Community Development offers informational brochures on the following topics:

CEQA and Environmental Review
Conditional Use Permits
Development Agreements
Development Plan Review
Drought Tolerant Landscape Standards
Fees and Charges
For Sale/For Lease Banners
Front Drought Tolerant Landscape Standards
General Plan Amendment
Lot Line Adjustments
Municipal Code Text Amendments
Outdoor Dining in Commercial Zones
Outdoor Displays of Merchandise
Permanent Signs
Planning Commission
Portable Signs
Property Information Inquiry
Residential Artificial Turf Standards
Residential Care Facilities
RV & Trailer Parking
Site Plan Requirements
Specific Plans
Storage Sheds in Residential Zones
Subdivisions
Temporary Signs and Banners
Temporary Use Permits
Trash Enclosure Standards
Tree Preservation
Variances
Window Replacement – Town Core
Window Signs
Zone Changes
Zoning Descriptions

**These brochures are generally intended to assist in the processing of application material. It does not necessarily provide every detail regarding Municipal Code regulations.*

To view additional brochures, scan the QR Code below.

CEQA and Environmental Review

Community Development Department
Planning Division
245 E. Bonita Avenue
San Dimas, CA 91773
(909) 394-6250
planning@sandimasca.gov

Mon-Thurs 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Fridays 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

www.sandimasca.gov

WHAT IS CEQA?

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is a system of checks and balances for land use development and management decisions in California. It was enacted to minimize the negative effects of development on its surroundings.

PRELIMINARY REVIEW

As with any development proposal, it is always recommended that applicants meet with a city planner to discuss the proposed project. In this pre-application meeting, the planner will explain all necessary city regulations and provide you with any application processing information.

After an application is formally submitted to the Planning Division, a formal review will take place. Within thirty (30) days, the application is checked for its completeness. Incomplete applications are returned to the applicant for corrections. Complete projects will be reviewed to determine how CEQA applies. Projects that are not specifically exempt from CEQA must go through the Environmental Review Process.

EXEMPTIONS

There are three basic types of exemptions, but generally, any project that can be shown to not have any possible significant effects is exempt from CEQA.

Non-Projects - Projects are defined as any action that has a potential for resulting in physical change in the environment. Anything that does not fall into this category is considered a non-project.

Categorical Exemptions - Minor projects such as room additions, remodeling, and tenant improvements are categorically exempt because of their low impacts to the environment.

Statutory Exemptions - Several types of specific actions have been granted exemption by the State Legislature. This includes ministerial projects such as building permits, business licenses, final subdivision map approval, etc.

A complete list of Categorical and Statutory Exemptions is provided in the “Guidelines for Local Compliance with CEQA” booklet.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW INITIAL STUDY

Once the Planning Division determines that a project must comply with CEQA, an Initial Study is undertaken. This involves a checklist to identify all possible environmental effects that a project may or may not have.

The Initial Study includes analyses on land use and planning, population and housing, geologic problems, water resources, air quality, transportation and circulation, biological resources, energy and mineral resources, hazards, noise, public services, utilities and public services, aesthetics, cultural resources, and recreation.

Based on the Initial Study, the City will determine the need for a Negative Declaration or an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

NEGATIVE DECLARATION

If the Initial Study shows that there are no adverse environmental impacts, a Negative Declaration is prepared. A Negative Declaration may also be prepared if mitigation measures are taken to minimize all detrimental environmental effects to the point that there is no substantial impact.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)

If it can be fairly argued on the basis of substantial evidence that a project may have significant environmental effects, an EIR must be prepared. The Initial Study is used to focus the EIR on areas of environmental impact.

The EIR is prepared by the City with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide the City Council with enough information to adequately decide on the environmental consequences. A good faith effort is made to ensure completeness and full disclosure. The EIR is written in plain language and graphics may be used to make the document easily understood by the public and decision makers.

A project **may not** be approved if the final EIR shows that there will be a significant environmental impact. However, the City Council may adopt a Statement of Over-riding Considerations if a project’s economic and social benefits far outweigh the environmental consequences.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Mitigation measures may be imposed on the Negative Declaration or the final EIR to eliminate any adverse effects. When this is the case, a monitoring/reporting program is also adopted to ensure all mitigations are being implemented.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION

Once a project is approved for which an EIR was prepared, a Notice of Determination must be filed with the County Clerk’s Office. This is to allow the public to review the decision and make challenges within 30 days.