

# SACRAMENTO COUNTY DESIGN GUIDELINES

## APPLICANT GUIDE AND CHECKLIST

### FOR PROJECTS REQUIRING **NONDISCRETIONARY** DESIGN REVIEW

**Design Review Applies to ALL Building Permit Applications** for Multi-family Residential, Commercial, Office, Industrial, and Institutional projects EXCEPT for Interior Remodels. Therefore, new construction, façade improvements, minor additions, and parking lot improvements require Design Review.

For a full list of projects that are exempt from Design Review, please review Zoning Code Section 6.3.2.A.3.

*\*Nondiscretionary projects are those projects that do not require one or more entitlements or approvals. Examples of such entitlements include: a conditional use permit, variance, development plan review, special development permit, or public works project approval.\**

**DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL MUST BE RECEIVED PRIOR TO SUBMITTAL FOR A BUILDING PERMIT OR IMPROVEMENT PLANS**

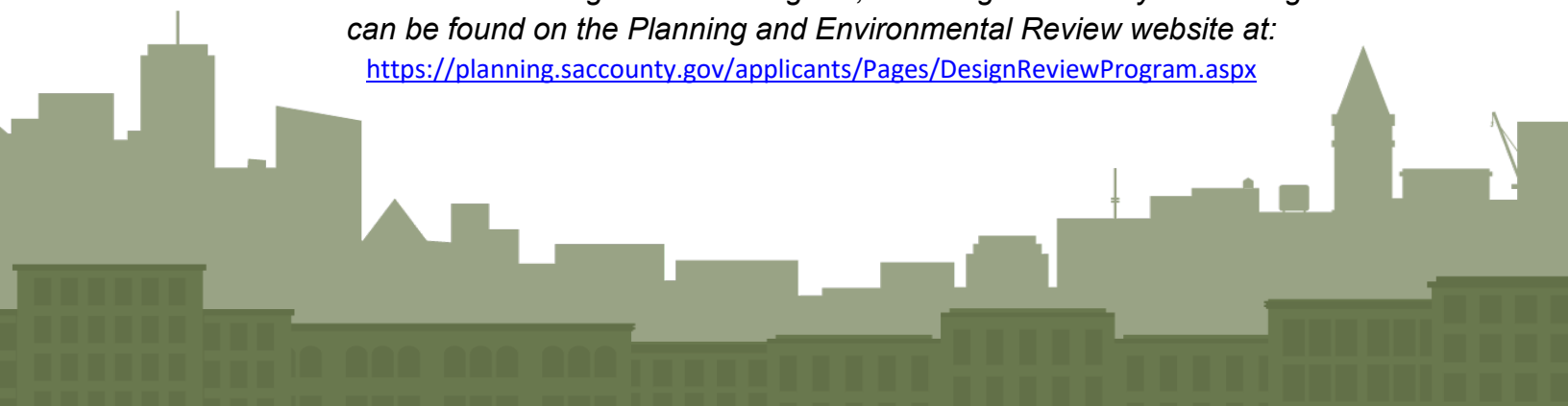
**NOTICE:** To submit for Nondiscretionary Design Review, email a complete electronic submittal package to [Planning-Applications@saccounty.gov](mailto:Planning-Applications@saccounty.gov).

#### **Purpose and Objectives of the Design Guidelines:**

- Encourage better design in the County by allowing for greater flexibility in creating good design;
- Provide concurrent application processing;
- Minimize uncertainty;
- Provide early feedback to project applicants;
- Provide early community input where applicable;
- Encourage pre-application communication.

More information about the Design Review Program, including the Countywide Design Guidelines can be found on the Planning and Environmental Review website at:

<https://planning.saccounty.gov/applicants/Pages/DesignReviewProgram.aspx>



## Nondiscretionary Project Design Review Level and Associated Fees are as follows<sup>1</sup>:

Non-Discretionary	Definition	Processing Fee [2]
Incidental (DRS-inc)	Freestanding shade structures, patio covers, decks, sheds, or freestanding signs.	Incidental: \$430 + 6.5% IT Recovery Fee = <b>\$457.95</b>
Minor [3] (DRS-minor)	<p>Façade improvements, minor additions to existing buildings, one (1) single-family home (except accessory dwelling units), and minor parking lot modifications such as restriping and minor site landscaping.</p> <p><b>Note:</b> <i>Projects involving improvements required to comply with the American Disabilities Act, except where such improvements will have a significant impact on the site and landscape configuration and/or building façade, are exempt from Design Review (ZC Section 6.3.2.A.3.f)</i></p>	Minor: \$1,090 + 6.5% IT Recovery Fee = <b>\$1,160.85</b>
Major (DRS-major)	New Construction of commercial, industrial, institutional, mixed-use, single-family homes two (2) units or more (except accessory dwelling units), and multi-family residential development when permitted by right and meeting all applicable development standards; OR projects involving more than one improvement outlined under "Minor" above.	Major: \$3,010 + 6.5% IT Recovery Fee = <b>\$3,205.65</b>
Major + PRC Review (DRS-mj-PRC)	<p>All components outlined above for major projects with review by the Planning Review Committee (PRC) for the following projects:</p> <p>Commercial buildings over 10,000 sq ft  Industrial buildings over 10,000 sq ft  Mixed Use Projects over 10,000 sq ft  Multi-family projects over four dwelling units</p>	Major: \$2,886 + \$1,231 PRC reviewing departments + 6.5% IT Recovery Fee = <b>\$4,384.61</b>

[1] When the required level of review is unclear based on the criteria of the Zoning Code, the Planning Director or Design Review Administrator (DRA), may determine the appropriate level of review (either incidental, minor, or major) based on the scope of the project and the anticipated time and resources required to complete the review (SZC Section 6.3.2.B.3)

[2] The IT Recovery Fee is added to all projects and has a maximum of \$850.

[3] One (1) new single-family home is generally exempt from Design Review unless Conditions of Approval (COA) requires Design Review prior to building permit issuance.

<sup>1</sup> Current fees as of July 1, 2025, inclusive of IT Recovery Fee.

## **Required Design Review Submittal Materials for ALL Projects<sup>2</sup>**

### **Submittals must be submitted electronically! No physical exhibits are**

**accepted.**<sup>3</sup> To submit for Nondiscretionary Design Review, email a complete electronic submittal package to [Planning-Applications@saccounty.gov](mailto:Planning-Applications@saccounty.gov).

The following information is required in order to evaluate the design of the proposal. Full Construction Document Plan Sets will be **rejected** due to numerous irrelevant sheets. In order to streamline your project, please provide only the below requested items. Preferred type of exhibits includes illustrative Architectural and Landscape Drawings.

Your application will be deemed **incomplete** if the following information is not included as part of your project application submittal:

### **GENERAL – FOR ALL TYPES OF PROJECTS**

#### ☐ **Completed Application Form**

- An Invoice will be issued after application materials are deemed complete and a project Control Number is created.
- Please **do not** send us Dropbox (or similar) links – We will send you a County secure link to upload project application files

#### ☐ **Completed Design Guidelines Supplemental Form** (Major & Major plus PRC projects ONLY - [see "Supplemental Application Forms for Various Project Types"](#))

#### ☐ **Computer Aided Drawings (CAD), on a standard sheet size, in PDF format**

### **MINOR & MAJOR DESIGN REVIEW PROJECTS**

#### ☐ **One (1) Architectural Site Plan** drawn to scale showing all existing and proposed improvements. Aerial photo site plans are not acceptable.

- ☐ Title, address, and assessor parcel number of the property;
- ☐ North arrow and scale bar;
- ☐ All property lines and easements (existing and proposed);
- ☐ All existing and ultimate public right-of-ways;
- ☐ All existing and/or proposed structures;

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<sup>2</sup> Some materials may be waived by the Design Review Administrator (DRA) if the project scope merits it. An email with confirmation by the DRA that certain materials are waived must be provided at submittal. Contact Dustin Littrell, Design Review Administrator, at [LittrellD@saccounty.gov](mailto:LittrellD@saccounty.gov).

<sup>3</sup> Physical exhibits may be requested by your assigned project planner or the Design Review Administrator. Please do not provide physical exhibits unless explicitly directed. If physical exhibits are to be submitted, full size exhibits (24" x 36" or larger) shall be folded down to 8.5" x 11" with bottom-right corner of plan showing. Paper sizes provided in this guide should be used for electronic exhibits.

- ☐ All site dimensions including parking lot planters, walks, etc.;
- ☐ Location, species and size of all existing trees (indicate trees to be removed);
- ☐ All fences or walls including height;
- ☐ All loading and storage facilities, utilities, trash enclosures, transformers, etc.;
- ☐ A statement regarding the proposed floor area, site area, parking ratios, employee counts where applicable, and zoning classification;
- ☐ A list of all service providers (water, sewer, school/park district, etc.);
- ☐ Floodplain designation and finished floor elevation (if applicable)

☐ **One (1) Building Floor Plan(s)**

- ☐ Square footage of proposed structure and existing structures (For Residential Uses, separate habitable and non-habitable space);
- ☐ Square footage for each space, including programmed outdoor areas (such as covered areas, patios, porches, break areas, etc.);
- ☐ Label all spaces.

