

Overview

In general terms, a design review application is a formal request to “allow design and site development review of all developments, signs, buildings, structures and other facilities constructed or modified in any zone where design and site development review is required in order thereby to foster a good design character through consideration of aesthetic and functional relationships to surrounding development, and in order to further enhance the city’s appearance, and the livability and usefulness of properties” (BMC 17.820.001.A). Furthermore, design review is not required for minor additions and remodeling of, existing structures which do not involve a change in the site design, except for buildings located within the Downtown. A design review application may be approved subject to various conditions. There are two basic types of design review conducted by the City, as follows:

1. *Design Review applications.* Applications for general design review are the most common type, and are required for projects involving the construction of new buildings or site improvements. Design review applications are considered concurrently with any other required land use permit or entitlement application submitted to the City, such as a conditional use permit, tentative parcel map, or subdivision map. Approval authority of design review applications rests with the Planning Commission and, upon appeal, the City Council. Staff and the Planning Commission have the ability to develop a set of conditions to ensure adherence to applicable City ordinances, standards, and design guidelines; improve the design of the site or building; or minimize any impacts before authorizing the development. See Chapter 17.820 of the Brentwood Municipal Code for more information related to design review applications.
2. *Administrative Design Review applications.* An administrative design review approval is a requirement of the Downtown Specific Plan when physical changes are proposed to either properties or buildings. The types of changes requiring approval include exterior building modifications (e.g., painting, veneering, new windows, etc.), modifications to existing signs or the addition of new signs, additions to existing structures up to 5,000 square feet in size, and new residential projects providing four (4) units or less. The approval is considered administrative since it is reviewed by City staff only, and not the Planning Commission or City Council. See the Downtown Specific Plan section 2.1.4 for more information pertaining to administrative design review applications.

Planning Review Process

Within 30 calendar days of an application being received (meaning all required materials have been submitted and all fees/deposits have been paid), the City will determine if the application is “complete” or “incomplete” for further processing. The review period shall be extended to the following business day if it ends on a weekend or City holiday. Typically, an “incomplete” application will require revisions and/or additional materials. Staff has 30 calendar days to review each subsequent submittal. Once an application is deemed “complete” it may continue to be processed for consideration by the appropriate decision-making body, including the appropriate level of CEQA review.

Within those 30 days your plans will be routed to departments and divisions within the City and to applicable outside agencies for review and comments. Your assigned project planner will contact you with a summary of the comments that are received.

Your plans may also be sent to one or more consultants hired by the City for the purpose of conducting peer review. The cost for peer review is paid by the applicant in accordance with the City’s Cost Allocation Plan.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

CEQA review will commence once the application is deemed complete. State law requires that all applications processed by the City be in compliance with CEQA. Your assigned project planner can give you preliminary information about what type of CEQA document is expected to be required for your project.

Copyrighted Material

The City is committed to ensuring that architectural drawings containing “protected” information, as defined in Senate Bill 1214, are made available to the public in a manner that does not facilitate copyright infringement. When official copies of architectural drawings containing “protected” information are submitted to the City, the City will not allow a member of the public to copy the drawings and the City will not post the drawings on the internet without permission from the copyright owner. However, the City may display an official copy containing “protected” information on the internet and a physical copy on premise during a public hearing when the project is being considered by the decision-making body.

When submitting an official copy of architectural drawings to the City, it is the responsibility of the applicant/design professional to ensure the drawings are protected by the federal Copyright Act of 1976 (as amended by the federal Architectural Works Copyright Protection Act of 1990) and that the drawings contain a copyright annotation indicating it is protected by the federal Copyright Act of 1976. In addition, upon submission of an official copy of architectural drawings to the City, the applicant/design professional must submit a site plan or massing diagram for the purposes of posting online or for distribution to the public. If a site plan or massing diagram is not submitted upon submission of an official copy of architectural drawings, then permission is deemed granted to post the official drawings online and to distribute the drawings, upon request, to members of the public.

