

INFORMATION  
BULLETIN

203

July 2022

## No-Plan Building Permit

This Information Bulletin establishes the procedure for the type of work which are eligible to obtain a building permit without a plan review for conformance with current building codes. Please note that only buildings and structures which have been legally permitted, constructed and passed final inspections are allowed to obtain No-Plan Building Permits.

If, after a No-Plan Building Permit is issued, the building inspector determines that the proposed work is too extensive or cannot verify that the existing construction qualifies as a No-Plan Building Permit, building construction plans will be required for review and a new permit will be issued. A Historical Review may be required even if the project scope qualifies as a No-Plan Building Permit (refer to Section III in this information bulletin for requirements).

### I. Building Permit Exceptions

A Building Permit is not required for the following activities, except when the work involves alterations, repairs, or improvements to a designated historical resource or if the building is located within a designated historic district. The work still needs to conform with all applicable codes and standards even if a permit is not required. See. Below is a list of common exemptions for building permits (see San Diego Municipal Code Section 129.0203 for the complete list of Building Permit exemptions):

- A. Repairs that involve only the replacement of components or existing work with similar materials for the purpose of maintenance, that do not have an aggregate valuation of over \$1,000.00, and that do not affect any electrical, plumbing, or mechanical installations.
- B. Installing replacement doors/windows in existing door/window openings in detached single-dwelling unit, duplex or townhouse residential buildings, as defined in the California Residential Code (CRC), where all of the following conditions apply:
  1. No modifications are required to be made to the exterior weather resistive flashings and,
  2. No alterations or modifications are made to the existing rough openings and
  3. Existing doors or windows to be replaced are not required to be fire-resistive or compliant with the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) requirements.
- C. Replacement of drywall associated with repair of electrical, mechanical or plumbing work, when the total aggregate area of drywall being replaced does not exceed 100 square feet.
- D. The application of a new color coat to existing stucco finish on walls.
- E. The relocation of cabinets and countertops in kitchens for a Group R-3 single-dwelling unit/duplex/townhouse structures.
- F. Tub to tub and shower to shower replacements that do not change size or location of the tub or shower.

### II. No-Plan Building Permits

A Building Permit may be issued for the following work without a plan review. Note that the work still needs to conform with all applicable codes and standards. However, plans may be required for Historic Review per Section III of this bulletin.

- A. Replacement of doors/windows required to be fire-resistive rated or in compliance with the VHFHSZ requirements for detached single-dwelling unit, duplex or townhouse residential buildings. Doors/windows must be the same size & type as the existing doors/windows with no changes to existing opening size.
- B. Remodel of an existing kitchen and/or bathroom(s) within detached single-dwelling unit, duplex or townhouse

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DS-5203 (07-22)

residential buildings (Group R-3 occupancy only) with no changes to structural elements, wall framing or exterior walls.

- C. Re-stucco (removal and replacement of existing stucco).
- D. Damage repair and replacement-in-kind (same size and specifications) when the existing structural framing system and life/safety elements are sufficiently intact for verification by the City inspector. Repair of damages for pre-engineered pre-manufactured structural elements such as trusses, glue-laminated beams or columns, Parallams, Microlams, truss-joists, etc. are not eligible for No-Plan Building Permit and plans and structural calculations for such repairs are required to be submitted for review and approval.
- E. Replacement-in-kind (same size and specifications) of damaged stair stringers and treads for detached single-dwelling unit, duplex or townhouse residential buildings. Guards and handrails, where removed, shall comply with the current CRC.
- F. Replace existing prefabricated fireplace with an approved listed prefabricated fireplace in the same location, for detached single-dwelling unit, duplex or townhouse residential buildings. Installation shall be per the manufacturer's recommendations.
- G. Replace siding (vinyl, wood, engineered wood, fiber cement, fiberglass, light-gauge metal) over existing solid sheathing (plywood or OSB) with an approved weather-resistive barrier per a valid ICC-ESR Evaluation Report number. Work cannot include any modifications to existing drywall or the exterior wall assembly besides the siding. For walls requiring fire resistance, the fire resistance rating required must be maintained. Applicant to provide a copy of the evaluation report to City inspector.
- H. Replace siding with stucco for detached single-dwelling unit, duplex or townhouse residential buildings.
- I. Drywall repair or replacement in-kind. Existing drywall must be sufficiently intact for the verification of fire-resistive type and attachment by the City inspector. For drywall repair and replacement in-kind related to the repair of electrical, mechanical or plumbing work, the associated project/permit numbers must be provided at the time of No-Plan Building Permit application.

### III. Additional Requirements

#### A. Designated Historic

If the project involves any parcel with a designated historical resource or is located within the boundaries of an adopted historic district, historical review is required. Please refer to Information Bulletin 581, Designated Historical Resource Review for additional Historic Review information.

#### B. Potential Historic Resource

If the site contains buildings or structures 45 years old or older, plans must be submitted through the Development Services Department for historic review, unless the project scope exempted per San Diego Municipal Code, Section 143.0212. The length of this review will typically be ten business days. See Information Bulletin 580, Potential Historical Resource Review, for supplemental submittal requirements.

#### C. Smoke Alarms and Carbon Monoxide Alarms in Existing Dwelling Units

For all existing dwelling units, when a permit is required for the replacement of components, repairs, or maintenance of existing work, smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms in accordance with the requirements of California Building Code or CRC shall be installed, as applicable.

#### D. Fire Alarm and Fire Sprinkler System

Any work that obstructs or affects the location functioning of sprinklers or fire alarms will require a permit for such work. See Information Bulletins 137 and 139 for specific requirements.

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DS-5203 (07-22)

**IV. Submittal Requirements**

- A. Project Contacts Form (DS-345)
- B. No-Plan Building Permit Supplemental Application (DS-6005)
- C. Owner-Builder Verification Form (DS-3042) This form must be completed and signed by the property owner if the property owner is obtaining the permit as “Owner-Builder”. Tenants/Lessees may not sign this form.
- D. Plans/documents for Historic Review shall be provided in accordance with Section III of this bulletin.

**V. Fees**

See Information Bulletin 501 for fees.

**VI. Permit Submittal**

No-plan building permits must be submitted electronically through the online [portal](#) by selecting the **Building Construction** application. An appointment can be scheduled to assist applicants in the submittal process through our [website](#).

**VII. Inspections**

A pre-construction inspection will be required for all repair/replacement in-kind permits. If the building inspector determines that the proposed work is too extensive or cannot verify the existing construction to qualify as a No-Plan Building Permit, the inspector will require that construction plans be prepared for review and a new permit will be required. For information concerning inspections, refer to Information Bulletin 120, How to Obtain Project Inspections.

Reference Table
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019 California Building Code, (CBC)</li> <li>• 2019 California Residential Code, (CRC)</li> <li>• 2019 California Energy Code, (CEnc)</li> <li>• San Diego Municipal Code, (<a href="#">SDMC</a>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 120</a>, How to Obtain Project Inspections</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 137</a>, Fire Alarm Systems</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 139</a>, Fire Sprinkler Systems</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 501</a>, Fee Schedule, Construction Permits - Structures</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 580</a>, Potential Historical Resource Review</li> <li>• <a href="#">Information Bulletin 581</a>, Designated Historical Resource Review</li> <li>• Project Contacts Form, <a href="#">DS-345</a></li> <li>• Owner-Builder Verification, <a href="#">DS-3042</a></li> <li>• No-Plan Building Permit Supplemental Application, <a href="#">DS-6005</a></li> </ul>

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