



DOCUMENT SUBMITTAL GUIDELINES

EFFECTIVE: June 23, 2023

The information provided in this document is general and intended as a guide only. Each project is unique and additional requirements may apply.

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines for Electronic Document Review (EDR) outline the formatting requirements for a successful Online Permitting submittal. Documents submitted following these formatting requirements will proceed through the EDR online system. This bulletin addresses formatting only; for instructions on plan content, based on the project scope of work, please refer to the applicable Submittal Requirements and Checklists at this website: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Development-Services/>

Planning & Development Services accepts online Pre-Applications, allowing applicants to submit a pre-application and upload digital plans and documents for Staff review. Once the online submittal package is considered complete, an online permit application will be created, and the digital plans will be routed for EDR review.

ONLINE SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

To submit an application remotely, please begin by setting up a basic account through Palo Alto's Accela Citizen Access (ACA) portal link <https://aca.accela.com/paloalto>

Formatting requirements are outlined below:

- PDF** – Digital documents must be PDF (portable document format), compatible with Adobe Acrobat Version 9.0 or higher.
 - Exported PDFs (required for most projects)** - A PDF exported from the native file, not a scan saved as a PDF, is required for most projects. PDFs of scanned documents are accepted only for supporting/reference documents and minor single-family additions or alterations, in which case, scan the hard copy at 150dpi minimum and 300dpi maximum for acceptable legibility and file size.
 - Text-Searchable PDFs** - For scanned or non-searchable PDF exports, apply Optical Character Recognition to your documents.
 - Supporting Documents** - Calculations, cut sheets, forms, technical reports, TDM plan, etc. must be a separate file in PDF format. See instructions in ELECTRONIC SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS (DOCS) section.
 - Drawings** - All layered information must be removed and flattened into a single layer.
- Unsecured Setting** - Choose "unsecured" on your security settings so that plan reviewers may mark up the documents or create notes.

3. **Landscape Orientation** - All drawings must uniformly use landscape orientation. Maintain a uniform page position and insertion point for all files in all submittals.
4. **Cover Sheet 6-inch Approval Block** – Provide a 6-inch wide clear space for departmental approval stamps. If the Title Block is located on the far right, insert the Approval/Stamp Block immediately to the left. If the Title Block is on the bottom, insert the Approval/Stamp Block on the far right. See illustration in SHEET INDEX / BOOKMARKS section.
5. **Drawing Sheet 4x6-inch Stamp Block** - Provide a 6 x 4-inch blank space for jurisdiction Received, Reviewed and Revision stamps on the lower right quadrant, adjacent to the title block. See illustration in SHEET INDEX / BOOKMARKS section.
6. **Scale, Legibility and Legends** - Plans shall be to scale, fully dimensioned, and legible:
 - PDF exhibits must be generated at a prescribed scale (i.e. 1/4" = 1'-0" or 1/8" = 1'-0") for staff to verify dimensions and areas within the file.
 - Use a legible font, equivalent or better than Arial, Gill Sans or Tahoma, set at minimum 10pt.
 - Use grayscale, not color - Do not use color to differentiate items on the plans; instead use symbols, hatches, line-type, and line-weights to relay information. Include a legend that defines all symbols.
7. **Bookmarked and Indexed Pages** – Bookmark, index, and label all pages within the PDF. The index and page labels should note the sheet number as well as the title/description of each sheet. See example in PLAN SHEET NAMING CONVENTION section.
8. **File Size** – Ideally each PDF file should not exceed 400MB in size. The system can handle files of larger size but upload and download of these larger files may take significantly longer time. Please limit each PDF file to 400MB in size and “flatten” drawings to help with loading times during review.

