c. **Downtown Design Guide Checklist.** Compliance with design guidelines is required for projects located in the Greater Downtown Housing Incentive Area as identified in ZIMAS. The checklist is required for all projects except it is not required for projects involving interior alterations not involving a change of use or demolition only projects. This form is available from the Project Planning staff assigned to the geographic area or the Urban Design Studio.
  - d. **Bureau of Engineering (BOE) Planning Case Referral Form (PCRF).** If the proposed project meets any of the below criteria, obtain a PCRF from the BOE counter.

- New construction, or floor area additions to buildings used for commercial or industrial purposes in any zone, including mixed-use projects with a commercial or industrial component and associated building/surfaces parking facilities in any zone, or
  - New construction of, alteration, and/or addition resulting in additional dwelling units for multi-family residential buildings (resulting in two or more dwelling units) in any zone, or
  - All zone change applications.
- e. Hillside Referral Form.** This form is required to be obtained from BOE if the project is located in a Hillside Area and/or Baseline Hillside Ordinance area as identified in ZIMAS.
- f. Low Impact Development (LID) Referral Form (Stormwater Mitigation).** All projects which add, create or replace 500 square feet of impervious area are required to comply with the City’s LID Ordinance. The design of a project may require alterations in order to incorporate stormwater mitigation measures and satisfy LID requirements. For additional information visit the Department of Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation at 201 N. Figueroa St, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor.
- g. Affordable Housing Referral Form.** If the project includes a housing incentive (i.e. density bonus), this form ([CP-4043](#)) is required to be completed by the applicant and signed by DCP, Metro Development Services Center, Housing Services Unit staff prior to your case filing appointment.
- h. Proof of Filing with the Housing and Community Investment Department.** The Housing and Community Investment Department (HCIDLA) must evaluate properties on which there is a proposed housing incentive case (i.e. density bonus) and determine whether replacement units are required. Include proof of filing with HCIDLA via Housing Application Forms that are stamped by said department.
- i. Mello Form.** Include an original copy of the “Mello Act Advance Notice and Screen Checklist form” if the project is located in a Coastal Zone. The form is available at the DCP Counter and must be completed by the applicant and reviewed by DCP Staff.
- j. Existing/Related Entitlements.** Include a copy of the original decision letter and/or any entitlements that are directly related to the proposed project. Copies of these letters can be obtained in ZIMAS under the “Case Numbers” tab, or from DCP’s Automated Records Counter; location, hours and telephone numbers are available on City Planning’s website.
- k. Building Permits and Certificates of Occupancy.** If the site has existing buildings, or structures, provide copies of building permits and the certificate of occupancy available from the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS). Building permit and certificate of occupancy documents may be obtained at <http://ladbs.org>.
- l. Order to Comply.** A copy of the Order to Comply is required if the application is being submitted as a result of an Order to Comply issued by either the Department of Building and Safety or the Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department.
- m. Ordinances—Q Conditions and/or D Limitations.** If the zoning of the project site contains a “Q”, (Q) or [Q] Qualified Classification or a “D” Development Limitation (e.g. [Q]R4-2D), a copy of the Ordinance establishing the “Q” or the “D” must be provided. Most ordinances can be found in the Case Numbers section of ZIMAS.

If the ordinance covered a large area such as an entire community plan, the ordinance may have been broken down into subareas (e.g. ORD-164,307-**SA280**). In this case, it is appropriate to provide excerpts of the ordinance including the cover page, an applicable



portion of the map, the subarea listing identifying the legal description, the subarea listing identifying the Q or D conditions, and the last section of the ordinance showing signatures and approval dates.

- n. **Department of Transportation (DOT) Referral Form.** Unlike the above referenced materials, the DOT Referral Form ([CP-2151.1](#)) is not required prior to application filing; however it may be required subsequent to filing. If the proposed project requires the filing of an Environmental Assessment Form and exceeds DOT traffic thresholds, City Planning staff will advise the applicant to submit the form to DOT for assessment.

## 6. PHOTOGRAPHS.

- a. **Color Photographs.** Provide color photographs taken recently and depicting current conditions of the entire project site showing existing structures, trees, walls/fences, signage, streets, curb & gutters and parking areas as applicable and photos of the surrounding area to clearly represent the context of the proposed project to the neighborhood. Photographs should be printed, no more than two to a page, captioned as to the content, and keyed to number on an accompanying *Index Map*. An aerial photograph is also recommended.
- b. **Index Map.** Provide an accompanying map (e.g. Assessor map, ZIMAS map or District Map) with arrows and numbers keyed to the photographs indicating from where and in what direction each photo was taken.

- 7. **VICINITY MAP.** Provide a map from an internet mapping website (e.g. Yahoo! Maps, MapQuest, Google Maps, etc.) or Thomas Brothers Guide depicting an area beyond the Radius/Land Use Map and showing nearby street system, public facilities and other significant physical features with the project site highlighted.