☐ **One (1) Set of Colored Building Elevations** showing all sides of all structures, including walls and fences. Photo Elevations are not acceptable.

- ☐ Label exterior finishes/ materials/ colors
- ☐ Slope of the property in relation to the proposed structure(s);
- ☐ All sides of ALL proposed structures showing architectural features and access points (doors, windows, etc.);
- ☐ Roof pitch and label height of plate line and height to roof peak or parapet.

☐ **One (1) Preliminary Landscape Plan** drawn to scale.

<input type="checkbox"/> Landscaped Site Plan with the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> North arrow</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Existing and proposed buildings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Streets with street names</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Parking areas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Walkways</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fences and walls</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Light fixtures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transformers/Utilities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fire equipment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Monument Signs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Trash Enclosures</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Site boundaries including property lines, right of way, and setbacks</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Planting layout showing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tree symbols at <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> mature sizes (not to exceed 30' – 35' diameter)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shrubs and groundcover areas including proposed lawn</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Water features</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Storm water quality features (storm water quality features may require cross sections)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A table or callouts indicating species of all existing trees</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Required landscape screening.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Areas of decorative or enhanced landscaping (such as site and building entries)</li> </ul>
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<input type="checkbox"/> A preliminary shade calculation in the County's format demonstrating compliance with County requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> The square footage of landscape area proposed
<input type="checkbox"/> Drawing to be on a title block with designer contact information	<input type="checkbox"/> Design statement and concept indicating knowledge of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Water conservation goals and the WELO</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Zoning Code Development Standards &amp; Special Planning Areas (as applicable)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Countywide Design Guidelines</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> Dimensions on all required planter widths (all required widths exclude curbs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary landscape grades, or indications of slopes
<input type="checkbox"/> Indication of surface types (turf, decomposed granite, concrete, asphalt, pervious pavers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> A candidate plant list or legend of proposed trees and shrubs, including common and botanical name., and water use designation per the WUCOLS IV document

- ☐ **One (1) Color and Materials Sample Board.** This labeled exhibit identifies all proposed exterior finishes including awnings/canopies, railings, glazing type, window/door frame materials, as well as the material and color selections for the proposed structure(s). Include manufacturers color samples, manufacturer and color names/numbers. Electronic submittal of Sample Board is required. Note that manufacturer physical material samples may be required, upon discretion of the DRA, and shall be submitted at the time of request and prior to project approval.
- ☐ **One (1) Site Amenities/Furnishings Package** that includes manufacturer's cut sheet information, representative imagery, or detail drawing for all required or proposed site furnishings, such as building or site lighting, outdoor furniture, trash and recycling receptacles, bike racks and lockers, and any proposed walls, fences, or gates. Include proposed finish/color/material.
- ☐ **One (1) Electronic Submittal of each item,** saved separately in PDF format and named with title of exhibit and sheet number. Example: "Site Plan – Sheet SP-1"

### **Additional Items For Major Design Review**

- ☐ **One (1) 3-D Colored Representation (Colored Perspective).** This exhibit should indicate the project design from two sides simultaneously. The purpose is to indicate the project's design as it will be seen spatially. This representation can be from pedestrian level or from above. (Please contact the Design Review Administrator to determine if this exhibit is needed for your project.).

- ☐ **One (1) Set of Context Photos and Key Plan** that illustrates the project in relation to its immediate surroundings. These photos should be in color and should show the site from multiple angles. Please do not provide photos from Google Street View or other publicly available resources.

**FOR INCIDENTAL DESIGN REVIEW – FREESTANDING SHADE STRUCTURES,  
PATIO COVERS, DECKS, SHEDS OR FREESTANDING SIGNS**

- ☐ **One (1) Site Plan** drawn to scale showing all existing and proposed improvements and the setback from the right-of-way.
- ☐ **One (1) Enlarged Plan View** drawn to scale.
- ☐ **One (1) Set of Colored Elevations** Show the front, side, and back elevations.
  - ☐ Label exterior finishes/ materials/ colors
  - ☐ Roof pitch and label overall height.
- ☐ **One (1) Color and Materials Sample Board.** This labeled exhibit identifies all proposed exterior finishes including material and color selections for the proposed structure(s). Include manufacturers color samples, manufacturer and color names/numbers. Electronic submittal of Sample Board is required. Note that manufacturer physical material samples may be required, upon discretion of the DRA, and shall be submitted at the time of request and prior to project approval.