

TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH

SAN MATEO COUNTY

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1600 Floribunda Avenue
Hillsborough
California 94010

Grading Permits Environmental Assessment Required

The California Environmental Act (CEQA) requires an environmental assessment for all discretionary actions. Grading Permits which require City Council approval are discretionary, so an assessment is required. To prepare an environmental assessment, an "Initial Study" is done by the City Planner to determine the potential environmental impacts of the proposal.

To initiate an "Initial Study", submit a completed "Environmental Information Form" (available at the Planning Office counter), along with the necessary attachments (plans, studies, etc) and the filing fee, as specified in the Town's fee schedule. It is important that the Environmental Information Form is carefully prepared, with supporting studies, by a professional with an understanding of CEQA.

Within thirty days of submittal, a determination will be made as to the completeness of the submittal. Planning staff will notify the applicant if additional information/material is required and if the assessment can be done by Town staff, or if an environmental consultant will be required to complete the Initial Study. The Initial Study will result in a requirement for a "Negative Declaration" or an "Environmental Impact Report (EIR)".

Depending on the nature and scope of the project, as well as the quality of the information provided, the time required for the environmental assessment varies. CEQA dictates the process, including the required processing steps, information and public notices. The environmental assessment is often a source of legal challenge, so it is important that it is done properly.

For Grading Permits requiring City Council action, allow at least two to three months for the preparation of the Initial Study plus the Negative Declaration (including the associated legal noticing); for larger and/or more complex or sensitive project, six months or longer may be required, especially if an environmental consultant is required. For an EIR, allow at least one year from the time the environmental consultant contract is signed for its preparation.

If you have any questions, please contact the Planning Office, 375-7411.