- 8. **RADIUS MAP.** Radius Maps are required if the written notification specified in the LAMC identifies a 500, 300, 100 foot, or abutting radius from the subject property. Refer to the *Radius Maps Requirements and Guidelines* handout ([CP-7826](#)) for detailed information.

- a. **Size and Number of Copies.** Provide one original plus seven (7) full size copies with a minimum size of 18" x 24", and one 8 ½" x 11" reduced map. The original radius map for Coastal Development Permit applications may be submitted on 11" x 17" paper.

- 9. **ZIMAS.** Provide a copy of the ZIMAS Parcel Profile Report and the Generalized Zoning Map for the project site. Use the "Select Parcels" tool to select all contiguously owned parcels.

- 10. **PUBLIC NOTICING.** Most applications require a public hearing; persons to be notified of the hearing are specified in the authorizing LAMC section. Additionally, abutting property owners and interested parties will be notified that a decision has been made regardless of whether or not a public hearing is required. All noticing materials must be dated within 180 days of application submittal and may be required to be updated prior to scheduling of a public hearing.

- a. **BTC Requirements/Receipt.** BTC is City's contractor for the mailing of public hearing notices. For projects that require a public hearing, prior to case filing, the applicant must commission BTC to mail the notices. Please refer to the *Mailing Procedures* form ([CP-2074](#)) for BTC's latest requirements, locations, hours and fees.

- b. **DCP Requirements.** Separate from BTC's requirements, City Planning requires the following public noticing materials at the time of your case filing appointment:

- BTC Receipt.** Provide a copy of the BTC receipt verifying they have received all noticing materials and fees.
  - Public Hearing Notification List and Map.** Provide a copy of the hearing notification list that was submitted to BTC. This list will encompass either abutting property owners or property owners and occupants within a radius of the subject site as specified by the authorizing LAMC section and applicable Findings/Specialized Requirements forms. Names on the notification list must be numbered and keyed to a map (e.g. district map, ZIMAS map or radius map as applicable).
  - Mailing Labels/Decision Letter.** Provide one set of self-adhesive, typewritten mailing labels of all abutting property owners for mailing the decision letter. Note “abutting properties” are properties which share a common property line/point or are directly adjacent to a street/alley from the subject property. All mailing labels must be prepared according to the *Mailing Procedures* form, and dated within 180 days of the public hearing.
  - Project Team.** The property owner, applicant and agent/representative must be included in both the Hearing Notification List and the abutting properties labels for mailing the decision letter.
  - Penalty of Perjury Statement.** The person preparing the mailing list must sign a Penalty of Perjury Statement certifying the accuracy of the lists provided. The statement can be found in the *Mailing Procedures* or *Radius Maps Requirements and Guidelines* handouts.
- 11. PLANS REQUIRED.** All plans shall be drawn to scale and legible. Include only the information necessary to depict the project and its settings (do not include mechanical drawings unless specifically requested by DCP staff).
- a. Scale and Orientation.** Plans shall indicate and display a graphic scale. North shall be shown and oriented to the top of the page.
  - b. Plot/Site Plan.** A plot plan is required for all cases (except standalone subdivision cases where the Tentative Tract or Parcel Maps will satisfy this requirement). The plot plan must include all contiguous parcels under the applicants’ ownership and identify which parcels are/are not a part of the proposed project. The plot plan should include a summary of information table indicating square footage of the proposed project and other pertinent project information. Refer to the Plot Plan Instructions ([CP-7752](#)) for details.
  - c. Floor Plans.** Most applications involving buildings require floor plans. Floor plans should include patios, balconies and, if proposed for use, portions of the right-of-way. Floor plans are always required for hillside projects, CUB’s (seats must be numbered), projects where the City Planning Commission (CPC) or the Area Planning Commission (APC) is the decision maker and other cases when the request involves the interior lay-out of a project. Refer to the Floor Plan Instructions ([CP-7751](#)) for details.
  - d. Elevations.** Most applications require elevations of all sides of all buildings. Elevations are always required, when the application involves new construction, height, aesthetics or design elements. Color elevations are required when the decision maker is the CPC or APC. Refer to the Elevation Instructions ([CP-7817](#)) for details.
  - e. Color Renderings.** Color renderings are required when the decision maker is the CPC or APC, and are highly recommended for most other applications to assist in evaluating a proposed project.

