



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

# PERMIT PRESS

Development Services Department

May/June 2003

## News Briefs

### Weekend Service:

Homeowners' Night is changing to Homeowners' Saturday Service, a more convenient time for customers. This permitting service for homeowners is available by appointment from 9 to 11 a.m. on Saturdays starting May 3 - call (619) 446-5300. Thursday evening service will no longer be available. Customers need to bring project plans, property plot plan, home owners association approval (if necessary) and a completed General Application, available on the department web page under the Homeowners section. 🏠

### New Fire Review Service:

Fire Plan Review now offers the enhanced service of reviewing selected tenant improvement sprinkler plans over the counter. This pilot program is offered for office tenant improvement plans that have no increase in area and involve 50 sprinkler heads or less. Plans must first be reviewed by screening to confirm that a backflow preventer has already been installed. For questions, contact Fire Prevention Supervisor Mike Benoit at (619) 446-5456. 🏠

### Access Attention:

Development Services Disabled Access Specialist, Sasan Nakhshab, a structural engineer, has been attending focus group meetings in Sacramento to help rewrite Chapter 11A of the California Building Code which addresses accessibility requirements for multifamily dwelling projects. The focus group is composed of representatives from the California Department of Housing and Community Development, Division of the State Architect, local cities, US Department of Housing and Urban

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## New downtown ballpark is a major league project

One can't help but feel the excitement when visiting the construction site of the "World's Best Ballpark in America's Finest City" in the East Village. The new downtown Petco Park is more than 60 percent complete and it's easy to visualize what it will be like to watch the San Diego Padres play in 2004. One of the charming features is the inclusion of the site's original Western Metal Supply Company building bordering left field. The southeast corner will act as the left field foul pole.

To complete the project, Ballpark Builders and the Padres have worked closely with the City of San Diego through all phases. Development Services Department staff reviews and approves plans and inspects the various stages of construction.

**"The Inspection and Project Management staff have been extremely helpful, cooperative, timely and reasonable, while still doing their job of protecting citizen safety,"** said Andy Stallings, Vice President of Construction for the project.

For Development Services staff, the ballpark is like 10 projects at once just because of the sheer size, according to Project Manager Pete Lynch. The overall project includes a large amount of ancillary development, which is revitalizing the East Village area. For staff members, Lynch said this project definitely invokes civic pride, especially to be part of



At the recent Topping Out Ceremony, which signified completion of the construction phase, the Padres and the City honored all the construction workers on the project. The top out piece was raised, center, and Padres Vice President of Development Eric Judson said, "We want to thank our partners, the City and CCDC (Centre City Development Corporation) for their resilience and commitment to this project in making sure it became a reality."

something that will be there for decades to come. All divisions of the department have done their part to help the ballpark become a reality.

"The cooperation level from the inspectors is outstanding on the project site," said Alan Petrasek, Vice President of Operations for the project. "They always came out on time and the job has remained on schedule. **We feel the city is a good partner.**" 🏠

## Fee proposal and improved services under consideration

*Details of report available on web page*

The Development Services Department has proposed a new fee schedule, changing the previous valuation-based fee model to a square-footage-based calculation. The Land Use and Housing Committee of the City Council met on March 19 and forwarded the proposal to the full City Council for consideration. This action is expected in mid-May.

If the fee proposal passes, the new fees will go into effect late summer. A new service that will be

added is long-term permit monitoring, and a new optional service is improved express plan check service, including additional resources to meet demand. **Other new optional services will include 100 percent next day inspections, the Affordable/Infill Housing Expedite team and the self-certification program. Benefits of the new fee structure include improved service levels, improved inspection response times and reductions in plan review times.**

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The City of San Diego  
**PERMIT PRESS**  
 MAY/JUNE 2003

**Development Services Department**



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 Assistant Director .....(619) 446-5039  
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*Small business assistance*



**Building Development Review**  
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 Building Official, Chief Deputy Director,  
 .....(619) 446-5406  
*Plan review and inspection for building,  
 mechanical, plumbing, electrical and fire  
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**Information and Application Services**  
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 .....(619) 446-5430  
*Miscellaneous permits, records, zoning and  
 sign information*



**Inspection Services**  
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*Construction inspections, enforcement of  
 Municipal and model codes, miscellaneous  
 permit issuance*



**Land Development Review**  
 Kelly Broughton,  
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This information is available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities. To request this bulletin in alternative format, call (619) 446-5000 or (800) 735-2929 (TT).

