



## CITY OF CAPITOLA

### DESIGN PERMIT INFORMATION

CITY OF CAPITOLA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
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#### Design Permit Overview

A Design Permit is required for new construction and substantial remodel projects. The purpose of a Design Permit is to implement the General Plan's land use and aesthetic goals and policies, ensure compliance with the Zoning Code, and to promote high-quality design and neighborhood compatibility. A Design Permit is a discretionary permit that is reviewed and decided upon by the Community Development Director (Minor Design Permit) or the Planning Commission (Design Permit) at a publicly noticed hearing.

#### Design Permit Applicability

Capitola [Zoning Code](#) section 17.120.030, establishes the criteria for when a Minor Design Permit and a Design Permit are required for single-family homes, multifamily residential, and commercial projects.

In general, the majority of commercial exterior renovations and additions require either a Minor Design Permit or a Design Permit. Residential remodel projects that do not include an addition are exempt from a Design Permit unless the work involves a historic structure. In general, all new residential construction, significant additions, and additions/modifications on upper floors, including new upper floor decks, require a Design Permit. See Capitola [Zoning Code](#) Table 17.120-1 for a full list of when a Design Permit is required.

The code also includes specific exceptions to design permits, for single-family and commercial. For example, a Design Permit is not required for:

1. First-floor additions at the rear of a home which are not visible to the general public, do not exceed four hundred square-feet; do not exceed fifteen feet in height (eight feet maximum plate height); and which utilize matching or compatible building materials.
2. A single accessory structure of less than 120 square-feet, less than 10 feet in height, with no connection to water or sewer. Two or more accessory structures require a Minor Design Permit.

#### Application Requirements

Applicants must submit a [Master Application](#) and submit necessary fees as established in the City's adopted fee schedule. Depending on the nature of the project, a streetscape, shadow study, photometric plans, section drawings, or other information may be necessary.

#### Time and Cost

Design Permit applications typically require 60-180 days to process. The cost for Design Permits is listed in the [Fee Schedule](#) under Planning Fees.

#### Design Permit Process

City staff will process a Design Permit application concurrently with any other discretionary permits such as a Conditional Use Permit or a Coastal Development Permit. Design Permit applications are first presented to the City's Development and Design Review Committee, prior to being considered for a decision. The Development and Design Review Committee is an advisory body consisting of City staff and consultants. The Development and Design Review Committee is advisory to the applicant and the Planning Commission.

#### Design Review Criteria

Capitola [Zoning Code](#) Section 17.120.070 lists the design review criteria that is considered by the City when reviewing an application. The criteria include: community character, neighborhood compatibility, historic character, sustainability, pedestrian environment, privacy, safety, massing and scale, architectural style, articulation and visual interest, materials, parking and access, landscaping, drainage, open space and public places, signs, accessory structures, and mechanical equipment. Be sure to go through the list of design criteria with your architect or designer prior to submitting an application.