



TOWN of PORTOLA VALLEY

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Updated April 30, 2020

Planning and Building Department Guidance COVID-19

Effective May 4, 2020, private construction activity will be allowed to resume in the Town of Portola Valley. All construction activity will be subject to the current [County Order](#) and [Appendix B-1](#), as well as Town requirements included in this guidance. Projects that had active, approved permits prior to the work suspension will be allowed to restart construction once they have implemented all requirements of the County Order and Appendix B-1. Please note that Town requirements may be subject to change as best practices evolve.

Below are details for each type of service activity:

1. Submittal of New Building and Planning Permit Applications

Emergencies: The Town is accepting building permit applications required for sanitation and life-safety purposes (such as water heater, furnace repair, fire hazard/electrical repair, incident referred by the Sheriff or Woodside Fire Protection District, or conditions that may cause severe erosion). If sanitation or life-safety work is needed, please email us at planbuild@portolavalley.net. Include a description of the situation, why the work is necessary for sanitation or life safety, how long the work will take, and why the work cannot reasonably be delayed.

Limited Scope of Work: Effective Monday, April 27th, the Town began accepting new building permit applications for specific types of projects with a limited scope of work. These applications will be processed on a first-come-first-served basis. Review times will be longer than normal as Town and Woodside Fire Protection District staff are working remotely. All steps of the review process will be done electronically over email. Limited Scope projects are defined as follows:

- Solar Photovoltaics (rooftop and ground-mount)
- Solar Roofing Photovoltaics
- Battery Back-up Systems
- Generators
- Interior-Only Remodeling With No Structural Plans/Calculations

To apply for a limited scope of work building permit, email us at planbuild@portolavalley.net. Please include: 1) Detailed description/narrative of the proposed work; and 2) Completed [Building Permit and/or Electrical/Plumbing/Mechanical Permit](#) application as applicable.

All other types of building permits: No new submittals for other types of building permits are being accepted at this time.

Planning Applications: No new planning applications are being accepted at this time.

2. Processing of Building and Planning Permits Currently Under Review

Staff will continue to process projects submitted prior to the closure of Town Hall to the extent it can be done remotely. All correspondence between applicants and staff members will occur remotely by email, phone and teleconference. Resubmittals will be accepted at the discretion of staff if they can be received and reviewed electronically.

3. Issuance of Planning and Building Permits

No Planning or Building permits will be issued at this time, unless required for sanitation and life safety as described above.

4. Scheduling and Conducting Building Inspections

The week of May 4th through May 8th, limited inspections will be conducted for life safety and those that were delayed by the Town at the time of the original shelter in place order. These inspections will be at the discretion of the Planning & Building Director.

General inspections for permitted projects will resume beginning May 11th. We expect a high volume of requests and ask for patience if wait times are longer than normal. To schedule an inspection, please email inspections@portolavalley.net with your request. Include the following information:

- contact person
- contact person's phone number
- property address
- building permit number
- type of inspection
- requested inspection day or soonest available

Please do not consider the inspection scheduled until you receive confirmation from staff.

All requirements of County Order Appendix B-1 shall be in compliance at the time of inspections. The Town expects that one person will be the primary contact for the inspector, and that person will remain at a 6' distance at all times. The area of the inspection shall be clear

of other workers while the inspector is present. The inspector has the right to cancel the inspection and leave the site at any time at their sole discretion. The Town may adopt additional criteria for inspections as additional information becomes available.

Please note that requests for final inspections will be received and processed, but are expected to take longer than normal conditions. To move through this process as quickly as possible, please review the final inspection checklist provided when you began your project and compile all required letters, final plans, and any materials previously requested by staff. In the past, this process was conducted through in-person visits and paper submittal materials. Staff is developing processes to transition these steps to electronic/virtual and we appreciate your patience and flexibility.

5. Public Meetings

Regular meetings of the Planning Commission and Architectural and Site Control Commission (ASCC) have been cancelled during the shelter-in-place. The Town is currently developing the procedures to allow meetings to resume in a virtual format. Meetings will be scheduled at the discretion of the Planning & Building Director.

We understand that these are very challenging times and that all decisions have consequences for the parties involved. We are working to the best of our ability and ask for your continued understanding as we address this evolving situation. We will continue to evaluate the needs of the community and may add additional services if there are sufficient resources after all essential and emergency needs are met.

Most importantly, we hope you and yours remain well.