

How to Obtain a Permit for Private Grading

INFORMATION BULLETIN

559

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This Information Bulletin (IB) describes private grading and the process for obtaining a grading permit on private property where building construction is proposed. Private grading is a new process that involves grading plan review, grading permit issuance, and grading inspection by the Development Services Department (DSD).

To qualify for this new process, the proposed work cannot be within public property or public easements, including the right of way. In addition, the proposed grading cannot impact public property or public improvements. Private grading permits do not involve public improvements and the grading plans do not need to be on mylars, nor will as-builts be required.

Projects that involve a subdivision improvement agreement (SIA), grading within special flood hazard areas, or public improvements (or contemplating future public improvements) are not eligible for this process. Sites graded under the private grading process will not be eligible for future public improvements or the conversion of private improvements to public improvements.

Plans for private grading shall be separate from the building plan set and will be permitted separately; however, the building plans and private grading plans may be submitted at the same time.

I. Submittal Requirements

The following plans and documents shall be provided when applying for a Private Grading permit.

A. Forms

Stormwater Requirements Applicability Checklist ([DS-560 PDF](#)).

B. Plans

- Provide one copy of the grading plans with the following information: (For detailed descriptions of the requirements, please see [Section 3 Project Submittal Manual PDF](#)).
 - Use [Private Grading -D-Sheet template](#).
 - Associated building project number when applicable.
 - Detailed scope of work (e.g., Grading for a future single-family residence, retaining walls under a separate permit).
 - Limit of grading.
 - Property line dimensions (any impact to the public right-of-way and/or easements within the project site will disqualify a project from this process). See [Submittal Manual Section 3 PDF](#).

C. Documents

- Drainage Study.
- Geotechnical Investigation Report.
- [Construction Cost Estimate](#).
- For projects with an associated discretionary permit, provide Exhibit 'A' and the permit (and map) conditions.

II. Other Requirements

- Connection to the City's water or sewer mains requires a separate right-of-way permit.
- The installation of a cross-connection control device on all water services must be in accordance with [IB-113, "Cross-Connection Controls" PDF](#).
- A Traffic Control Permit may be required; please see [IB-177 "Right of Way Permit for Traffic Control" PDF](#).
- For applications for Private Utilities, see [IB-182 "Permit For Private Utilities" PDF](#).

III. Fees

Plan check fees are required to be paid prior to review; please see [IB-502 "Fee Schedule for Grading/Right-Of-Way"](#) Section II B. For your convenience, DSD offers online payment through [SanDiego.Gov/DSD](#). Payment may also be made in person by check, ATM card, Visa or MasterCard. Checks shall be in the exact amount, drawn on US banks, and made payable to the "City Treasurer."

Express Plan Check is available; see [IB-502 PDF](#) for Express fees.

The inspection fee is established from the approved Construction Cost Estimate for the grading, landscape, irrigation, and drainage improvements being made. The estimate must be prepared by a registered civil engineer using the most current [DSD—Unit Price List](#).

Construction Cost Estimate	Inspection Fee	Increment
\$0 to \$25,000	\$2,500	-
\$25,001 to \$50,000	\$5,000	-
\$50,001 to \$100,000	\$7,500	4% of amount over \$50,000
\$100,001 to \$250,000	\$15,000	4% of amount over \$100,000
\$250,001 and over	\$25,000	4% of amount over \$250,000

Additional plan check and inspection fees may be assessed at an hourly rate for fees not covered.



Plan check fees and some administrative fees are non-refundable, but inspection fees may be refundable. For additional refund information, see the Refund Policy noted within [Refund Application Form DS-721](#).

Long Term Monitoring Fee

This fee is charged at permit issuance for grading permit projects with a cost estimate of \$100,000 or greater to monitor project compliance with stormwater, environmental mitigation, slope revegetation, paleontology, and other permit conditions on an ongoing basis after projects have been completed and a final inspection has occurred.

