

Structural Peer Review Process

BPC-020

Purpose: The purpose of this form is to provide information and requirements for building permit submittal under the Structural Peer Review Process.

The Sonoma County Permit and Resource Management Department (PRMD) has an established Policy 9-4-7 for a structural peer review process that can be used to shorten the plan check time between project submittal and permit issuance. The Structural Peer Review Process generally allows the issuance of a permit within two weeks. A complete submittal of documents, including but not limited to, plans, specifications, structural calculations, energy calculation, soils reports and fire safe standards compliance is required. Incomplete submittal packages will delay the plan check process. See Residential Plan Check List, (BPC-002), for more information on required submittal documents and current adopted codes and ordinances.

Structural Peer Review is used for single story non-conventional and multi-story conventional or non-conventional buildings. Projects with a building design that requires approval by the Building Official as an alternate design or method of construction do not qualify.

The structural engineer who performs the structural peer review shall be independent from the design engineer or any design firm involved in the project (Engineer of Record). There shall be one structural engineer that takes responsibility for reviewing the foundation and the structure supported by that foundation.

The structural engineer verifies that the design incorporates all necessary code complying structural requirements into the drawings and verifies that the drawings are structurally correct. The structural engineer then writes a letter which must fully identify project drawings by date, description and number of pages in the letter. Alternatively, the structural engineer may indicate, in a readily discernible manner, directly on the drawings, which drawings have been reviewed, and contain a statement that the drawings have been reviewed and found in conformance with the appropriate codes.

Structural Peer Review Procedure:

1. The applicant submits building plans to PRMD and completes the attached Structural Peer Review Questionnaire. A PRMD building plans examiner determines if the project qualifies for Structural Peer Review. If the project qualifies, the fee is 75% of the standard building plan check fee.
2. PRMD building check staff review the plans for compliance with life safety, fire safe standards and energy compliance. A brief review of the structural system will be completed to determine that the structural elements identified in the design calculations are identified on the building plans.
3. If, during the non-structural plan check, the structural peer review is found to be inadequate, the project shall be subject to the standard plan check procedure and full plan check fees shall be charged.

Information/Requirements:

1. If a site specific soils report is not included, use Chapter 18 of California Building Code (CBC), Table 18-1-A, Class 5 soil for design purposes (1,000 psf). If a soils report exists, the design and drawings must be consistent with the recommendations in the report. Soils engineer design review and approval letter must be included with final submittal documents.
2. Seismic Zone 4 standards must be met.

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3. Basic wind speed is to be 80 mph, Exposure C (use Exposure D in the Coastal area as per CBC 2001). If the design engineer can justify Exposure B and the structural engineer agrees, Exposure B may be used. Justification must be in writing and must be more than a simple statement of the design engineer's opinion.
4. Conventional construction shall comply with Section 23, Div 11, CBC 2001.
5. The structural roof framing for cathedral/vaulted ceilings must be adequate in size to contain the insulation needed for the California Energy Commission requirements plus ventilation space.
6. If there are any changes to the structural design, either through corrections requested by PRMD or revisions to the plans, the structural engineer must acknowledge the changes to the design with a supplemental report. The supplemental report must be submitted with the revised drawings and calculations submitted by the Engineer of Record. This procedure applies to any design changes made during construction.

Structural Peer Review Questionnaire

To be completed by applicant:

YES **NO**

1) One or two family dwelling

2) Commercial building

3) Type of construction

4) Site Evaluation completed

Site Evaluation permit number:

5) Structural peer review letter

I hereby request the Structural Peer Review Process for my project:

Signature _____

----- ⚠ DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE - To Be Completed by PRMD Staff ⚠ -----

YES **NO**

Authorized for structural peer review:

If no, state reason:

Staff: _____

Job Address: _____

Building Permit Number: _____