Submittal Requirements

The following submittal requirements, as specified below, are required for a development application to be accepted. If the required materials are missing, clearly inadequate, or in an incorrect format, the application will not be accepted. Further, all submission of application materials must be provided in a singular submittal (i.e., items shall not be submitted piecemeal).

Electronic Processing

All materials are required to be submitted electronically by e-mail directly to Planning@brentwoodca.gov (note that there is a 20 MB limit on e-mails) or via e-mail of a shared file link containing the complete submittal package. Physical copies of the submittal requirements will not be accepted.

Data to Accompany Development Proposal

All development proposals shall be accompanied, when applicable, by the following supplemental data.

1. Completed [Universal Application](#)
2. Environmental Questionnaire
3. Statement of Understanding, signed by the property owner. Alternatively, a letter of authorization from the property owner will suffice. Include contact information for the legal property owner, applicant or authorized agent, Civil Engineer, and Architect, Landscape Architect on the Universal Application form.
4. A detailed project description (on a separate sheet and attached to the application). This information is

critical for staff to fully understand your project and how you wish to operate. Much of this information will be used to explain the project to the approving body and the general public. In a narrative form, provide the following information (if applicable) in as much detail as possible.

- a) **Project Title:** *Name of the proposed subdivision, residential development, commercial/industrial center or anchor tenant.*
 - b) **Project Site Context:** *Address and APN. General Plan Land Use designation and density range, including mid-range. Confirm if a density transition is required and how will the project comply with this requirement. Zoning district. Acreage of property. Major roads. Surrounding land uses. Current condition of the site (i.e. vacant, developed). Special areas affecting the site (i.e. flood zone, biological habitat, etc.)*
 - c) **Site Development:** *Number of lots proposed. Number of residential units proposed. Number of commercial/industrial buildings proposed, multi-tenant or single tenant. Demolition proposed. Onsite circulation. Ingress/egress. Interaction with abutting uses/right-of-way (i.e. shared parking, continuation of public trail, etc.) Outdoor storage areas, loading/unloading areas. Trash enclosure (location, materials and design). Describe lighting plan and methods of preventing glare and light pollution.*
 - d) **Use:** *Proposed use. Use permit required? Hours/days of operation. Number of employees. Number of customers/guests. Other licenses/approvals required (i.e. liquor license, etc.). Surrounding uses. Compatibility with surrounding uses. Subject to the City's Affordable Housing ordinance? If so, how will the project comply (in-lieu, dedication, etc.)? How many units are required? If on-site units will be provided describe locations and unit types.*
 - e) **Design:** *Describe the design, the designer's approach, and how the architectural, landscape and other elements have been integrated. The relationship of the project to adjacent properties and to the adjacent streets should be expressed in design terms. Define the site, building design, and landscape concepts in terms of site design goals and objective, pedestrian circulation, outdoor uses area, visual screening and enhancements, conservation of natural resources, mitigation of negative site characteristics, and off-site influences. Describe how the site design and architecture is meeting the City's Design guidelines (call out specific examples).*
 - f) **Environmental Review:** *Has a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) been completed? If so, what was the outcome? To your knowledge, are there any environmental considerations that should be taken into account (i.e. cultural, biological, agricultural, etc.)?*
 - g) **Additional Applications/Entitlements:** *Describe any additional applications/entitlements that will be sought (Density Bonus application, SB 330, etc.).*
5. A preliminary soils report, prepared by a soils engineer or engineering geologist registered in this state, and based upon adequate test borings.
 6. Stormwater Control Plan to address C.3 requirements, including all applicable text and worksheets. Please visit the Contra Costa Clean Water Program's website ([here](#)) for further information.