**Your small business is a big deal**  
*City working with community to better assist small business customers*

New services are on the way to assist customers starting small businesses. The permitting process can be intimidating for small business owners, who are often brand new to the process. In an effort to help navigate through these requirements, the Development Services Department is in the process of creating a new Small Business Guide and checklist, and revamping our Small Business Owners section of the web page.



**Development Services is developing a partnership with the Small Business Advisory Board.** Management and senior

staff are working closely with small business representatives to gather input and troubleshoot issues in an effort to better serve the small business community.

If you are a small business owner looking for early assistance in starting the permitting process, please contact Deputy Director Terry Marshall at (619) 533-3089. If you are already in the process of obtaining permits and inspections and need additional assistance, please contact Development Services Manager Ed Oliva at (619) 446-5395. Look for more details on the web page. 🏡

**Local review and inspection now available to medical clinics**

*New service greatly reduces review time for minor improvements*

As part of continued efforts to improve existing service and provide new ones, the Development Services Department has implemented a new provision for medical clinic operators. These industries can now submit medical clinic improvement projects to the City of San Diego for review and inspection rather than submitting to the Office of Statewide Health and Planning Department (OSHPD).



The former procedure could take up to six months for review of relatively minor improvement projects. **This new service**

**will reduce this review time to under a month, allowing hospital operators to quickly put in place much needed medical services to citizens, and reduce crowded conditions in hospitals and emergency rooms.**

The program was developed and implemented through cooperative efforts with staff and industry. These ongoing partnerships aim to develop innovative and practical solutions to difficult development process issues. 🏡

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Development and private industry. The objective is to make Chapter 11A more user friendly and to ensure it meets the Fair Housing Act. These changes are scheduled to be adopted into the 2004 edition of California Building Code. 🏡

**Reaching Out:**

The Development Services Department participated in the Spring Home/Garden Show at the Del Mar Fairgrounds on February 28, March 1 and 2. Six building inspectors operated an informational booth at the event, providing detailed information on the permitting process, safety issues, remodeling tips and general inspection procedures. More than 40,000 people attended the event. 🏡

**Earthquake Focus:**

Development Services Geologist Rob Hawk recently appeared on KPBS-TV's Full Focus, in an education piece about earthquakes. Hawk explained the City's work to make buildings better able to withstand earthquakes and protect public safety. He detailed the state's

new earthquake fault mapping project, which identifies new active fault lines in downtown San Diego and the City of Coronado, and how City staff are utilizing this information to ensure safe, and stable development. 🏡

**Tire Tracking:**

The Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency, part of Development Services, has received a \$235,900 Waste Tire Enforcement Grant to continue their waste tire enforcement and surveillance program. Part of an overall clean-up project in the Tijuana River Valley, the grant will also be used to create a training program, produce bilingual educational materials, and research and identify the sources and destinations of used and waste tires to more effectively prevent illegal disposal and enhance recycling efforts. 🏡

**Holidays Closure:**

All City departments will be closed Monday, May 26, in observance of Memorial Day. 🏡

# New streamlined appeal process for Building Development Review

*Revisions govern requests for use of alternate methods, materials or designs*

As part of ongoing efforts to improve the development review process, the Building Development Review division has implemented substantial revisions to the process of submitting appeals and requests for the use of alternate methods, materials or designs to those permitted or recognized in the adopted codes. The streamlined process primarily implements the following changes:

-  All requests for the use of alternate methods, designs and materials of construction will be initially reviewed at the senior staff level
-  The review process will be decentralized with requests handled by all senior staff members from the appropriate review discipline rather than by the research engineer alone
-  The Board of Building Appeals and Advisors will be primarily used by the applicant to appeal a denial of a request by the Building Official or when the Building Official requests the Board's input on an issue
-  All applications must be signed by the building owner and the required code analysis and justification must be prepared by a California registered design professional

**Forms for this process, DS-104 and DS-104A, are available on the web at [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov). Select Development Services, Forms.**

Section \*129.0109 \*Use of Alternate Materials, Design, or Construction Methods\* of the San Diego Municipal Code authorizes the Building Official to approve on a case by case basis the use of any alternate material, design, or construction method not specifically prescribed by the Building, Electrical, Plumbing or Mechanical Regulations. The Building Official may approve requests for alternates pursuant to Section 129.0109 if the Building Official finds that the proposed alternate material, design, or construction method is at least equivalent to the standards prescribed in the applicable regulation in terms of suitability, quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability, safety and sanitation.

