

INFORMATION
BULLETIN

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How to Obtain a Permit for Private Grading

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

1. Provide a copy of the completed General Application ([DS-3032](#)).
2. Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist ([DS-560](#)).

B. Plans

1. Provide one copy of the grading plans with the following information: (For detailed descriptions of the requirements, please see [Section 3 Project Submittal Manual](#)).
 - a. Associated building project number when applicable.
 - b. Detailed scope of work (e.g., Grading for a future single-family residence, retaining walls under separate permit).
 - c. Limit of grading.
 - d. 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.](#)

C. Documents

1. Drainage Study.
2. Geotechnical Investigation Report.
3. Construction Cost Estimate.
4. Clearly identify existing and proposed private utilities included in this application.
5. For projects with a discretionary permit, provide exhibit 'A' and the permit (and map) conditions.

Plans must be submitted for review. This can be done as a walk-in or with an appointment. To make an appointment for your submittal, call 619-446-5300. Check-in on the 3rd floor of the Development Services Center at 1222 First Avenue.

II. Other Requirements

Visit our website: sandiego.gov/DSD.

Upon request, this information is available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities.

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

III. Fees

Plan check fees are required to be paid prior to review; please see [IB-502 " Fee/Deposit Schedule for Grading/Right-Of-Way"](#) table 502A. For your convenience, DSD offers online payment through [SanDiego.Gov/DSD](#). Payment may also be made in person by cash, check, ATM card, Visa or MasterCard. Checks shall be in the exact amount, drawn on US banks, and made payable to the "City Treasurer." Due to space constraints, we are unable to store submitted plans awaiting fee payment.

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

Construction Cost Estimate	Inspection Fee	Increment
\$0 to \$15,000	\$1,500	-
\$15,001 to \$35,000	\$2,700	-
\$35,001 to \$50,000	\$3,700	-
\$50,001 to \$100,000	\$4,800	2% of amount over \$50,000
\$100,001 and over	\$6,000	1% of amount over \$100,000

The inspection fee is established from the approved Construction Cost Estimate of the grading, landscape and irrigation and drainage improvements being done. The estimate must be prepared by a registered civil engineer using the most current DSD—Unit Price List see below.

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

Please note plan check fees and some administrative fees are non-refundable. See Refund Policy noted within [Refund Application Form DS-721](#) for additional refund information.

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..... \$2,722.25
 Cost Estimate over \$500,000..... \$5,446.01

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IV. Permit Issuance

Currently, there are two processes (paper or electronic), depending on your application date. The difference is that “paper” projects will require multiple plan sets and a manual distribution. Electronic processing only requires one uploaded set of documents with the stamping and issuance process occurring electronically.

Issuance Requirements

To obtain a private grading permit you must have the following completed documents:

A. Plans

1. For “Paper” projects, two sets of approved plans are required. Both plan sets must be complete, identical, and contain all applicable stamps and signatures of approval.

Stamp Transfers: The applicant is responsible for obtaining all stamps and signatures of approval on both final sets of plans (commonly referred to as a “stamp transfer”).

2. For “Electronic” projects, the final plan set must be uploaded electronically when all issues have been satisfactorily resolved and the applicant has received instructions to upload the final version of the plans.

B. Provide a digital scan in PDF format of the stamped approved set (paper projects only).

C. Approved reports or studies used for plan review (paper projects only).

D. Payment of all remaining fees.

V. Permit Expiration

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

An [Application for Extension of Time DS-340](#) 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, by calling the IVR 858 581-7111 or contacting the inspection office 858 492-5070. Prior to any site disturbance activities, contractor shall make arrangements for 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:

- A. Pre-Construction Meeting.
- B. Rough Grading.
- C. Final Grading.

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

- A. As Graded Technical Report.
- B. Permanent Best Management Practices (BMP).
- C. Mitigation Monitoring Coordination (MMC).

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D. 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 construction change issuance. Please see [IB-118 "Construction Changes to Approved Plans"](#).

Reference Table
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC) • California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CAMUTCD) • Traffic Control Plan Permit (DS-269) • General Application (DS-3032) • Storm Water Requirements Applicability Checklist (DS-560) • Application for Extension of Time for Grading/Right-of-Way Permits (DS-340) • Project Submittal Manual, Section 3 • Cross-Connection Control (IB-113) • Construction Changes to Approved Plans (IB-118) • Project Inspections (IB-120) • Water, Sewer & Fire Service (IB-166) • Public Right-of-Way Permit for Traffic Control (IB-177) • Private Underground Fire Service & Hydrants (IB-181) • Private Utilities (IB-182) • Grading/Right-of-Way & Mapping Actions (IB-502) • Grading Permit for Site Reconnaissance and Testing (IB-560) • Building Demolition/Removal (IB-710)