



HOW TO OBTAIN A PERMIT FOR PLACEMAKING

Development Services Department
City of San Diego
1222 First Avenue, MS 301, San Diego, CA 92101-4101

INFORMATION
BULLETIN

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This information bulletin describes the approval process and submittal requirements for Placemaking projects.

I. WHAT IS PLACEMAKING?

Placemaking is the temporary use of public right-of-way and private property that activates streetscapes by enhancing the pedestrian experience and providing neighborhood-serving activities, experiences, or spaces and includes temporary, small-scale development specifically designed to support that temporary use. Projects that may qualify as Placemaking uses include, but are not limited to, those that provide areas for pedestrians to briefly rest (e.g., plazas, shade structures, and benches), promote the use of underutilized space (e.g., landscaping and decorative lighting), and improve and promote pedestrian activity and other uses of the public right-of-way (e.g., bicycle racks and refuse containers). (SDMC §113.0103).

Placemaking projects are privately funded, typically have broad community support and are often planned in concert with community oriented organizations, such as a Business Improvement District, Civic Association, Community Parking District, Community Planning Group, Maintenance Assessment District, Property Business Improvement District, Town Council or other similar non-profit organizations. SDMC § 113.0103, 123.0402, 123.0406, 129.0710, and 141.0421.

II. PERMIT DURATION

Placemaking projects can be permitted for up to five years. After five years the Placemaking project must be removed and the area returned to its original condition, unless a new permit for Placemaking is obtained. Placemaking projects may also be test projects to determine the feasibility of permanent public improvements.

Documents referenced in this Information Bulletin

- San Diego Municipal Code, ([SDMC](#))
- [Street Design Manual](#)
- [Community Profiles](#)
- [General Application, DS-3032](#)
- [Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist, DS-560](#)
- [The "Whitebook", San Diego Supplement to the Greenbook](#)
- [Greenbook Standards for Public Works](#)
- [Sewer Design Guide](#)
- [Water Design Guidelines and Standards](#)
- [California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, \(CA MUTCD\)](#)
- [Drainage Design Manual](#)
- [Storm Water Standards Manual](#)
- [California Building Codes, \(CBC\)](#)
- [Land Development Manual, Project Submittal Requirements](#)
- [Memo: "Installation of Murals in Public Right-of-Way \(ROW\) Pavements and Sidewalks" dated May, 25, 2018](#)
- [Information Bulletin 111, Sign Plan Check to Permit Issuance](#)
- [Information Bulletin 148, Mobile Food Truck](#)
- [Information Bulletin 502, Fee Schedule, Grading and Public Right-of-Way Permits](#)
- [Information Bulletin 533, Temporary Use Permit](#)
- [Information Bulletin 565, Pedestrian Plaza](#)
- [Information Bulletin 581, Designated Historical Resource Review](#)

The permit holder for a placemaking project is responsible for all maintenance.

Maintenance includes posting of the name, phone number and email address of the party responsible for the placemaking project in a location visible from the public right-of-way, keeping the placemaking project area free of litter and graffiti, and preventing litter attributable to the placemaking project from occurring on adjacent properties.

III. PLACEMAKING IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY

Placemaking projects in the public right-of-way are subject to the regulations contained in SDMC §129.070.

Placemaking projects are not allowed in Industrial Zones and the Coastal Overlay Zone. Additionally, Placemaking in the public right-of-way is not allowed in a Residential-Single Unit (RS) Zone.

A. PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMIT

A Public Right-of-Way Permit is required for placemaking within public rights-of-way. This Public Right-of-Way Permit is a Process One decision (ministerial).

B. APPLICATION PROCESS

An application for a Public Right-of-Way Permit must be approved prior to installation. To apply for a Public Right-of-Way Permit, submit the following completed items:

1. **General Application** ([DS-3032](#))
2. **Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist** ([DS-560](#))
3. **Encroachment Exhibit**
An exhibit (minimum 8-1/2" x 11"; maximum 18" x 24"), drawn to scale, detailing the encroachment area, including the following minimum details:
 - a. Vicinity Map
 - b. The right-of-way lines completely labeled and dimensioned
 - c. The location and type of encroachment, clearly identified
 - d. Existing and proposed right-of-way improvements, such as driveways, sidewalks, trees, light posts, fire hydrants, water meters, etc.
 - e. Elevation views with heights dimensioned for above ground structures
 - f. North arrow and scale

4. Construction Plan ([DS-3179](#) or [DS-3179C](#))

5. Record Owner Permission

Letter or similar proof of written permission from the record owner of the adjacent property.

C. HOW TO APPLY

Application must be made in person. Appointments are recommended and can be made by calling 619-446-5300. Walk-in service is also available at the Development Services Department located at 1222 First Avenue, 3rd Floor. Please visit the department's website at www.sandiego.gov/development-services for business hours.

D. FEE AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

Fees and deposits are required at the time of project submittal. For customer convenience, Development Services Department offers on-line payments through Open DSD. Payment may also be made in person by cash, check, debit card, Visa or MasterCard. Checks shall be in the exact amount, drawn on US banks, and made payable to the "City Treasurer."

The fee for plan check is based on the number of construction plan sheets contained in a submittal. Plans should be as concise as possible. Fee Information and the Refund Policy are contained in [Information Bulletin 502](#).