7. Residential developments are required to follow the City's Objective Design Standards. For single-family projects, complete the Single-Family Interim Objective Design Standards Checklist [here](#). For multi-family and mixed-use projects, complete the Multi-Family Residential and Mixed-Use Projects Checklist [here](#).
8. Residential developments of five or more lots/dwelling units are required to meet the City's Affordable Housing requirements pursuant to Chapter 17.1725 of the BMC. Provide an Affordable Housing Plan that includes the following information:
 - i) The location, structure type (attached, semi-detached, or detached), proposed tenure (sale or rental), and size of proposed market-rate, and affordable housing units and the tenure and size of nonresidential uses included in the development.
 - ii) A floor or site plan depicting the location of the affordable housing units and a floor plan describing the size of the affordable housing units in square feet.
 - iii) The income level to which each affordable housing unit will be made affordable.
 - iv) Draft of the documents to be used to assure that the units remain affordable for the desired term, such as resale and rental restrictions, deed of trust, and rights of first refusal and other documents (this may be deferred until the affordable housing agreement is approved and not required as part of this submittal).
 - v) For phased developments, a phasing plan that provides for the timely development of affordable housing units in proportion to other housing units in each proposed phase of development.
 - vi) A marketing plan that describes how the applicant will inform the public, and those within the appropriate income groups, of the availability of affordable housing units (this may be deferred to a later date (this may be deferred until the affordable housing agreement is approved and not required as part of this submittal)).
9. Arborist Report.
10. Cultural Resources Study.
11. A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA). If the Phase 1 ESA report indicates that a Phase 2 ESA report or additional assessment is recommended, a Phase 2 report must accompany the application.
12. A preliminary title report on the subject property(s), no more than 6 months old at the time of submittal.
13. An HCP application form and Planning Survey Report (PSR) is needed in order to comply with East Contra Costa County HCP/NCCP. This document can be accessed at <https://www.cocohcp.org/193/Project-Permitting>.
14. Applicable filing deposit(s). **Note:** that charges for materials and staff time spent processing this application will be billed against this deposit. Application processing includes but is not limited to plan checking and processing, meetings, phone calls, research, email, and staff report preparation. Additional funds may be required if the cost of processing the application exceeds the initial deposit amount. All

costs incurred in processing the application are required to be paid in full.

15. Other information which is pertinent and/or which the Community Development Director may require all applicant to furnish, by general policy.

Format of Plans

All site plan shall be prepared in the following format:

16. Be prepared, signed and stamped by a licensed professional(s).
17. All topographic elevations shall be based on U.S. Geologic Survey 1929 sea level datum.
18. All plans shall include the date of preparation and dates of each revision.
19. Incorporate all the required plan sheets, inclusive of architectural, civil, and landscaping sheets, into a single set of Project Plans.
20. Plans shall be clearly and legibly drawn on 24"X36" sheets, be fully dimensioned and drawn to scale. All plan sheets shall have a consistent scale.

Required Development Plans

All development plans shall include the following information:

21. **Cover sheet** to include:
 - i) Project site address, APN, zoning district, project title, scope of work, sheet index, legend, north arrow, and vicinity map.
 - ii) Project data table including net lot size, gross lot size, building lot coverage, landscaping coverage, paving coverage, impervious/pervious coverage, existing/proposed building square-footage (for each floor and in total), building heights, building setbacks (all sided and all floors), number of housing units (by size and bedroom count), and number of parking stalls required/provided (including accessible stalls, compact and electric vehicle stalls (EV)).
 - iii) For residential development, include the floor area for each unit type, the number of bedrooms, the number of units by type, the number of units per building, the total number of units, and net density.
22. **Site photography** sheet providing at least six labeled photographs of the project site taken from multiple vantage points, with a key/legend identifying the location where each photograph was taken.
23. **Contextual Plan** to include:
 - i) Location and dimensions of all existing structures extending 50 feet beyond the property. If adjacent to the street, show the entire width of street to the property line, including driveways.
 - ii) Land use and zoning designation on all lots.
 - iii) Property lines and dimensions of the subject site and adjacent properties showing all easements.

- iv) Location of streets, medians, curb cuts, sidewalks and parking areas.
- v) Location of all creeks, waterways and trees.
- vi) Vicinity map indicating site in relation to major streets.

