



COUNTY OF LAKE
 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
 255 N. Forbes Street – 3rd Floor
 Lakeport, California 95453
 Planning • Building • Code Enforcement
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Community Development Policies and procedures to Support Housing Element Policy HE-6: The County shall develop policies and procedures to give priority or expedited processing to residential developments that include a significant portion of units restricted to very-low, low-, or moderate-income households.

Expedited Processing for Qualifying Projects

The County has amended the Zoning Ordinance to remove the Minor Use Permit requirement and allow low-income housing by right within High Density Residential (R3) and Community Commercial (C2) zoning districts. For qualifying projects, the County shall determine application completeness within 30 days of submittal and shall approve or deny the project within 90 days of deeming the application complete (or within 180 days for projects with more than 150 units). If the County fails to act within these periods, the project shall be deemed approved, consistent with Government Code § 65913.4.

Pre-Development Meetings

The Community Development Department offers Pre-Development meetings with prospective developers and applicants. Meetings may be in person and also virtual to accommodate out of town guests. These meetings provide the applicant an opportunity to discuss prospective projects with staff from Building, Planning, Environmental Health, Public Works, Air Quality, Water Resources, and outside agencies as applicable (such as CA Department of Fish and Wildlife) to learn requirements of each department, potential issues, and solutions. The permit process, environmental review, timeline and fees are also discussed with the applicant. Upon conclusion of the meeting, a Pre-Development Checklist with notes of everything discussed and next steps is provided to the applicant. These meetings provide information and expectations up front, resulting in an increase in complete submittals and overall processing time.

To incentivize low income housing, the CDD will schedule Pre-Development meetings for qualifying projects within two weeks of submittal.

Electronic Permitting System

The Community Development Department launched an electronic permitting system in March, 2025. The e-permitting system, called OpenGov, allows applicants to submit building and planning entitlement applications, make payments, and schedule inspections online. The program allows applicants to upload project documents for staff review and track the progress of the project in real time (vs. having to call or email the department) through the entire development process from initial intake and review to the final sign off and approval. OpenGov also provides two-way communication between CDD and the applicant, as well as review by other departments and jurisdictions through the system. This includes the



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ability for CDD staff, as well as other reviewing agencies, to transmit comments and requests for revised or additional information directly to the applicant. Lastly, the Planning Division has moved to utilizing one standardized application within OpenGov to aid in streamlining the permit and review process. Implementation of OpenGov provides transparency and reduces delays in communication, and overall processing times.

The CDD will also create a workflow/streamlining path for projects residential developments that include a significant portion of units restricted to very-low, low-, or moderate-income households. This will include creating a section in the OpenGov planning application form, prompting the applicant to answer questions related to the type of development so that staff may easily identify qualifying projects. Qualifying projects will then be prioritized by the project planner to expedite processing.

Lastly, the Building Division will expand the library of pre-approved plans available for use to include additional types of housing, such as duplexes and fourplexes. The Building Division will also allow submittal of permits for low-income housing to be submitted at the same time as planning entitlements for early review during the plan check phase.

The improvements and expedited permitting processes noted above improve efficiency by cutting time and expenses for developers. Reducing the costs incurred during the development review process makes affordable housing projects more feasible and reduces the cost of housing generally.