



PLANNING

A Guide to Development Permits

What is a Development Permit?

A development permit is a permit approved by Council that sets forth conditions under which multi-family residential, commercial or industrial development (or institutional for an Environmental Development Permit) may take place. Once approved, it becomes binding on the existing and future owners of the property.

The purpose of a development permit is to give the District of Saanich greater control over development to maintain the highest possible quality of design. The tool for achieving this control is a Development Permit. A development permit may specify requirements for environmentally-sensitive or hazardous areas. It may include requirements respecting the character of development including landscaping and the siting, form, exterior design and finish of buildings and structures. It also may impose conditions respecting the sequencing and timing of construction.

A development permit may vary or supplement land use bylaws, however, it may not vary the permitted uses or densities of land prescribed by existing regulations. A development permit is not a building permit. A building permit (or a sign permit or other approvals) must be obtained prior to any construction.



Why do I need a Development Permit?

A development permit is required when the property to be developed is situated within an area designated a Development Permit Area in Saanich's Official Community Plan. The permit must be obtained prior to any subdivision, construction (including alteration to a building or structure) or alteration of land. Where a development also involves a rezoning, the two processes proceed in tandem. For more information on rezonings, see the brochure called *A Guide to Rezoning*.

What is a Development Permit Area?

Certain lands are designated as Development Permit Areas in Saanich's Official Community Plan. Development permit areas require special regulation of development to respond to any one, or a combination of, municipal objectives:

- control of the form and character of development
- protection from hazardous conditions
- protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems, and biodiversity.

Appendix "N" of the Official Community Plan defines and maps each development permit area. It describes the municipal objectives which justify the designations, and specifies development guidelines for each area.

8 Steps to a Development Permit



1. **Become familiar** with municipal development policies, guidelines and bylaws.
2. **Obtain** your Certificate of Title and submit it with your application.
3. **Apply** by submitting your plans and documentation.
4. **Pay** applicable fees.
5. **Review** your application with the Planning Department. Submit any additional information that may be requested.
6. **Present** your project to Council at Committee of the Whole. In the case of both rezoning and development permit applications, the development permit is considered at a Public Hearing.
7. **Resolve** any conditions specified by Council.
8. **Permit is issued** after conditions of the application have met Council's satisfaction. The development permit is registered with the Land Title Office.

1. Pre-Application

Applicants should be well informed about municipal policies and procedures before submitting a DP application package. Planning staff should be consulted regarding municipal objectives, policies, and guidelines. Staff can also advise about the review process and potential timelines. This initial stage can be very beneficial, enhancing the project's chances for approval, and saving time in the formal review process.

Pick up a development permit application package (APPL 1 and APPL 2) or download from website and review its contents. Before submitting an application, consider the following:

- Informal discussions with the Area Planner;
- Discussions with neighbours and the community association;
- Development Permit Area guidelines;
- The Saanich General Plan;
- The Local Area Plan and any special studies;
- Zoning and land use regulations relating to the subject property;
- Subdivision guidelines and bylaw regulations;
- Landscaping and Screening guidelines;
- Engineering servicing and access requirements (both on-site and off-site);
- Environmental requirements and considerations;
- Regional planning or parks documents;
- Any other applicable municipal policies (Adaptable Housing, Heritage Inventory, Green Building Policy, Arts Policy).
- Samples available on the website.

2. Submit the Formal Application

Discuss with the Area Planner which of the submission requirements outlined in the application form are necessary for your application. The level of detail required will depend on the complexity and scale of the proposed development. Documentation and additional information may be requested during the review of the application.

Submission of complete and accurate information will help to eliminate unnecessary delays in the DP process. The services of an architect, engineer, or designer may be required.

One individual of this team (or the applicant) must have prime responsibility for coordinating the application process.

A complete DP application* must contain the following:

- A completed Development Permit application form;
- Development Permit application fee;
- Certificate of Title for the property;
- Metric site plan;
- Architectural drawings;
- Landscape plan;
- Stormwater Management statement;
- Sustainability Strategy statement;
- All other submission information required on the application form.



