



City of Woodland
Community Development Dept.
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DESIGN REVIEW (Planning Commission Review)

DESIGN REVIEW REQUIRING PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVAL

PURPOSE

The design review process ensures that new development will conform to applicable Specific Plans, Interim Zoning, Community Design Guidelines, General Plan Policies, City Codes and applicable Conditions of Approval. Through these development standards, the City tries to promote attractive, compatible architectural design, protect views and preserve natural landforms and existing vegetation.

WHEN REQUIRED

If design review is combined with other entitlements that required Planning Commission approval, then the Commission serves as the design review authority. Typically Planning Commission review is required for associated entitlements such as a conditional use permit, tentative map, planned development, master plans, or in some cases as required in a specific plan.

Planning Commission design review can take from 2-4 months to process, depending on the level of environmental review that is required. Projects that are determined to be categorically exempt from CEQA normally take 2 months to process while those requiring a Negative Declaration take approximately 4 to 6 months to process. Projects that require preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will take longer to process. **A complete and accurate submittal package is essential to reducing the project timeline to its minimum.** The Community Development Department staff has established a goal of processing applications as rapidly as possible within applicable legal constraints.

APPEALS

Any person dissatisfied with the decision of the Planning Commission may appeal to the City Council. Appeals must be filed with the City Clerk's office in writing within **14 days** of the Planning Commission action. A fee will be assessed according to the enclosed fee schedule. Decisions by the City Council regarding appeals are final.

FINDINGS

The Planning Commission must be able to make the following findings in order to approve a project subject to design review.

1. The plans are in conformance with the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance.
2. The plans are in conformance with applicable Specific Plans, Community Design Guidelines and development standards.
3. The project is categorically exempt under CEQA or other applicable Environmental Documents have been certified as complete and adequate.

4. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, sanitation and/or other necessary facilities will be provided.

The following additional principles of design are included in the City's Design Standards:

1. The design should be usable by all.
2. The design should be readily and easily understood.
3. The design should be distinct and recognizable.
4. The design should be pleasing and attractive, and contribute in a positive way to quality of life in Woodland.
5. The design suits the proposed site.
6. The design and project respects the historical setting.
7. The project suits its purpose.

EXPIRATION OF DESIGN REVIEW APPROVAL

Design Review approvals are valid for **one year** from the date of approval unless designated differently by the approving body. This means that the project must commence (i.e. receive a valid building permit or start construction) within that one-year period or the approval expires and is no longer valid. The Zoning Administrator under certain circumstances may approve a one-year extension.

DESIGN REVIEW/COMPREHENSIVE SIGN PLAN

Some design review projects are subject to multiple review requirements. In some cases, a comprehensive sign plan will be required for a project with multiple tenants. The City has adopted Community Design Guidelines to provide for improved signs for projects located along major corridors, entrances to the City and new development areas. The application instructions for Comprehensive Sign Plans should be consulted for submittal requirements and fees.

SPECIFIC PLANS

To date, the City has adopted four Specific Plans, which provide improved development standards and land use regulations for specific geographic locations. Projects located within the Southeast Area Specific Plan, East Street Corridor Specific Plan, Downtown Specific Plan and Spring Lake Specific Plan is subject to land use and development and design guidelines contained within those plans. The application instructions for the various Specific Plans should be consulted. Staff can assist with identifying multiple review requirements.

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Detailed information regarding plan preparation, including the required number of plan sets, is provided in the **Planning Application Submittal Requirements and General Application Form** handout.

FEES

(Please refer to the Community Development current fee schedule for all current fees). Fees for processing Design Review applications that are exempt from CEQA require payment of a nonrefundable, flat fee plus a categorical exemption. In those instances, if the project is complex or requires hiring a consultant to perform analysis a deposit fee will be required rather than the flat fee. Please check with the Planning Staff to determine the fee type.

The Department of Fish and game requires payment of fees for the review of projects impacting wildlife sensitive areas. (Please check with Yolo County Recorder for all current fees). Checks for payment of these fees should be made out to the County of Yolo, but should be submitted to the Community Development Department.