



County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services

## **Self- Certification for Private Roads with 4 Homes Max Applicant's Guide**

**LAND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION**

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### **What is a Private Road Improvement Plan?**

A private road refers to any road which has not been declared or accepted for public use and/or County-maintenance by the County Board of Supervisors. This includes roads and/or portions of roads for which grants of easements, dedications, offers of dedication, or irrevocable offers of dedication for public roadway purposes are not granted for public use and/or County-maintenance. It also includes roads where offers of dedication or irrevocable offers of dedications for roadway purposes are not accepted for public use and/or County-maintenance. This applies to all or any parts of the entire area of private road easements which are to provide legal access for use as ingress and egress for vehicular traffic onsite or offsite to the lots/parcels. Private roads shall not include private residential driveways, nor does it include roads or portions of roads which lie within a County Service Area (CSA) or Permanent Road Division.

### **What does self-certification mean?**

The Self-Certification Program eliminates private road improvement plan permit reviews by allowing a registered engineer to take responsibility for code compliance and certify that the project complies with the San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances, Private Road Standards, Zoning Ordinance, Grading Ordinance, or other governing Codes (The Code). Permits for Self-Certification for Private Roads serving four or less residential homes can be issued within one to five business days.

To participate in the Self-Certification Program, the Self-Certified Professional must meet all the requirements detailed in PDS-693. The project must meet the eligibility requirements in the table in the next section. Project submission requirements and procedures are detailed below. All Self-Certified Projects are subject to audit as described in PDS-693.

PDS will advertise the Self-Certification Program and post on the County of San Diego website the names of all Self-Certified Professionals who are eligible to participate in the Self-Certification Program. The website will also contain all documents related to the Self-Certification Program to assist the Self-Certified Professional with project submission.

Additional information about the County's Self-Certification Program can be found in the link below:

<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/bldg/scp.html>

### **Eligible Projects**

The first step will be to verify that your project will meet the requirements in the Self-Certification Eligibility Chart printed below:

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### Private road serving 4 or less residential homes

Eligible Projects	Projects Not Eligible
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minor Private Road Improvement Plans serving up to but no more than four parcels.</li><li>• Parcel Map fronts and connects directly to public road.</li><li>• Minor Private Road serves onsite Parcel Map parcels and cannot be extended nor serve offsite parcels.</li><li>• Projects that meet Private Road Standards</li></ul> <b>Requires a CA registered Civil Engineer to self-certify</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Private Roads that can be extended to serve offsite lots.</li><li>• Private Roads that require a Design Exception Request.</li><li>• Projects that do not meet Private Road Standards</li></ul>

### How do inspections work?

Inspections that would normally be required for standard Grading Permits would still be required for Self-Certification Projects. This would be coordinated with Department of Public Works (DPW) Private Development Construction Inspection (PDCI) upon issuance of the permit. An inspection deposit of 5% of the Cost Estimate for the first \$100,000 plus 3% of the remainder with an \$800 minimum will be required prior to permit issuance.

A pre-construction conference is **REQUIRED** prior to the start of any work in the County ROW. Once the grading permit is issued, advance notice of 48-hours must be given to PDCI prior to you or your contractor scheduling the mandatory pre-construction meeting. No work may be commenced prior to this meeting. To request a meeting, call PDCI during normal business hours at (858) 694-3165.

### How do I certify a project as an engineer?

Please refer to Self-Certification Program Rules and Regulations PDS-693. Professional civil engineers that wish to participate in the self-certification program must meet the eligibility requirements listed in the document. Completion of a self-certification training class offered by or under the direction of the County is required. Information about registering for the Self-Certification Program training class is available at PDS website:

[https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/bldg/scp\\_programoverview.html](https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/bldg/scp_programoverview.html).

### Insurance Requirements

For each project, the Self-Certified Professional is required to furnish to PDS a certificate of professional liability errors and omissions insurance, issued by an insurer authorized to insure

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in California, with limits of not less than \$250,000 per claim and \$500,000 in the aggregate for all claims made during the policy period.