Six complete sets of plans, two additional landscape plans, and four additional site plans are required. One 279 mm x 432 mm (tabloid size) reduction is also required.

**Consult the Planning Department for required submission information for an Environmental Development Permit.*

3. Certificate of Title

All applications must be accompanied by a Certificate of Title dated no earlier than 30 days prior to the date of application. The purpose of this requirement is to confirm property ownership and to ensure that the legal description used for permits and bylaws is accurate. Certificates of title may be obtained in person or by mail from:

Victoria Land Title and Survey Authority of BC
850 Burdett Avenue
Victoria BC • V8W 1B4
Tel • 250• 387•6331
website: www.ltsa.ca

4. Development Permit Application Fee

The fee for a Development Permit application is based on the total Gross Floor Area (GFA):
\$500.00 plus GFA m² x \$1.00

Note: *This fee may be adjusted after plan verification*

\$500.00 fee for Environmental Development Permit only

5. Planning Department Review

The Planning Department coordinates the review of development permit applications. The review will include the referral to other municipal departments to ensure that the proposal conforms to municipal bylaws and policies. It may also involve input from several external agencies and government ministries.

The review may result in a request for additional information, or a modification of the proposal. Staff will meet with the applicant throughout the process.

The Advisory Design Panel (ADP), an advisory body appointed by Council, reviews all DP applications, except Environmental Development Permits. The applicant makes a brief presentation to the Panel at a scheduled meeting. The Panel reviews the proposal and may recommend Council approval of the project, often subject to minor modifications. If the Advisory Design Panel does not recommend approval, the applicant may be requested to provide additional information.

Following consideration by the Advisory Design Panel, a staff report is presented to Council for consideration. The report describes the proposal, includes staff and Design Panel comments, and makes a recommendation.

6. Committee of the Whole

Council will receive and consider the report at Committee of the Whole. The applicant should be prepared to present the proposal to Council at the meeting. Council will exercise one of four options:

1. Approve the permit.
2. Reject the application.
3. Table the application pending receipt of additional information.
4. Where the DP is part of a rezoning, forward the application to a public hearing.

7. Issuance of Development Permit

The Committee of the Whole decision must be ratified at a Council meeting. This may occur the same evening as Committee of the Whole.

If a rezoning is involved, the development permit is ratified after the Zoning Bylaw amendment receives final reading.

Once issued, the Municipality will register the development permit with the Land Title Office. As a result, the development permit is binding on the parcel for existing and future owners (unless rescinded). Any amendments must be authorized by Council through a Council amendment or a minor amendment to the development permit. All amendments are also registered against the parcel.



Development Permit Timeline

Timelines are an extremely important aspect of each application. Applicants need to know as soon as possible, if their application has merit or not and whether changes are needed.

Our 90 Day commitment

The Planning Department's report on your application will be processed and filed with the Municipal Clerk's Office within 90 calendar days (or earlier) of its receipt.

To achieve this, your commitment must be:

- To submit a full and complete application at the outset (incomplete applications will not be accepted for the 90 day process).
- To ensure that the area residents and community association have had an adequate opportunity to learn about and comment on your proposal
- To provide technical information requested during the 90 day review period necessary for Council to make a decision.

It's Your Option:

Your Planning report will be forwarded to the Clerk at the end of 90 days (or earlier). If you have managed to resolve most of the significant issues, you will be in a good position to request that Council approve your application.

If there are information gaps and significant unresolved issues regarding your application, the Planning report will flag these and seek direction from Council. In such an event, you will be given the option of requesting that the report be withheld pending resolution of these issues.

More Info

For further information please contact:

District of Saanich
Planning Department
770 Vernon Avenue
Victoria BC • V8X 2W7

Telephone: 250•475•5471
Fax: 250•475•5430
Email: plansec@saanich.ca

website: <http://www.saanich.ca>

The Planning Department of the District of Saanich is responsible for processing various development applications, and for advising municipal Council on the suitability of each proposal.

This brochure is one of the Saanich Development Procedures available at the Municipal Hall. The series also includes:

- A Guide to Rezoning