Requests for alternates must be first initiated by completing form DS-104 (now available on the department web page). The new form must be submitted in conjunction with a complete code analysis and data substantiating any claims made of the alternative being proposed. The application and associated documents will be reviewed by a senior staff engineer and a written response will be returned to the applicant within four weeks from the date of submittal for most projects. The Building Official will make the final decision as to whether the request



Petco Park submitted an appeal requesting omission of spray applied fire proofing.

should be approved. Building Newsletter 1-4A is in the final stages of development and will be published to aid in the completion of form DS-104. A fee will be required to initiate the review process.

Applicants whose requests for the use of alternate methods, designs and materials have been denied may appeal the Building Official's decision to the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. Form DS-104A, which replaces the existing form, must be used to request action by the Board of Building Appeals and Advisors. Building Newsletter (BNL) 1-4B will be published to replace BNL 1-4 and can be used to aid in the completion of form DS-104A.

Items requiring input from the Fire Marshall, or which involve an issue for which the Fire Marshall holds the primary responsibility, will be forwarded to Fire and Life Safety Services for their review and consideration. Submittals may be made via the senior staff member associated with the project of directly to the Senior Research Engineer. For more information please contact Ali Fattah, Senior Research Engineer, at (619) 446-5092.

## Project tracking computer system moves forward

The Development Services Department is moving into the next stage of implementation for the Project Tracking System (PTS). This phase of PTS replaces paper files and disjointed permit tracking systems inherited from eight other departments. PTS was created to provide

staff and customers with one integrated project tracking system for their project, beginning to end.

Once fully implemented, customers will no longer have to go to separate sources for information on planning, engineering, building or fire permits. In

this phase of PTS, the current building permit tracking system (BPIS) will be replaced. In PTS, projects are tracked geographically and the system is accessible by all staff. PTS provides a common set of tools to track all project steps, plan rout-



# City of San Diego

## Development Services Department

### Summary of Row Homes / Townhouses Policy

2001 California Building Code: Chapter 5

Revision Date: February 10, 2003

#### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide a brief summary of the Department's policy for the design and construction of multiple townhouse dwelling units, when built in a row at or near property line or assumed property line, under Group R, Division 3, Dwelling occupancy classification.

Under this occupancy classification, terms townhomes and row homes are considered to be synonymous and are referred to as townhouse or townhouses hereinafter.

Under the policy, row homes are single-family dwelling units constructed in a row consisting of either a single townhouse or a pair of attached townhouses forming a duplex unit.

For comprehensive and detailed requirements for design and construction of row homes, refer to Building Newsletter [newsletter, hereinafter] Row Homes Requirements for Occupancy Classification as Group R, Division 3'.

#### II. DEFINITION

TOWNHOUSE is a single-family dwelling unit constructed as single unit which extends from foundation to roof. Furthermore, each townhouse shall have open space on at least two sides.

#### III. CONDITIONS FOR OCCUPANCY CLASSIFICATION AS GROUP R, DIVISION 3

In order for multiple individual townhouses to be classified as Group R, Division 3, Occupancy, when built in a row at or near property line or assumed property line, the following conditions are required to be satisfied:

A. Each townhouse is required to be in compliance with the applicable provisions of the Building Code related to Group R, Division 3, occupancy classification.

B. Each single townhouse or a duplex shall be considered a separate and independent building.

C. Each individual townhouse must be located on a parcel of land either bounded by established and recorded legal property lines or assumed property lines or both. The site plan shall clearly show the legal property lines [lot lines] or the assumed property lines with a description of legal address for each individual townhouse and duplex.

D. Each single townhouse building or duplex building shall be separated from adjoining dwelling unit by property

line walls. Attached dwelling units in a duplex may be separated by a party wall, constructed as defined in the newsletter.

E. Townhouses shall not to be stacked with one constructed on top of the other. Each townhouse must extend from foundation to roof.

F. Underground and aboveground plumbing, conduits, wiring and other utilities shall comply with the requirements set forth in the newsletter.

G. Each separate and independent building must be structurally independent in resisting both vertical gravity loads and lateral (seismic and wind) loads.

H. Each individual townhouse or duplex must have a separate means of egress.

#### IV. COMMERCIAL USES IN RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Commercial uses may be established in one- and two-story townhouses without triggering compliance with Building Code provisions associated with commercial use and occupancy group. For comprehensive and detailed requirements refer to newsletter.

#### V. PERMIT ISSUANCE

A. Townhouse. A separate Combination Permit will be issued for each individual townhouse when all building and zoning regulations of the City of San Diego are satisfied and complied with.

B. Duplex. A separate Combination Permit will be issued for each dwelling unit of a duplex when all building and zoning regulations of the City of San Diego are satisfied and complied with. A duplex unit will be reviewed as a duplex.