Cost Estimate \$100,000 to \$500,000..... \$3,090.38

Cost Estimate over \$500,000..... \$6,183.13

IV. Permit Issuance

Private Grading permits are issued once the project application has been reviewed and signed off by all the required review disciplines. All projects will be automatically placed into a permit issuance queue for staff to conduct pre-permit issuance reviews. During pre-permit issuance, the applicant will receive an e-mail if additional documents are required.

A. Issuance Requirements

Visit the [Development Services Department \(DSD\) online permitting portal](#) to log into your user account to submit the required issuance documents requested by permit issuance staff. Review the [User Guide PDF](#) for detailed instructions on how to submit documents electronically.

1. Required Documents

Project Contacts Information ([DS-345 PDF](#))

2. Plan Check Fees

Any outstanding plan check fees must be paid prior to uploading the requested Issuance Checklist items shown on the Project Issues Report email attachment for permit issuance. Refer to Section III of this information bulletin for further information regarding Plan Check Fees

3. Inspection Fees

Inspection fees will be invoiced once all required issuance documents have been submitted (as requested during pre-permit issuance). These fees must be paid to finalize permit issuance and download the approved plans. Refer to Section III of this information bulletin for further information regarding Inspection Fees,

4. Bond - Construction

When the reviewer indicates that a Bond is required on the completed Construction Cost Estimate, a Bond in the form of a **Performance Bond, Cash Bond or Letter of Credit** is required. For additional information, refer to [Information Bulletin 126 - Bonding for Grading/Public Right-of-Way Permits and Maps](#).

V. Permit Expiration

A grading permit shall expire 24 months from the date of issuance; if it is associated with a Building Permit, the expiration date will be the latter of the two. Refer to M.C. 129.0650 for additional information.

An [Application for Extension of Time DS-340 PDF](#) may be submitted no earlier than 60 calendar days before expiration (M.C. 129.0651). A maximum of 2 extensions may be granted for a period of 180 days each.

VI. Inspections

Inspections are required for all grading on private property and will be performed by DSD staff. Inspections can be scheduled online through [sandiego.gov/dsd](#) or by calling (858) 585- 7111. Prior to any site disturbance activities, the contractor shall arrange a Pre-Construction Meeting with DSD staff by calling the inspection office number listed above. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to schedule the following inspections:

- Pre-Construction Meeting.
- Rough Grading.
- Final Grading.

Prior to Final Inspection approval, the following need to be addressed (as applicable):

- As Graded Geotechnical Report.
- Permanent Best Management Practices (BMP).
- Mitigation Monitoring Coordination (MMC).
- Paleontological/Archaeological Report.

VII. Construction Changes

Changes to approved and permitted plans will be reviewed at the hourly rates for each discipline reviewing the change. Fees will be due prior to the construction change issuance. Please see [IB-118 "Construction Changes to Approved Plans" PDF](#).

References

- [San Diego Municipal Code \(SDMC\)](#)
- [California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices \(CAMUTCD\)](#)
- [Traffic Control Plan Permit PDF \(DS-269\)](#)
- [Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist PDF \(DS-560\)](#)
- [Application for Extension of Time for Grading/Right-of-Way Permits PDF \(DS-340\)](#)
- [Project Submittal Manual PDF](#), Section 3
- [Cross-Connection Control PDF \(IB-113\)](#)
- [Construction Changes to Approved Plans PDF \(IB-118\)](#)
- [Project Inspections PDF \(IB-120\)](#)
- [Water, Sewer & Fire Service PDF \(IB-166\)](#)
- [Public Right-of-Way Permit for Traffic Control PDF \(IB-177\)](#)
- [Private Underground Fire Service & Hydrants PDF \(IB-181\)](#)
- [Private Utilities PDF \(IB-182\)](#)
- [Grading/Right-of-Way & Mapping Actions \(IB-502\)](#)
- [Grading Permit for Site Reconnaissance and Testing PDF \(IB-560\)](#)
- [Building Demolition/Removal PDF \(IB-710\)](#)

Previous Versions of this Information Bulletin

This section contains previous versions of this Information Bulletin by the last day they were effective.

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