



Development Guide

A User-Friendly Handbook to Brea's Development Process

City of Brea Community Development Department

1 Civic Center Circle, Brea, California 92821

Planning Division 714-990-7674

Building Division 714-671-4406

www.cityofbrea.net



First Things First...Tips for Successful Development



Step By Step Through Brea's Development Process

Helping You Create A Better Brea

This Development Guide provides general information you need in order to make the sometimes complex development process easier by taking you through it step-by-step.

Brea's professional staff is prepared to provide personal assistance and guidance. It is wise to **talk with a planner early** – before you complete an application. That way, you get off to a good start by reviewing application needs and getting any additional forms that may be required.

Information sheets called Applicant Guides are also included with this packet. These provide additional information regarding various permits, reviews, procedures or other requirements specific to your project. The application form, any other required forms, and a Plan Review Checklist are also included.

The City of Brea is committed to a streamlined development process. Brea's Guaranteed Second Opinion Program is designed to ensure your complete satisfaction. If at any time, you have a question over interpretation of any code or ordinance, you can appeal the decision to either a supervisor or manager. A brochure on the Second Opinion Program is available at the Community Development counter for your convenience.

Check Zoning

Before you sign the lease, purchase a piece of property or begin the development process, first be sure to determine the approved uses (zoning) for the site. This is easy to do by contacting the Community Development Planning Division, on Level 3 of the Brea Civic & Cultural Center, 714-990-7674. In order to preserve characteristics unique to Brea, land uses are directed to certain areas within City limits. Checking what is allowed in advance can prevent you from entering a lease or mortgage for a site that is not zoned for your intended use.

Screen Check (Preliminary Review)

If your project is complex or potential concerns have been identified, a planner will suggest using Brea's Screen Check process. This is a free, unique service to facilitate coordination of approvals prior to preparation of plans or drawings. Screen Check saves time and money because you can determine requirements before you've invested in architectural and engineering services.

At a Screen Check appointment, a team of technical staff members overview specific requirements and codes related to your project. Simply bring, or provide prior to this meeting, a conceptual site plan and short narrative description of your proposed project. At this point you will evaluate what professional expertise is needed to prepare a Planning Application Submittal. You may bring a development team to explain technical elements of your project. Screen Check meetings are held twice monthly. Call the Planning Division at 714-990-7674 for additional details.



There are six basic steps in Brea's development process. Depending on the nature of your project, all of these steps may not be necessary. A Brea planner will help you determine which of these steps are necessary for your specific project.

1. Planning Application Submittal

The first step is to complete the Uniform Application and any additional forms required, which should accompany this packet. Submit your application in person to the Planning Division along with 12 sets of plans for staff review and make a fund deposit.

Have a planner review the application and other forms before you complete the package of information. You may need additional forms such as an *Environmental Information Form*, or a *Hazardous Waste and Substance Site Statement*. These forms and the Plan Review Checklist are to be completed with planner assistance.

Please make sure all information on the application is legible and includes the property owner or the legal agent's signature. Applications without a proper signature will delay processing. You will be required to pay a deposit when you turn in your application. The City of Brea has a full cost recovery program with an established hourly rate; you pay only the cost of the actual work. Typically this system has been found to save applicants' money, but may require more upfront money than you are accustomed to. Current charges are \$88 per hour for inspection services; \$94

per hour for professional; and \$126 per hour for management. Other fees may apply and the deposit will vary depending on the complexity of your project.

2. Plan Review

Submittal of your application, site plans and deposit starts the Plan Review process. At this point a planner is assigned as your project leader serving as your ongoing liaison to complete the planning approval process.

The goals of Plan Review are to:

- ✓ Ensure that your application packet is complete and accurate
- ✓ Analyze the project and, when applicable, formulate recommendations for Planning Commission or City Council approvals (referred to as discretionary approvals)
- ✓ Verify compliance with the General Plan, Zoning and other regulations

Your project leader coordinates necessary reviews by distributing Application Submittals to appropriate City divisions for review and comment. There may be an occasion when a staff person other than your project leader calls you regarding the project.

