



Community Development/Building Division **Custom Single Family Residence Frequently Asked Questions**

These are general questions and answers. For specific information, please the Community Development/Building Division counter at 916-351-3555.

Design Criteria

Q1. What are the current applicable design codes?

A1. The 2016 editions of the California Residential, Electrical, Fire, Mechanical & Plumbing Codes (*CRC, CEC, CFC, CMC & CPC*) and the 2016 CalGreen Code.

Q2. What is the minimum roof live load?

A2. 20 psf (reducible for roof slope) per *2016 CRC Table R301.2(1)*.

2016 CRC TABLE R301.2(1)														
CLIMATIC AND GEOGRAPHIC DESIGN CRITERIA														
GROUND SNOW LOAD	WIND DESIGN					SEISMIC DESIGN CATEGORY	SUBJECT TO DAMAGING FROM			WINTER DESIGN TEMP	ICE BARRIER UNDERLAYMENT REQUIRED	FLOOD HAZARDS	AIR FREEZING INDEX	MEAN ANNUAL TEMP
	Speed (MPH)	Exposure	Topographic effects	Special Wind Region	Wind Borne Debris Zone		Weathering	Frost line depth	Termite					
N/A	110 Ult 85 asd	C	No	No	No	CRC: C CBC: D ¹	Moderate	12"	Heavy	20	N/A	Reference FMC 14.32	<1500	55

¹ When designing with the CBC per Section 1613.3.5. Reference Table 1613.3.5(2)

Q3. Is there an applicable snow design load?

A3. No.

Q4. What is the minimum design wind speed and wind exposure?

A4. 85 mph wind speed and exposure C.

Q5. What is the applicable seismic zone?

A5. Seismic Design Category C.

Architects, Engineers & Designers

Q6. Is a licensed architect required to design a custom home?

A6. No. An unregistered individual may prepare plans, drawings and specifications of single-family dwellings of wood frame construction not more than two stories and basement in height.

If any portion of the single-family dwelling deviates from substantial compliance with the conventional framing requirements for wood frame construction the preparation of plans, drawings, specifications and calculations for that portion shall be provided under the direct supervision of a California registered civil engineer or California licensed architect.

Q7. What is a building designer and are they licensed by the State of California?

A7. A building designer is an unlicensed individual who prepares plans, drawings and specifications for building projects. Building designers **are not** licensed by the State.

Q8. Are structural calculations required on all custom homes?

A8. No. Structural calculations are only required when the building or portions thereof **do not** substantially comply with the conventional framing requirements for wood frame construction. Most custom homes require some structural calculations for structural elements such as roof beams, floor joists & beams, posts, footings, shear walls and their elements, metal plate connected wood trusses, etc.

Q9. Who may perform the structural calculations and stamp/sign the drawings?

A9. A California registered civil engineer, structural engineer or a California licensed architect

Q10. Can the City of Folsom recommend an architect, engineer or a building designer?

A10. No, but you may want to refer to the “Consumer’s Guide to Hiring an Architect” at www.cab.ca.gov or “Consumer Guide to Professional Engineering and Professional Land Surveying” at www.dca.ca.gov/pels.

Design Review Submittal (Planning Division 916-355-7214)

Q11. My plans have been approved through the neighborhood association. Is a separate submittal required to the City of Folsom?

A11. Yes, a separate Design Review submittal application is required to be submitted to the City of Folsom Community Development Department. Depending on the location of the project, the application will be reviewed by the Community Development Department or the Historic District Commission. Refer to the *Custom Home Builder Packet* for more information.

Q12. What is required for the Design Review Application submittal to the City of Folsom Community Development Department?

A12. Completed and signed application form, application fee of \$55.00, material samples, and one complete set of full size plans (24” x 36”) along with one complete digital set. For residential Design Review, a complete set of plans should include a detailed site plan / grading plan, building elevations, floor plans, foundation plans and, if there are oaks on site or adjacent to the site, an arborist report. Refer to the “Design Review Submittal Requirements” handout for more information.

Q13. When does the City of Folsom Design Review Meeting occur?

A13. The Design Review meeting generally occurs every Thursday afternoon at 4:00 p.m. in the Community Development Conference room. Hearing dates and submittal deadlines are subject to change. Dates may be verified by calling the Planning Counter at (916) 355-7214 or plngcounter@folsom.ca.us.

Q14. When does the City of Folsom Historic District Commission (HDC) meet?

A14. The Historic District Commission generally meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 pm in the City Council Chambers located at 50 Natoma Street in the City Hall building. Design Review Applications must be received, assigned and reviewed by a Planner before it can be scheduled to appear before HDC. Hearing dates are subject to change. Dates may be verified by calling the Planning Counter at (916) 355-7214 or emailing plngcounter@folsom.ca.us.

