



Land Use Services Department
Planning Division
Site Plan 101

PREPARING A SITE PLAN

You may need to prepare a site plan if you are planning to improve your property. A site plan is an accurately scaled drawing that shows the existing conditions of and proposed improvements to your property. It includes the location of any existing and proposed development such as structures, paving, and land uses. Your site plan must show where your property lines are located in relation to any existing and proposed structures, parking, or other site features. **While it is not required, it is strongly recommended that you hire a professional to prepare the site plan.**

✓ **1. Determining when a site plan is required.**

A site plan is required for any entitlement process whether it be a new development, expansion of an existing use or establishing a land use. For example, you need to have a site plan if you will be constructing a new building or reconfiguring the existing parking lot. A site plan is required with most land use applications, including project applications (i.e. conditional use permits, minor use permits, and planned developments).

You may contact a duty planner at our office if you need assistance determining if you need a site plan. A planner can help you determine the type of planning application needed for your proposed project and can also provide you with different handouts to guide you through the land use process.

✓ **2. Identifying parcel dimensions and property lines.**

Parcel dimensions and property lines can be determined by either using the assessor's parcel maps, using a recorded subdivision map, or hiring a licensed surveyor.

The assessor's parcel map are typically drawn to scale based on the latest recorded surveys. They usually include lot dimensions for all sides of the property. You may use the Property Information Management System to locate the map <https://www.sbcounty.gov/assessor/pims/>

A recorded subdivision map in which the property is located will have lot dimensions. The legal description of the property, which should be included on the deed, typically contains the property's lot or parcel number and the subdivision name in which the parcel is located. If the property is not located within a subdivision map, the legal description will likely be a 'metes and bounds' description of the perimeter of the property.

A licensed surveyor can locate the property lines and prepare a topographic survey of the property that shows its boundaries in relation to the street and existing buildings. You can use this information to prepare the site plan.

✓ **3. Determining the location of structures and other features.**

Once the property boundaries and dimensions have been identified, the drawing of a site plan can begin. Existing buildings, streets, rights-of-way, easements, driveways, trees, wells, septic tanks, and other site specific features shall be clearly identified in relation to the property boundaries. Measure the distance from these site features to the surrounding property lines.

✓ **4. Drawing the site plan.**

A site plan can be drawn by using all of the information you have gathered and by following the checklist on the application type, you are submitting. The site plan shall be drawn using a computer graphics or drafting program. You can hire a design professional to prepare the entire site plan.