#### VI. ALTERNATE MATERIALS, DESIGN AND METHOD OF CONSTRUCTION

The applicant may submit to the Building Official, requesting for review and approval of an alternate design and method of construction for property line walls and means of egress system. For comprehensive and detailed requirements refer to newsletter.

For questions regarding this policy please contact Mehdi Shadyab, P.E., Senior Engineer, at 619-446-5400.

Fee Proposal continued from Page 1

The new fee schedule and related fee increases are needed to more accurately reflect the cost of service, keep up with the increasing workload and labor costs, and hire staff for vacant positions to improve service levels. Increased costs are also associated with regulatory requirements including additions to the Uniform Building Code, energy conservation, storm water pollution pre-

vention, disabled access and environmental monitoring. Some fees, such as those for single family tract homes, will decrease.

A complete copy of the City Manager's Report detailing the fee proposal and the related attachments is available on the internet at [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov), select "Development Services" from the "Business" heading, then select "News and Updates." 🏠

## New package added to Whole House Energy Retrofit Program

*Investment payback can be realized in less than 18 months*

The Whole House Energy Retrofit Program was established in October 2002 to help homeowners reduce their energy bills while conserving energy in the City of San Diego. **The program provides cash rebates for installation of energy-efficient technologies in family residences built prior to 1978.** Administered by the City's Development Services and Environmental Services departments, the program is funded by a grant from the California Public Utilities Commission.

The program has just added a new package, which will appeal to homeowners because it is more affordable, with a quicker pay-back period and lower initial capital cost. The entire project will cost an average consumer approximately \$1,300 and will pay itself back in less than 18

months. Any of the three packages are estimated to give the customer a reduction of \$30 per month off their SDG&E energy bills. The following is a breakdown of each package requirement and their rebate range:

**Package 1 - Rebates of \$200-\$600 depending on income** - To qualify the homeowner must complete all of the following: Insulate attic with R-30 insulation, install double-pane windows, install low-flow showerheads, and wrap water heaters where appropriate.

**Package 2 - Rebates of \$400 to \$800 depending on income** - To qualify the homeowner must complete all of the following: Do all in Package 1 and install a new high-efficient furnace with AFUE rating of 90% or higher.

**Package 3 - Rebates of \$300-\$500 depending on income** - To qualify the homeowner must complete all of the following: Install low-e window film on all windows, insulate the attic with R-30 insulation, wrap the water heater, and replace 10 standard light bulbs or 50% of light bulbs with Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs.

An application form and final inspection are required. For information call the City at (858) 492- 6004. Brochures and applications are available at the Development Services Department, 1222 First Ave.; the Ridgehaven facility, 9601 Ridgehaven Court; and Community Service Centers. Information can also be found on the web at: [http://genesis.san-net.gov/infospc/templates/esd/residential\\_programs.jsp](http://genesis.san-net.gov/infospc/templates/esd/residential_programs.jsp) 🏠

## New Storm water permit requirements

*Mandate drops permit threshold from 5 acres to 1 acre*

Under Federal mandate (40CFR Parts 9, 122, 123 and 124), the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) has made revisions to the State General Construction Permit, Order No. 99-08-DWQ. **In effect since March 10, 2003, the threshold for this permit drops from 5 acres to 1 acre.** No exceptions were written into the modifications.

**If your site is under construction and has 1 acre or more of soil being disturbed, it falls under the permit requirements and you must:** 1) File a Notice of Intent with SWRCB; 2) Pay an annual fee of \$700 to the SWRCB (in most cases); 3) Have a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan implemented on site.

The permit is applicable to all sites under construction; there is no grandfather clause. The Development Services Department will not be reviewing any Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans for projects with either an active permit or a valid Notice to Proceed for Subdivision Improvement Agreement, however, the document must still be prepared, implemented and kept on site to satisfy SWRCB requirements. The permit, frequently asked questions and forms are available on the State's website at: [www.swrcb.ca.gov/stormwtr/construction.html](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/stormwtr/construction.html).

Since Dec. 2, 2002, new development and significant redevelopment projects



that fall under certain criteria must incorporate water quality improvements. Refer to the Storm Water Standards Manual (located on the web at [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov), select "Development Services" from the "Business" heading, then "News and Updates") for complete details of storm water requirements, and to determine if your project requires water quality improvements. For further questions, contact the Development Services Department at (619) 446-5152. 🏠

**Project tracking** continued from Page 3

ing, and plans approval for all project types.