Fire Sprinklers

Q15. When are fire sprinklers required for a custom home?

A15. As of January 1, 2011, the California Residential Code, Section R313, requires all homes (custom or production) to have a residential fire sprinkler system. Room additions do not require a sprinkler system unless the existing house is sprinklered. *The sprinkler plans must be submitted along with all other construction documents at time of permit application.*

Grading Plans & Site Plans (Engineering Division 916-355-7251)

Q16. What information should be shown on a grading plan?

A16. Refer to the grading plan handouts that can be found at the Community Development Counter, which details all the requirements. Some of the typical grading plan items include both existing **and** proposed topography at one-foot intervals, lot corner elevations, location of proposed house and driveway, finish floor and pad elevations, elevation where driveway meets back of walk, setbacks, existing trees and tree protection zones, any easements, drainage features, standard notes, cut and fill quantities, site retaining wall heights, retaining wall details, etc. Grading plans shall be drawn at a **minimum** scale of 1-inch equals 20 feet.

Q17. How does a site plan differ from a grading plan?

A17. A site plan is just an overall reference plan included in the building plan set of a custom home. It will typically require all the items noted above. A grading plan will address lots which require any cutting or placement of engineered fill. A grading permit shall be issued separately for all grading work and grading shall be completed prior to issuance of your building permit. See Questions 25 for building permit issuance requirements.

Q18. Can a building designer prepare the grading plan?

A18. A building designer may prepare the site plan, but most grading plans will need to be prepared under the direct supervision of a California registered civil engineer. The engineer is required to stamp and sign the grading plan. Trunk locations and base elevations of existing trees needs to be determined by a California registered civil engineer or licensed land surveyor.

Q19. I am building a custom home on a “flat” or “pad-graded” lot; do I need to submit a grading plan?

A19. If your lot is a “pad-graded” lot and the lot drainage is already established, then a grading plan is not typically required. However, drainage patterns should still be shown on the site plan. If your lot is relatively flat but is not a “pad-graded” lot then a grading plan is required so that changes in drainage patterns resulting from minor grading of the lot can be analyzed. Submittal of a pad certification letter by a California registered civil engineer is required prior to building permit issuance.

Q20. Can I submit architectural building plans without including a grading plan, and submit the grading plans later?

A20. No. The grading of a lot can significantly affect the foundation of the home and may require additional structures such as retaining walls. Grading and retaining wall plans are required to be submitted **and** coordinated with the architectural and structural plans at time of building plan review submittal. If grading and retaining wall permits are required for your custom home, the building permit will not be issued until the grading and retaining wall improvements are completed.

Q21. I am building a custom home and will be grading my lot. I would like to grade BEFORE I submit building plans. Do I need a separate grading permit?

A21. Yes. Grading and Retaining Wall permit applications are available at the Community Development Department counter. A Grading permit may be issued **after** the applicant has received Design Review approval for the structure and retaining walls when applicable. To receive a Grading permit, the applicant shall submit a complete, signed application and three copies of a grading plan. After the plan is reviewed and approved, the applicant signs the permit and pays appropriate fees prior to permit issuance.

Q22. What does a typical grading permit cost?

A22. The cost of the grading permit is determined from the valuation of grading operations. Most grading permits range from \$300 to \$600. An encroachment permit is required with the issuance of a grading permit (see “Encroachment Permits” below).

Q23. My lot is a “no-grade”, “sheet flow” drainage lot. Can I continue to drain my lot onto my neighbors’ lot(s)?

A23. Probably not; as a result of flooding problems in some neighborhoods, drainage is evaluated very carefully. It is required to avoid drainage from one lot to another; however, there may be situations where this is unavoidable. In such cases, drainage flows must be maintained in the same direction and manner that existed prior to development (i.e. sheet flow). City staff needs to review and approve site grading **and** drainage as part of the building permit or as a separate grading permit.

Q24. My grading and retaining walls are completed, now can I get my Building Permit?

A24. Once the grading is completed a pad certification letter by a California registered civil engineer and a pad elevation letter by a California registered surveyor is required to achieve City acceptance of the grading. If retaining walls were constructed then a letter of completion of the walls by a California registered civil engineer is also required. These items are listed on the Building Permit Issuance Sign-off Sheet which shall be submitted to the Building Department during permit Building Permit issuance.

Q25. If I have additional grading questions, whom should I call?

A25. The Engineering staff of the Community Development Department is available to answer any grading or drainage related question. They can be reached at (916) 355-7251.

Building Plan Review

Q26. When can the construction / building plans be submitted for plan review?