**Professional of Record Statement**

For each project, the Self-Certified Professional is required to submit a Professional of Record Self-Certification Statement in which the Self-Certified Professional shall be required to certify to the County of San Diego and to the person hiring or otherwise retaining the Self-Certified Professional for such project that:

- A. The Self-Certified Professional has been a registered civil engineer for at least three (3) years and is registered in the State of California; and
- B. Within the preceding five-year period, the Self-Certified Professional has not been convicted or found liable of: (1) knowingly making a false statement of material fact on or in connection with any grading permit application, or (2) knowingly submitting in support of a grading permit application any document containing false or fraudulent information, or (3) knowingly affixing a false signature to any grading permit application; and
- C. The attached application and every page of the accompanying plan(s) stamped by the Self-Certified Professional: (1) were prepared by, under the direct supervision of, or reviewed by such Professional; (2) are complete; and (3) are, as of the date of submission, in accordance with the requirements of the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, Private Road Standards, Public Road Standards, County of San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance and all other applicable laws; and
- D. The attached application and all technical submissions made by the Self-Certified Professional in connection with the self-certified project were prepared in accordance with and meet the "standard of care" required of the profession; and
- E. All information and assertions made by the Self-Certified Professional in the permit application and documents submitted in support of such permit application are true and correct; and
- F. If the Self-Certified Professional becomes aware of any false or inaccurate statement in the permit application, accompanying plans or any document submitted in support of such permit application, regardless of whether such false or inaccurate statement was made by such Self-Certified Professional or by his agent or employee, the Self-Certified Professional will immediately take all measures necessary to correct such false or inaccurate statement; and

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- G. The Self-Certified Professional understands that the Land Development Chief will rely upon the truth and accuracy of the certifications contained in the Professional of Record Self- Certification Statement as the basis for issuing a permit under the Self-Certification Permit Program; and
- H. The Self-Certified Professional understands that the self-certified project identified in the grading permit application is being approved for a grading permit subject to audit and/or field inspection by PDS and the permit is subject to revocation by the Land Development Chief if necessary or appropriate to protect the public health, safety or welfare; and
- I. If PDS determines that the submitted plans do not conform to the requirements of the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, Private Road Standards, Public Road Standards, County of San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance or any other applicable law, the Self-Certified Professional agrees to submit a revision to permit to PDS in a timely manner and to take all remedial measures within such professional of record's control to bring the submitted plans and any construction there under into conformity with the requirements of the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, Private Road Standards, Public Road Standards, County of San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance and any other applicable law; and
- J. The Self-Certified Professional understands that the failure to submit any required plan revision to PDS in a timely manner will result in automatic suspension of their self-certification privileges under the Self-Certification Permit Program, until such time that a plan revision is submitted to PDS and/or the matter is resolved by PDS; and
- K. The Self-Certified Professional understands that failure to take all remedial measures within their control to bring the submitted plans and any construction thereunder into compliance with the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, Private Road Standards, Public Road Standards, County of San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance or any other applicable law shall result in revocation of the Self-Certified Professional's privileges under the Self-Certification Program and may result in notification of such fact to the California Department of Consumer Affairs Board of Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists.
- L. The Self-Certified Professional understands that a Stop Work Order can be issued at the discretion of the Land Development Chief.

Nothing in this rule shall be construed to prohibit the Land Development Chief from requiring

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additional certifications in the Professional of Record Self-Certification Statement.

### **Project Submission Procedures**

The checklist of required forms and documents is listed below. The relevant application forms and documents are at the same website location. Once all items listed have been completed, the Self-Certified Professional shall submit the application to the public Land Development Counter or by email to [ldpermitcounter@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:ldpermitcounter@sdcounty.ca.gov). All completed applications, forms, letters, and other documents listed on the website, as applicable or otherwise required by PDS for the project shall be reviewed with the plans.

The project address and scope of work stated in the permit application must agree with the address and the scope of work shown on the submitted plans.