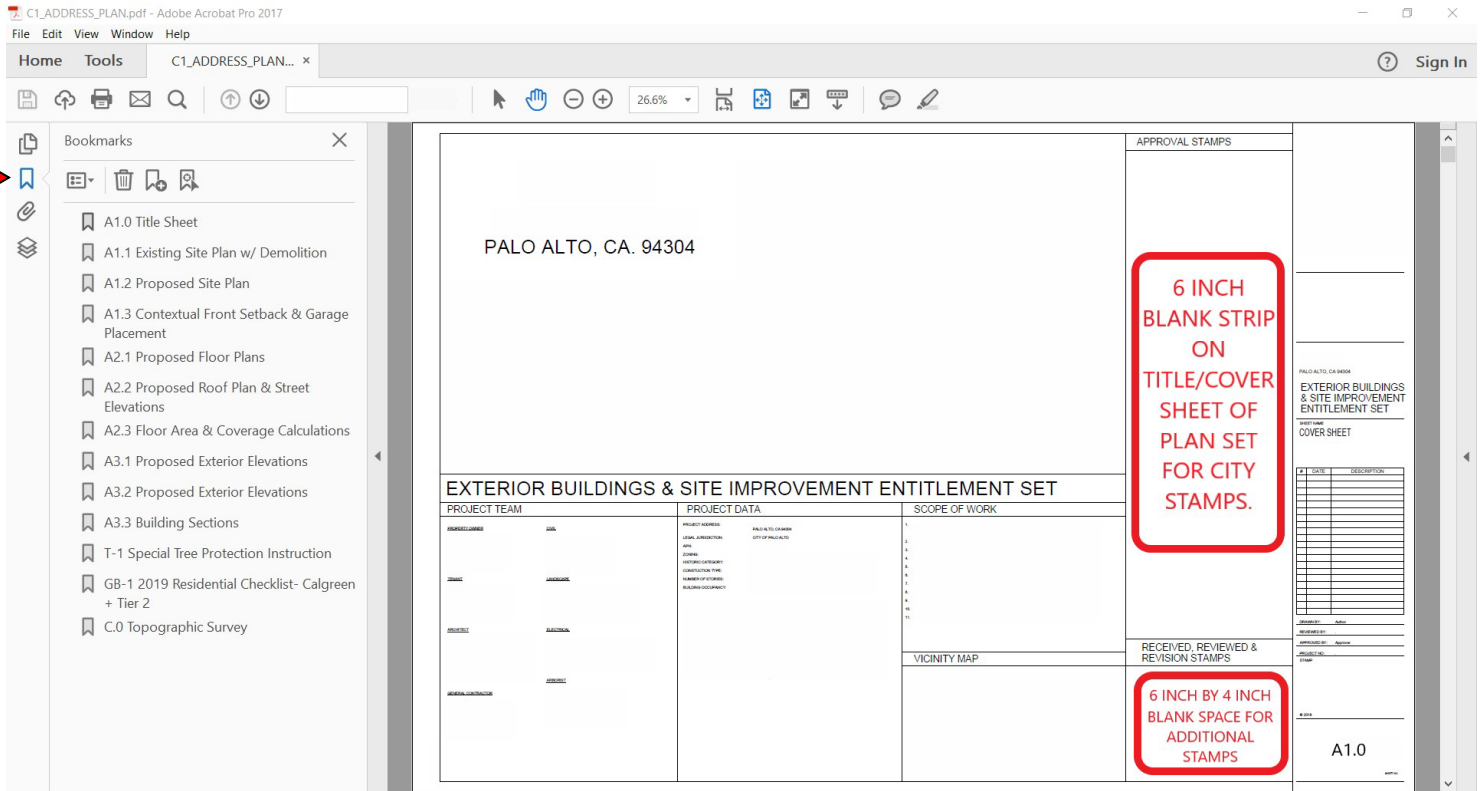
If a project size requires the file to split into smaller file sizes, please use the following file naming conventions and make the break at the end of an industrial trade (i.e. Plumbing):

C1_ADDRESS_PLAN1.pdf (limit to 400MB)
C1_ADDRESS_PLAN2.pdf (limit to 400MB)
C1_ADDRESS_PLAN3.pdf (limit to 400MB)

See file naming sections below for additional instruction. It is good practice to start the 2nd file (PLAN2) with a new discipline/sub-trade.

BOOKMARKS/SHEET INDEX

Labeled bookmarks and sheet index can be viewed in Adobe Acrobat.

