



## Land Use Permit – Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a Land Use Permit?

Land use permits, including Use Permits and Minor Use Permits, provide for public review of certain uses, that due to their type or intensity, require consideration of location, site design, adjacent uses, availability of public infrastructure and services, and environmental impacts.

Project proposals are analyzed for their compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood, applicable zoning regulations, General Plan policies, impacts on environmental resources such as traffic, noise, and biological resources, as well as compliance with other codes and ordinances such as Building Code and Fire District requirements.

Land use permits are discretionary and are typically granted for five-year terms with provisions for subsequent renewals; however, they may also be issued for fixed, maximum, or indefinite terms.

Common examples of land uses which require issuance of a Use Permit include large scale agricultural processing facilities, wineries, cottage industry home-based businesses, wireless telecommunication facilities, kennels, and public stables. Reference the Planning Services Division [Land Use Permit brochure](#) for more detailed information regarding the permitting process.

### What is the process?

**Pre-Application Consultation.** Potential applicants are encouraged to discuss the development proposal with Planning staff prior to filing. More complex projects may warrant filing a pre-application request to identify key issues early on, prior to filing a formal entitlement application.

**Step 1 – Completeness.** Staff will perform an initial review of your project once a complete Use Permit application is filed with the Planning Services Division. Refer to the [Land Use Submittal Requirements Checklist](#) for a comprehensive range of information and documents necessary to file a complete application. Within 30 days of filing you will be notified if your application is deemed complete or whether additional information is necessary for evaluation and processing. If an application is deemed incomplete, you will receive a letter detailing the additional information necessary to continue processing.

**Step 2 - Environmental review:** Land use permits are subject to the discretion of a hearing body and therefore, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process. CEQA requires the County to evaluate a development proposal to determine whether or not a project has the potential to generate significant effects on the environment. Biological, air quality, noise, and traffic are examples of environmental resources that may be analyzed. The Planning Services Division will determine the appropriate level of environmental review for your project. Reference the Planning Services Division [Environmental Review brochure](#) for additional information regarding the CEQA process.

Supplemental application fees may be required depending on the level of environmental review required for your project. In addition, staff may request that the applicant provide professionally prepared site-specific studies such as a biological assessment, acoustical analysis, traffic study, or wetland delineation report to assist in the preparation of the environmental document. The cost of special studies is not included in the Planning Services fee schedule and is the obligation of the applicant.

**Step 3 – Public Hearing.** Generally, the Zoning Administrator acts as the hearing authority for Minor Use Permits and the Solano County Planning Commission for Use Permits. Public notice of the project is mailed out to nearby property owners and anyone requesting notice at least 15 days in advance of the hearing. Prior to the hearing, staff will provide the applicant a report which describes project specifics, details conditions of approval, and makes a recommendation to the hearing authority.

Once a decision is made by the hearing authority, there is a ten (10) day appeal period where any person or party aggrieved or affected by the decision may file an appeal. Decisions made by the Zoning Administrator may be appealed to the Planning Commission and decisions made by the Planning Commission may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors. If an appeal is filed, a subsequent noticed public hearing to the higher-level hearing authority will occur, typically within 30 to 60 days. During an appeal period, no permits can be issued related to the project. Any decision by the Board of Supervisors on an application is final.

### **How long does the process take?**

The process typically takes three to four months from the time the application is deemed complete. More complex projects and those subject to higher levels of environmental review may increase processing time.

### **My Land Use Permit is approved. What next?**

Granting of a Use Permit does not authorize approval, application, or fees for other potential land development requirements, such as grading, building, encroachment, sewage disposal, or water supply. Development proposals often require a separate building permit. Please contact the Building and Safety Division at (707) 784-6765 to discuss building permit requirements. Before additional permits can be obtained, the permittee may be asked to verify compliance with their Use Permit conditions of approval.

### **My operations have changed or expanded, what is necessary to continue operating?**

Once a Use Permit becomes effective, the land use may be developed and operated in substantial compliance with the terms and conditions of the granted permit. Any development or operation that is not in substantial conformance with the terms of the permit shall not be initiated until a revision or amendment to the Use Permit is approved. In this case, the property owner or operator should file a Minor Revision or Amendment to authorize changes to the approved Use Permit. Minor Revisions are considered by the Zoning Administrator and significant changes are considered by the Planning Commission.

### **The term of my Land Use Permit is 5 years. What can I do?**

Most Use Permits are subject to periodic renewal every five years, or other such period as granted by the hearing authority. If a Use Permit requires renewal, the Planning Services Division will notify the permittee in writing within 60 days of the Use Permit expiration date. Timely filing of the renewal application is required to continue operations.

### **How do I apply for a Use Permit or Minor Use Permit?**

Reference the [Planning Application Submittal Guide](#) for specific details regarding contact information, office hours, and application filing.

This application packet includes:

- Land Use Permit - Submittal Requirements Checklist**
- Land Use - Application**
- Project Description**
- Environmental Evaluation Questionnaire**
- Application Processing Agreement**