A26. Plans may be submitted concurrently or after submittal to the City of Folsom ARC. For custom homes within the Historic District, HDC approval must be obtained prior to submitting for building plan review.

Q27. What fees are due at time of submittal for building plan review?

A27. Only the building plan check fee, which is determined by the counter staff, is due at time of submittal. The plan check fee is equal to 80% of the building permit fee, which is determined by the valuation of the building. The plan check fee may be estimated by contacting our Building Counter staff at (916) 351-3555. The final fees may be revised after the actual square footage and valuation are verified by Plan Checkers.

Q28. When will the balance of fees be due?

A28. When the plans are approved and ready for permit issuance.

Q29. What and how many documents are required?

A29. Typically, **three sets** of complete building plans, structural calculations, metal-plate connected wood truss calculations (if applicable), energy calculations (Title 24), electrical load calculations and manufacturers specifications for roof tile, gas fireplaces, etc. Refer to the “*Document Submittal List*” handout in the *Custom Home Builder Packet* for more complete information.

Q30. How long will the building plan review process take?

A30. The first plan review usually takes *approximately* 20 business days to complete and depends upon the completeness of the submittal documents. All additional plan reviews are usually completed within 10 business days. Please be aware that these time lines do not include the time that may be required by the building designer and or engineer/architect to fully respond to the plan review comments. Typically, incomplete documents submittals will delay the process significantly.

Q31. My contractor is recommending that we submit for plan review even though the plans are not complete. He says that way we can receive a “punch list” of required items on the first plan review. Is that acceptable?

A31. No. Only complete submittals (i.e. plans, structural calculations, energy calculations, etc.) may be submitted for plan review. All custom home plans taken in by the building counter staff, will be reviewed for completeness. Any plans determined to be incomplete will be returned to the applicant. The next submittal will count as the first plan review with a plan review turnaround time of *approximately* 20 working days.

Q32. How will I know when my plan review is complete or when the plans have been approved and are ready for permit?

A32. The Building Counter staff will call the individual noted as the “contact person” on the permit application at the completion of each plan review and when plans are approved and ready for permit issuance.

Q33. When using metal plate connected wood trusses, can these be treated as a deferred submittal and be submitted after the permit is issued?

A33. No, the City of Folsom requires that all metal plate connected wood trusses be submitted prior to the plan approval. The truss supplier’s layout must be coordinated with the appropriate framing plan and the truss calculations must be reviewed and approved by the engineer (or architect) of record.

Q34. We have decided to switch to metal plate connected wood trusses in lieu of conventional roof framing (i.e. roof rafters, ceiling joists, purlins, struts, etc.). Is it necessary to revise the plans to reflect this change in framing?

A34. Yes. Any change in the roof framing system can significantly affect the supporting framing. As a minimum, the roof framing plan must be revised and coordinated with the truss supplier's layout. Floor framing and/or foundation plans must be revised as determined by the engineer (or architect) of record.

Q35. I have not received approved plans or a building permit; can we begin trenching for foundations?

A35. No. A valid building permit is required before any work begins, including the excavation of building foundations.

Q36. Does the City of Folsom issue "Foundation Only" permits for custom homes?

A36. No. "Foundation Only" permits are not available for residential projects.

Building Permit

Q37. My custom home plans have been approved. What fees will be due when I pick up the approved plans and permit?

A37. The building permit fee, SMIP fee, business license fee (if permit is pulled by contractor), school mitigation fee, general plan update fee and other fees obtained from the "*Schedule for Building Permit Fees*" worksheets on file by subdivision with the Community Development Department.

Q38. What fees are not collected by the City of Folsom?

A38. School fees are determined and collected by the School District. Just prior to permit issuance, a school form may be obtained from the building counter staff. Prior to permit issuance, the school form must be taken to the School District office and fees paid, returning the pink copy of the school form to our building counter staff.

All custom home lots in American River Canyon will obtain water service and pay related fees to San Juan Water District. Contact San Juan Water to obtain a "will serve application". A copy of the approved application must be submitted to the building counter staff prior to issuance of the building permit.

Encroachment Permit

Question 39: Is an encroachment permit required for a custom home?

Answer 39: Yes, an encroachment permit is even required when the access to the custom lot is by way of a private road.

Question 40: How much is an encroachment permit?

Answer 40: \$118 plus a minimum \$500 refundable deposit. The deposit is refunded after the final inspection is approved. Please refer to the "*Encroachment Permit Minimum Requirements*" handout for certificate of insurance and business license requirements.

Question 41: When is the encroachment permit issued?

Answer 41: At time of the building permit and grading permit issuance (if applicable).