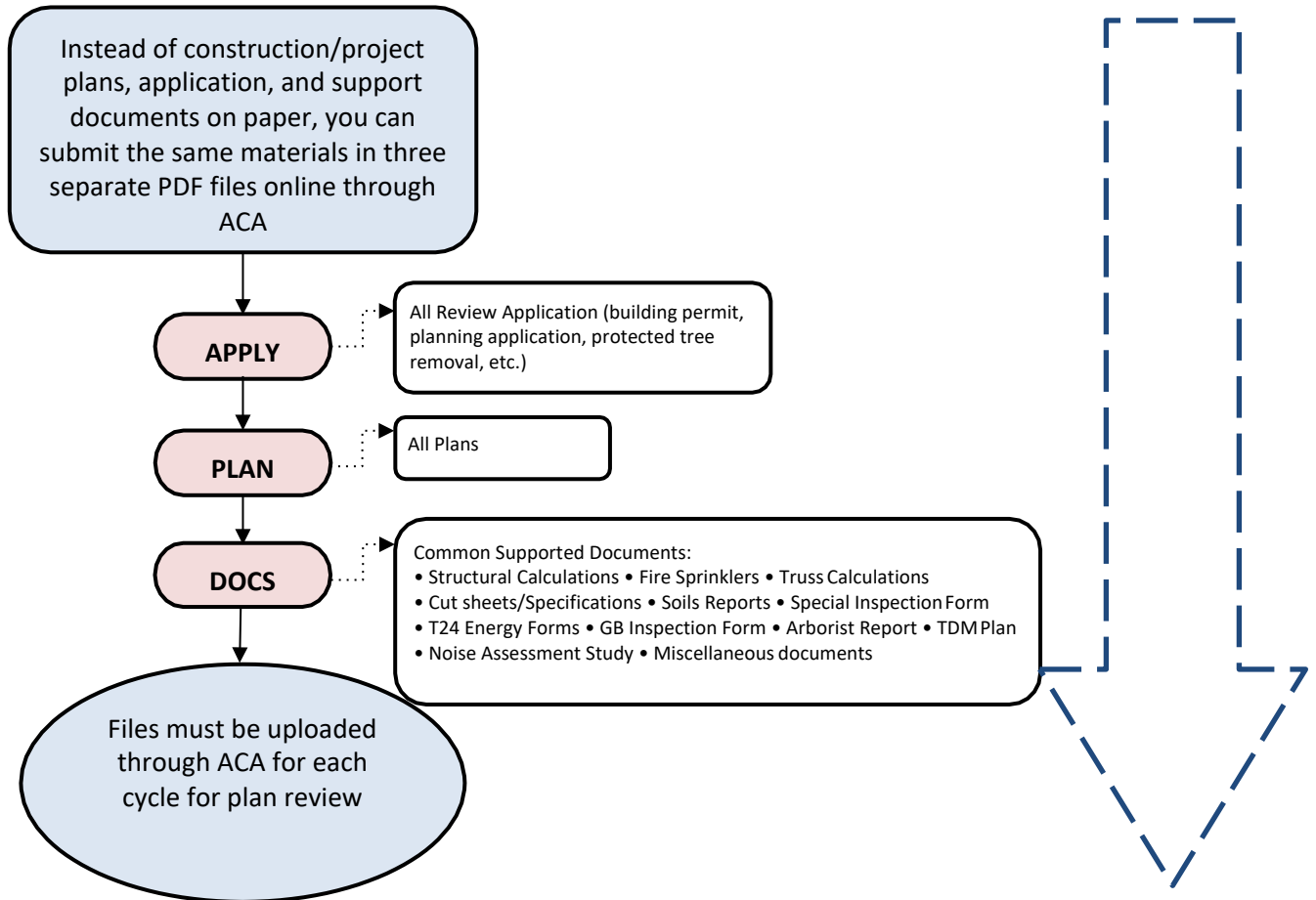


PLAN SHEET NAMING CONVENTION

Use the following chart for naming your plan sheets (see above for example) using these prefixes based on disciplines/sub-trades:

- A – Architectural
- B – Departmental Condition of Approvals
- C – Civil (site, site utility, grading and draining, survey, etc.)
- D – Shoring Plans
- E – Electrical
- FP – Fire Protection (fire alarms, sprinklers)
- GB – Green Building
- H – Hazardous Materials
- K – Kitchen Equipment
- L – Landscaping (i.e., irrigation plan, water use table, T-1 sheet, etc.)
- M – Mechanical
- N – Signage
- P – Plumbing
- Q – Equipment
- S – Structural
- T24 – Title 24 Energy
- IT – Technology/Communications/IT
- X – Exterior Antennas and Communication (i.e., monopole, etc.)
- Y – Security (i.e., card readers, security alarm systems, etc.)
- Z – Contractors/Shop Drawings

FILE NAMING CONVENTION



Your initial submission will consist of an APPLY, PLAN and DOCS file. In subsequent plan review cycles only, plan sheets which need modification (due to plan review comments or changes) along with a REPLY (Response Letter to comments) will need to be resubmitted in a separate file.