- f. Sections.** Sections are required for applications with multiple levels or subterranean floors (e.g. basements, subterranean parking etc.).
- g. Landscape, Hardscape and Open Space Plans.** Preliminary landscape, hardscape and open space plans are required for applications with six or more dwelling units, applications where the CPC or APC is the decision maker, applications in hillside areas involving grading (showing landscaping for erosion control), applications involving surface parking lots, and applications for other “significant” projects as identified in the Landscape Plan Instructions. Refer to the Landscape Plan Instructions ([CP-6730](#)) for detailed requirements. If the project is located within a specific plan or overlay zone, check with the assigned planner prior to preparing these plans as some specific plans have more stringent landscaping requirements.
- h. Trees.** Plans must clearly show all existing trees on the project site and within the right-of-way adjacent to the property. Identify and label (by name and trunk diameter) the following protected and Southern California native trees species: Oaks (excluding Scrub Oak trees), Southern California Black Walnut, Western Sycamore, and California Bay.

**SIZE AND NUMBER OF COPIES.** All plans must be collated into sets and folded to 8 ½” x 11”. The following pertains to most applications; however the applicant is advised to check the Special Instructions for your request prior to preparing these plans as some entitlements (for example Tentative Tract and Preliminary Parcel Maps) may require additional copies.

- a. Full Size.** Provide one (1) set of plans, preferably 24” x 36 in size.
- b. Reduced Size.** Provide four (4) sets of reduced plans, 11” by 17” in size. For APC cases, six (6) sets are required. For CPC cases, eleven (11) sets are required.

**12. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA).** CEQA is a statute that requires state and local agencies to identify the significant environmental impacts of their actions and to avoid or mitigate those impacts if feasible. Development Services Center (DSC) planners will initially select the appropriate CEQA documentation unless already indicated on the Project Planning Referral Form. The project planner who is assigned to the case will ultimately determine if a different level of CEQA review is required in accordance with CEQA regulations. At the time of case filing, one of the following documents will typically be required.

- a. Categorical Exemption (CE).** CEQA Guidelines include a list of classes of projects which have been determined to not have a significant effect on the environment, also known as Categorical Exemptions. If your project appears to fall within one of these classes, the appropriate paperwork will be completed by the DSC planners at the time of application filing (excluding Class 32-Urban Infill Exemptions as described below). The initial determination that the project is Categorically Exempt must be subsequently confirmed by the staff planner assigned to the project.
- b. Environmental Assessment Form (EAF).** Projects not qualifying for a CE and those requesting a Class 32 CE must complete the Environmental Assessment form (CP-1204) and provide all materials and fees identified in the instructions therein. The EAF may be filed prior to or with the entitlement application. If the EAF was filed prior to the application and the environmental review was concluded, provide a copy of the completed Negative Declaration (ND), Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), or Environmental Assessment Report (EIR).

**13. DUPLICATE CASE FILES.** In addition to the materials provided above, the following duplicate files for notification to other agencies are required:

- a. Each duplicate file must include the following:**



- Department of City Planning Application
- Findings/Justification
- Environmental Assessment or determination
- Vicinity Map
- Radius Map (if applicable)
- A set of plans, 11" x 17" size
- All photographs of the site and surrounding properties and the index/key map
- Any additional application specific materials.

**b. Duplicate files must be prepared for the following agencies, where applicable.**

- i. All Certified Neighborhood Councils (CNCs).** A duplicate file is required for each CNC serving the area in which the proposed project is located and must be:
  - Submitted in an unsealed manila envelope(s).
  - Addressed to the CNC(s) for the area in which the project is located. Names and address of the CNCs can be obtained via the "Jurisdictional" tap in ZIMAS.
  - The envelope must be labeled with a City Planning DSC counter return address.
  - The envelope must be affixed with adequate postage (in most cases postage to mail a 1-pound package will suffice).
- ii. California Coastal Commission.** A duplicate file is required for all Coastal Development Permit and Coastal Exemption applications. No envelope is required.
- iii. LAPD.** A duplicate file is required for all alcohol sales (CUB) and entertainment (CUX) cases. No envelope is required.
- iv. Applicant.** It is also highly recommended that the applicant maintain a duplicate file for their own records that contains copies of all materials submitted to DCP.

**14. ELECTRONIC COPY OF APPLICATION DOCUMENTS.** Provide an electronic copy of your application on a flash drive (DSC planners will upload materials during filing and return the flash drive to you) or a CD (which will remain in the file). The following items must be saved as individual PDFs and labeled accordingly (e.g. "Floor Plan.pdf", "Photos.pdf", or "Findings.pdf" etc.). No file should exceed 9.8 MB in size.

- Department of City Planning Application
- Findings/Justification
- Vicinity Map
- Radius Map (if applicable)
- Each required plan separately (e.g. plot plan.pdf, floor plan.pdf. etc.)
- All photographs of the project site and surrounding properties
- Any additional application specific materials (alcohol\_list.pdf., FAA\_application.pdf etc.)
- Any additional documents that could be helpful in the review of the project.