Your project leader will review any associated environmental issues as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). All discretionary projects do require an Environmental Review.

3. Planning Commission Approval

Planning Commissioners are appointed by the City Council and provide community representation regarding proposed projects. However, their approval is not required on all development projects. The Planning Commission meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the City Council Chambers, Plaza Level, Brea Civic & Cultural Center. Meetings are open to the public.

If it is determined that your project requires the discretionary action of Planning Commission approval it will be scheduled on the agenda and public notice will be given. Property owners within 500 feet of your proposed project will also be notified. If a public hearing is held, you will have an opportunity to speak before the Commission. The public may also comment and express any concerns. You will want to be sure to work out any potential problems with neighboring residents or business owners before the Planning Commission meeting.

You may appeal most Planning Commission actions to the City Council. In some circumstances, the project may also require City Council approval. The project's location and use dictate what level of review is required. Some projects never go to either the Planning Commission or the City Council as staff has been given authority to review and approve them.



5. Building Permit

Before the building permit can be issued, two full sets of final construction plans with approvals from related city divisions are required. At the time of permit issuance, the owner of the project or an authorized agent must be present to sign the permit. A State-certified contractor with Workers' Compensation and a City business license may also sign for the permit.

Regular inspections are required throughout the construction phase. Inspection requests may be scheduled by calling our 24-hour hotline at 714-990-7668. The City schedules inspections within 48 hours of requests. Typically, the same Building Inspector is assigned throughout the project. The inspector verifies that the project is constructed per the approved set of plans and that all sub-contractors working on the project have current state and city business licenses along with the respective Workers' Compensation insurance.

Final inspection involving all appropriate departments will be coordinated through your Building Inspector. Prior to the final construction inspection, the owner's project manager is responsible for submitting final approved, as-built drawings of the project via electronic PDF documents and/or microfilm. *(Your inspector will inform you of the City's current policy on format.)*

6. Certificate of Occupancy

Finally, buildings or structures cannot be used or occupied until the Building Official has issued a Certificate of Occupancy. The Certificate of Occupancy verifies that the use and occupancy is permitted and safe for its future tenants. This form records vital information required by the City of Brea and other agencies such as the California Air Quality Management District. Forms are available at the Community Development Department and on the City's website, www.cityofbrea.net.

Important Extras

A Sign Permit is required prior to placement, erection, reconstruction, alteration or display of any sign, whether temporary or permanent, including promotional signage such as flags. Ask the Planning staff for additional direction.

The Fire Department conducts annual or biannual fire inspections of businesses. Certain processes require the issuance of a permit which is posted at your business. For fire inspection or permit information, call 714-990-7655.

A Business License is needed to commence operation. Contact the Business License division at 714-990-7686 for full details.

Welcome to Brea!

4. Plan Check

Next, the Building & Safety Division coordinates the building permit process. Once a project is prepared for construction, five sets of technical drawings (architectural, structural calculations and related reports) must be submitted. The Building & Safety Division routes these plans to appropriate agencies for their review and comments.

At the time of submittal, a separate electronic application is created along with a customer deposit account, which serves the project until completion. City services are charged as needed on an hourly rate and on occasions the account may need additional funds deposited to continue the construction process.

Once your Application Submittal is complete, the City commits to the following Plan Check turn-around times:

- Minor repair projects . . . 10 days
- Tenant improvements, room additions . . . 15 days
- Full development projects . . . 90 days

The plan check process ensures that all building, fire, mechanical, plumbing and electrical code requirements are fulfilled in compliance with Brea's Building and Zoning codes. Plan check includes other divisions such as Engineering, Fire, and Planning. Brea's plan checking staff will help bring the project into compliance with City requirements and streamline permit issuance.