24. Site plan to include:

- i) Existing and proposed property lines with dimensions, and distance from centerline of adjacent street(s) to property lines(s).
- ii) Recorded and/or proposed easements with the purpose for each easement noted (i.e., PUE) and notation if existing easements are to be vacated.
- iii) Driveways, walkways and other hard surfaces, indicating all materials.
- iv) Proposed and/or existing public improvements dimensioned from street center line.
- v) Accessible path-of-travel to buildings from the public sidewalk and from accessible parking stalls.
- vi) Parking stalls with stall dimensions, accessible and van-accessible stalls (with loading area), electric vehicle parking stalls; dimensioned drive aisles, wheel stops and long-term/short-term bicycle parking.
- vii) Proposed and existing trash enclosures(s): **Note:** Please review the [City's Trash Enclosure Standards](#) handout.
- viii) Proposed and existing (to be retained) buildings, accessory structures, trellises, etc., showing dimension of each structure, setbacks from property lines, and distances between structures. For residential properties this would include a color-coded master plotting plan/development plan showing lot lines, the footprint of homes and any optional accessory structures plotted on each lot, the elevation style of each home, and setbacks from all property lines.
- ix) Location, height and materials of all walls and fences, including retaining walls.
- x) Location and dimensions of mechanical and utility equipment, including, transformers, backflow prevention devices, meters, ground-mounted air conditioner (AC) units, private fire hydrants, and lighting standards.
- xi) Location of all natural features such as creeks, ponds, drainage swales, wetlands, etc., extending 50 feet beyond the property line to show the relationship with the proposed development.

25. Floor Plans to include:

- i) All floors of all building(s), including depiction of any walls to be removed and/or modified (existing buildings).
- ii) Labeled use of each room (bedroom, kitchen, office etc.).

- iii) Dimensions of all exterior walls, doors, windows and rooms.
 - iv) All functional components of the building, including kitchen appliances, fixtures (sinks, bath tubs, toilets, etc.).
 - v) Seating layout for restaurants and assembly spaces.
 - vi) Delineation between existing and proposed floor space (for additions and alterations).
 - vii) Existing and proposed tenant spaces or suites.
 - viii) Floor plans shall clearly identify affordable (BMR) units.
26. **Building Cross Sections** taken from at least two opposing sides showing depth of reveals, projections, recesses, etc.
27. **Site Cross Section** taken from at least two opposing sides showing existing topography, slope lines, final grades, location and height of existing and proposed structures, fences, walls, roadways, parking areas, landscaping, trees, and property lines. Section locations shall be identified on the site plan.
28. **Exterior Elevations** to include:
- i) Unobscured grayscale or color hardline architectural depictions of all sides and all floors (including roof parapets) of all proposed structures.
 - ii) Delineation between existing and proposed construction (for additions and alterations).
 - iii) Existing and finish grade.
 - iv) Maximum structure height, wall heights, and finish floor height of each floor.
 - v) Detailed building sections depicting architectural elements such as depth of reveals, projections, recesses, etc.
 - vi) Details of vents, gutters, downspouts, external air conditioning and/or mechanical equipment, etc.
 - vii) Details including materials and dimensions of door and window treatments, railings, stairways, accessibility ramps, trim, fascia, soffits, columns, fences, and other elements which are incorporated into the wall plane.
 - viii) All building-mounted equipment, including HVAC units, exterior duct work, lighting fixtures, fire panels, gutters, downspouts, etc.
 - ix) All elevation profiles shall be labeled as “North Elevation, South Elevation, etc.”
29. **Roof Plan** showing roof slope(s) and direction, mechanical equipment, and screening. Plans shall show existing roof forms and roof forms to be added or changed.