E. SAFETY AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS INCLUDE:

- [The "White Book," San Diego Supplement to the Greenbook](#)
- [Greenbook Standards for Public](#)
- [Sewer Design Guide](#)
- [Water Design Guidelines and Standards](#)
- [California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices](#) (American Society for Testing Materials)
- [Street Design Manual](#)
- [Drainage Design Manual](#)
- [Storm Water Standards Manual](#)

- [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)
- [California Building Code](#)
- [Community Plan](#)
- [Memo: "Installation of Murals in Public Right-of-Way \(ROW\) Pavements and Sidewalks" dated May, 25, 2018](#)

F. TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

In order to allow for safe and efficient vehicle and pedestrian visibility and circulation, placemaking projects shall not change, modify or conflict with traffic control devices, such as signage, directional controls, crosswalks or any other items that direct any mode of transportation. Placemaking projects shall also not allow for public congregation in locations within a street that is not designed for pedestrian access. For example, new gathering areas are not appropriate in a median, roundabout or traffic circle.

G. LOCATIONS

There may be planned or future proposed City Capital Improvement Projects, utility initiated projects, Maintenance Assessment District activities, Parking District projects or other private construction projects that may impact a Placemaking project location. An applicant for a Placemaking project should perform due diligence to determine the viability of proposed locations with knowledge that the Placemaking project may be removed in part or total by other allowed or permitted activities by the City, other agencies, organizations and persons. In addition, a placemaking permit holder is responsible for any required reconstruction or additional removal as a result of other types of projects. Two resources that can be used to determine if there are conflicts with other projects can be found here:

<https://pap.accela.com/envista-public-web/index/SanDiego/San%20Diego/SanDiego>
<https://www.sandiego.gov/development-services/opensds>

H. MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

A Placemaking project permit holder will be required to enter into an Encroachment, Maintenance and Removal Agreement with the City.

IV. PLACEMAKING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

Placemaking projects on private property are subject to the regulations contained in SDMC §141.0421. Placemaking projects are not allowed in Industrial Zones and the Coastal Overlay Zone.

A. TEMPORARY USE PERMIT

A Temporary Use Permit (TUP) is required for placemaking on private property. The Temporary Use Permit decision is a Process One decision (ministerial).

B. APPLICATION PROCESS

A TUP must be received prior to starting the use. To apply for a TUP please refer to [Information Bulletin 533](#).

C. FEES

Fees are required to be paid prior to review. For customer convenience, DSD offers on-line payments through [Open DSD](#). Payment may also be made in person by cash, check, debit card, Visa or MasterCard. Checks shall be in the exact amount, drawn on US banks, and made payable to the "City Treasurer." The required fees are listed in [Information Bulletin 533](#).

V. OTHER PERMITS AND REQUIREMENTS

A Placemaking project may require additional permits and may be subject to additional regulations. A Placemaking project that includes any of the following construction or activities requires a separate permit or approval for the construction or activity and is subject to additional regulations.

A. CONSTRUCTION

Issuance of a TUP does not authorize the construction of any structures, mechanical work, electrical work, or plumbing work. A separate Building Permit or miscellaneous permit is also

required for any construction that requires a permit. For Building Permit, Mechanical Permit, Electrical Permit, and Plumbing Permit submittal requirements please refer to the Project Submittal Manual Section 2.

https://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/dsdpsm_sec_02.pdf

B. SIGNS

A separate Sign Permit is required for the installation of any sign, except for the required posting of the name, phone number, and email address of the party responsible for the placemaking project. Please refer to [Information Bulletin 111](#) for additional information.

C. MOBILE FOOD TRUCKS

A Mobile Food Truck Permit is required for a Mobile Food Truck to be located on private property in most zones. For additional information concerning Mobile Food Trucks, please refer to [Information Bulletin 148](#) for additional information.

D. COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens are premises that are used for crop cultivation by individuals or collectively, and may be divided into multiple plots. Placemaking projects that include a Community Garden must also comply with all requirements for Community Gardens. Please refer to [SDMC §141.0203](#)

E. FARMERS' MARKETS

Farmers' markets are outdoor establishments where farmers and other vendors sell produce and other goods directly to consumers and where vendors selling farm produce comprise at least 50 percent of the vendors. A farmers' market may be either a weekly farmers market or a daily farmers market stand.

Placemaking projects that include a farmers' market must also comply with the requirements for farmers markets.

[Please refer to SDMC §141.0503](#)

F. ACCESSIBILITY

Placemaking Projects shall be accessible to individuals with disabilities, complying with most restrictive regulations of the California Building Code and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Placemaking Projects shall not interfere with, or impede, access to adjacent existing buildings to persons with disabilities.

G. HISTORIC REVIEW

Historical review may be required for a Placemaking project that is located within a Historic District or on a historically designated site. See [Information Bulletin 581](#) for additional information.

H. PEDESTRIAN PLAZAS

Pedestrian Plazas are sometimes referred to as Parklets. Please see [Information Bulletin 565](#) for additional information.

I. ARTWORK INCLUDING MURALS

Any placemaking project in the public right-of-way that contains artwork (SDMC 26.0701, et seq.) requires review and approval by the Commission for Arts and Culture before submission to the Development Services Department. To learn more about the Commission for Arts and Culture application process please visit their website at www.sandiego.gov/arts-culture.

J. SPECIAL EVENTS

A Public Right-of-Way Permit for Placemaking allows for construction in the right-of-way only and does not allow for any organized activities. Organized activity in the public right-of-way requires a Special Event Permit. For information concerning Special Events, please see: <https://www.sandiego.gov/specialevents-filming/events>.