Changes customers will see include the replacement of plan file numbers with project numbers and more detailed reports and invoices. With PTS, plans will be distributed to all reviewers simultaneously. This will require additional copies of plans at submittal and will result in a faster turnaround time. The Project Submittal Requirements have been updated to reflect these changes. PlanFinder on the web will be temporarily unavailable during the transition. In

the future, similar web-enabled information will be available for entire projects. Until then, customers should contact their project manager for plan status. A staff member will be designated as project manager for every project in PTS to act as a central point of contact.

See the Development Services web site at [www.sandiego.gov](http://www.sandiego.gov) (select Development Services from the Business heading) for a calendar of public workshops on PTS. These seminars will be held at the Development Services Center downtown to provide detailed information to cus-

tomers about changes associated with PTS.

The Development Services Department appreciates your patience while we continue to train staff and implement this new and improved service. We are confident the new system will not only speed up processing times, but provide a more comprehensive service overall. Please provide your feedback on the customer comment forms located throughout the offices. 🏠



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**City of San Diego Development**  
**Services Department**  
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## HOW TO CONTACT US

### Express Plan Check Limited

Construction Plan Check ..... (619) 446-5300  
 Engineering Services ..... (619) 446-5460  
 Fire Plan Check ..... (619) 446-5440  
 After Hours/Weekend Building  
 Inspections ..... (858) 492-5070

### Services by FAX

*For printouts of plan clearances. You will be faxed the printout or mailed a copy.*

PlanFinder Touchtone Line ..... (858) 581-7171  
 PermitFax Line ..... (619) 236-7687

### Service Telephone Numbers

Address Coordinator ..... (619) 446-5411  
 Code Enforcement ..... (619) 236-5500  
 Community Plans ..... (619) 235-5200  
 Demolition/Removal/Relocation; Grading;  
 Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Gas Permits;  
 Preliminary Review; Public Improvements; Tenant  
 Improvements; Transportation; Wet Taps; Water &  
 Sewer, Zoning ..... (619) 446-5000  
 Development & Permit Information,  
 Submittal Appointments ..... (619) 446-5300  
 Electrical Plan Check ..... (619) 446-5300

Engineering Information ..... (619) 446-5460  
 Engineering Project Close-Out, Time Extension,  
 Bond Release ..... (619) 446-5363  
 Facilities Financing ..... (619) 533-3670  
 Fire Prevention New Construction Plan Check,  
 Hazardous Materials Plan Check,  
 Subdivision Review ..... (619) 446-5440  
 Hazardous Materials Inspections ..... (619) 533-4477  
 Home Owners Appointments ..... (619) 446-5300  
 Land Dev. Review Info. .... (619) 446-5460  
 Master Plans ..... (619) 446-5052  
 Over-The-Counter Plan Review  
 Appointments ..... (619) 446-5300  
 Plumbing/Mechanical Plan Check (619) 446-5300  
 Publications ..... (619) 446-5200  
 Records ..... (619) 446-5200  
 Seismic/Geologic Hazards ..... (619) 446-5460  
 Sign Permits ..... (619) 446-5300  
 Structural Plan Check ..... (619) 446-5300  
 Traffic Control Plan Check ..... (619) 446-5150  
 Transportation Planning ..... (619) 235-5231

### Schedule In Advance Services

New Construction, Relocation, Removal,  
 Demolition Inspections ..... (858) 581-7111  
 Engineering Field Inspections ..... (619) 627-3200

### Service Locations

Development Services Center, 1222 First Ave.

Development Services (Building Development  
 Review, Information & Application Services,  
 Land Development Review, Support Services).

Stadium/Kearny Mesa area,  
 9601 Ridgeway Ct., Suite 220  
 Development Services Inspection Services:  
 Selected permit issuance, reinspection fee  
 payment (checks only), 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.,  
 office open to 5. Construction, sign, demolition  
 inspectors.

City Administration Building, 202 C St.  
 Planning Department (Long Range Planning,  
 Multiple Species Conservation Program,  
 Transportation Planning)

Executive Complex, 1010 Second Ave.  
 Engineering and Capital Projects Dept.,  
 Traffic Engineering, Facilities Financing.

Civic Center Plaza, 1200 Third Ave.  
 Neighborhood Code Compliance

**Community Service Centers** are located in  
 many neighborhoods, including Clairemont,  
 Market Street, Mid-City, Navajo, Otay Mesa/Nestor,  
 Peninsula, Rancho Bernardo and San Ysidro.  
 Call City Information at (619) 236-5555 for the  
 nearest location and operating hours.

### Small Business Permit Information

Thinking of expanding or relocating your small business? Call us first, before you lease, for information to avoid permit problems; regulations can vary widely by location. Contact Terry Marshall... (619) 533-3089