30. **Roof Cross Sections** taken from at least two opposing sides. **Note:** All roof-mounted equipment must be screened from public view. The screening must be an integrated part of the architecture and cannot be “tacked-on”.
31. **Colors/Materials** to include sheets providing illustrations of all proposed exterior materials/paint colors, specifically indicating manufacture, color/product name, and color/product number that correspond to the notes on the elevations sheet(s). This may include brochure excerpts/product specification sheets or photos of exterior building lights, and other architectural features.
32. **Fence Plan.** Showing the location, height and type of all fences and walls.
33. **Lighting Plan.** Location and type of exterior lighting, both fixed to the building and freestanding, any and all lights for circulation, security, landscaping, building accent or other purpose.
34. **Photometric Plan.** Indicate compliance with Section 17.620.022 of the BMC, luminaries shall be such that a maximum of seven foot-candles and a minimum of one foot-candle of illumination are obtained on all vehicle access ways and parking areas. Lighting shall not shine directly onto an adjacent street or property.
35. **Phasing Plan** depicting and describing the proposed phasing of the project, including, as applicable, the separate components of the proposed project and identifying major milestones.
36. **Stormwater control plan,** drawn to scale, including water treatment calculations.
37. **Preliminary landscaping plan,** if any is required or proposed, should be prepared by a licensed landscape architect and include:
 - i) Location, size, number, and name of all plantings, including trees, shrubs, groundcover, etc.
 - ii) Locations, size, and drip-line/canopy of existing trees to remain or removed.
 - iii) All impervious surfaces, including driveways, walkways, patios, etc.
 - iv) Documented square-footage of all landscaped areas.
38. **Grading and Drainage Plans to include:**
 - i) Actual topographical elevations of building pad, existing grade, and finished grade.
 - ii) Surveyed property line dimensions and lot size.
 - iii) Direction, path of drainage channels or facilities and all necessary trenching for utilities, and any overland release paths.
 - iv) Documented square-footage of new impervious/pervious areas.
 - v) Stated maximum depth and volumes of cut and fill.

- vi) Cross-section at property lines.
 - vii) Retaining walls showing height and materials.
39. **Circulation Plan** depicting and differentiating between pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle routes through the project site and extending to the public right-of-way, including wayfinding signage, loading areas, etc.
40. For projects that require an initial study to be prepared under CEQA, additional reports may be required, including but not limited to an arborist report (where applicable), biological site survey, cultural resource survey, Phase I environmental site assessment, VMT analysis, and traffic study..
41. Other information which is pertinent and/or which the Community Development Director may require all applicants to furnish, by general policy.

Additional Applications

1. *Optional:* A [Density Bonus application](#) may be submitted for a residential project seeking an increase over the otherwise maximum allowable residential density or seeking incentives pursuant to Chapter 17.720 of the BMC.
2. *Optional:* A [Preliminary application for Housing Development Projects](#) may be submitted for a residential project seeking to be covered by the provisions of the Housing Crisis Act of 2019 (SB 330).

Public Hearings Required

Design review applications do not require public hearings. However, design review applications being processed concurrently with other entitlement requests requiring public hearings should be publically noticed in conjunction with public hearings for those other requests, including General Plan amendments, rezones, tentative subdivision maps, parcel maps, and conditional use permits.

- The City is responsible for providing applicable notices to all property owners within 300 feet of the project site, as well as publication in the local newspaper, no less than 10 days from the date of the hearing.
- The applicant is required to install an on-site notification sign for the public hearing. A template for the site notification sign can be found [here](#). The project description for the site notification sign will be provided to the property owner/developer by City staff, after the application has been deemed complete.

Appeal Process

Decisions made by either the Zoning Administrator or Planning Commission are subject to appeal, in accordance with Chapter 17.880 of the BMC. In general, decisions of the Zoning Administrator become effective 10 calendar days after they are made. Any affected party may appeal a decision of the Zoning Administrator to the Planning Commission by submitting an application and the required appeal fee to the City Clerk during the 10-day appeal period. Decisions of the Planning Commission also become effective 10 calendar days after they are made. Any affected party may appeal a decision of the Planning Commission to the City Council by submitting an application and the required appeal fee to the City Clerk during the 10-day appeal period. Decisions of the City Council are final.