Resubmissions to plan review comments (Cycle Two and beyond) will most often be comprised of a PLAN, DOCS and REPLY (see additional info below) file. Only in cases where the APPLY file needed revision or augmentation will a new APPLY file be required.

The following page details the content of each distinct PDF file.

ELECTRONIC APPLICATION (APPLY)

The most important core documents contained in the **APPLY** file is the Application. Applications can be found online at the City of Palo Alto website: <https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/Departments/Planning-Development-Services/Development-Services/Development-Services-Forms>

In general, the **APPLY** file should contain any City form necessary by the scope of your project. Common documents or forms which fall into this category are:

- **Review/Permit Application:** Application for a building, planning, utility service, PW certificate of compliance, protected tree removal, hazardous materials disclosure, etc.
- **Others:** Owner's Agent Authorization, etc.

ELECTRONIC PLANS (PLAN)

The second PDF file is primarily comprised of plans required for construction, planning application, utility service, etc. Special care should be paid to the sheet index, usually located on the cover sheet. This index should only bear sheets which are included in the submitted set, and all sheets included in the set should be shown in this index. It is also necessary to index/bookmark each sheet included in the set in the same order as the sheet index.

Unsigned stamps from the architect and/or engineer will be allowed at the time of submittal. Please note that for Building permits, signed and stamped plans are required at or prior to permit issuance. Beginning with Cycle 2 resubmittals, all design professional stamps must be signed unless it is not required as specified on the submittal checklists. The signature should consist of an image that includes the digital stamp and wet signature on each sheet.

To have the most precise and timely estimate of fees, the building area, occupancy group, construction type, proposed use and zoning designation must be provided on the title page.

ELECTRONIC SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS (DOCS)

The third PDF is the supplemental document file. This file contains all required support documents. The following is a list of some of the common support documents which would be included in the DOCS file. Not all these documents are required for every project. The scope of the project dictates their need:

- Structural Calculations
- T24 Energy Calculations
- Soils Reports
- Material Specs/Cut Sheets
- Special Inspection Form
- Green Building Inspector Form
- Fire Sprinklers/Alarms
- Truss Calculations
- Ground Water Study
- Environmental Assessment
- C&D Debris Diversion Program
- Arborist Report
- AMMR Application
- Sound Assessment Study
- Historic Report
- TDM Report
- Base Flood Elevation

It is pertinent to bookmark and index each document within the DOCS file.

ELECTRONIC RESPONSE LETTER (REPLY)

After Review Cycle 1, a response letter is uploaded as part of the resubmittal, along with the other files as required. Please clearly itemize each department's comments and responses to expedite the reviews. Response should explain the corrective action and pinpoint the correction location on plans (i.e., see detail 5/S7). "See Plan" is not an acceptable response as this will cause a delay in the review process. If grid coordinates are used, indicate letter, then number (i.e., Grid B.5/8).

UPLOADED FILENAME CONVENTIONS

Use this convention for naming the uploading file types. Example for a project at 285 Hamilton Ave. for Cycle 1 review is shown below.

1. **C#_Address_APPLY.pdf** =====> **C1_285HAM_APPLY.pdf**
2. **C#_Address_PLAN.pdf** =====> **C1_285HAM_PLAN.pdf**
3. **C#_Address_DOCS.pdf** =====> **C1_285HAM_DOCS.pdf**

- **C# = Cycle # of plan checks = C1, C2, C3**
- **Address = Address # and 1st 3 letters of street name (Use UPPER case)**
- **Files Type = APPLY, PLAN, OR DOCS; REPLY if CY1 is not approved. Provide a response letter with the following filename: C2_285HAM_REPLY.pdf to be included as part of cycle 2 file.**