The Owner who is responsible for the work identified in the permit application must sign the permit application, Owner Certification Statement, and Hold Harmless letter. Both the permit application and accompanying plans must be stamped by the Self-Certified Professional who prepared or reviewed the plans and is submitting the plans for Self-Certification under the Self-Certification Program.

A cover sheet shall be attached to each set of plans. Each required cover sheet shall:

- A. Be signed and stamped by the Self-Certified Professional responsible for preparing the plans; and
- B. Contain an Index of Drawings as required by law; and
- C. Contain an owner/ contractor notice with the following language:

"This project has been permitted under the County of San Diego Self-Certification program. The project is subject to audit and field inspections. If the construction of the project is contrary to, or does not meet the standard of the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, Private Road Standards, Public Road Standards, County of San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance, the owner, at his/her own expense, shall remove or modify any and all components that do not conform. Any deviations from the approved plan must be coordinated in advance with the County Private Development Construction Inspection Staff and revised plans or sketches must be provided by the self-certified professional."

- D. Contain the following certification statement, which shall be wet-inked in black or plotted to the cover sheet: "I hereby certify that these drawings are prepared by me, under my supervision, or reviewed by me and to the best of my professional knowledge conform to

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the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, Private Road Standards, Public Road Standards, County of San Diego Watershed Protection, Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance." Such certification statement shall be signed by the professional of record who prepared the plans.

Each page of the construction plans **must** contain the following:

SELF-CERTIFIED BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Insert name of Self-Certified Professional) \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

- Plans were prepared by or under the direct supervision of, or reviewed by the Self-Certified Professional,
- Plans are complete,
- The plans are, as of the date of submission, in compliance with County of San Diego building, civil, site and zoning codes, ordinances, and all other applicable laws.

The following must be included in the submittal package:

- ☐ Self-Certification Permit Application for Private Roads (PDS-856)
- ☐ Owner Certification Statement (PDS-858)
- ☐ Hold Harmless Letter on property owner's letterhead (PDS-857)
- ☐ Financially Responsible Party Agreement (PDS-126)
- ☐ Permit Fee
- ☐ Proof of Liability Insurance
- ☐ Signed & Stamped Engineering Plans
- ☐ Stormwater Intake Form & Standard SWQMP/ PDP SWQMP\*

The application will be processed per the procedures outlined in PDS 693.

\*If the project will require a PDP SWQMP, the PDP SWQMP will not be subject to self-certification and will be reviewed separately through a Land Development Referral (LDREFL).

**Auditing Procedures**

All self-certified plans are subject to audit by PDS to determine whether the plans and/or projects are in compliance with the requirements of the County of San Diego Grading Ordinance, Private Road Standards, Public Road Standards, County of San Diego Watershed Protection,

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Stormwater Management, and Discharge Control Ordinance and other ordinances and codes adopted or followed by the County of San Diego. The audit will also measure the efficiency of the Self- Certification Program. There are two types of audits: random and automatic. Audit review time frames will be the same as traditional plan review. Please refer to PDS-693 for further procedures on the random and automatic audit processes.

### **Revisions**

There are different procedures that must be followed for making field changes and revisions. The procedure that must be followed is dependent on whether it is a voluntary change due to a change in construction material, design or in response to field conditions; or a mandatory change due to an inspector identifying a code violation or plans missing critical information.

### **Voluntary Field Changes and Revisions**

The Design Professional or the General Contractor should provide PDS Inspection staff a request for any proposed field changes or revisions. The field inspector associated with the discipline that is being modified will determine if revised plans must be resubmitted. Prior to rough grading release, revised plans must be provided to the County of San Diego for records.

1. If the inspector determines that the change is minor and can be processed in the field, revisions may be provided prior to final inspection. The following examples are types of minor field changes that inspection staff may approve. Additional changes may be made at the inspector's discretion. Any deviations from the permit record set must be approved in advance by the field inspector. When revised plans are provided, the proposed revisions must be sealed by the applicable design professional and contain the Self-Certified Professional's approved stamp.
2. For complex changes, the field inspector and their supervisor will determine if revised plans are necessary. Revised plans shall be resubmitted through the normal submittal process. The plans must be stamped by the Self-Certified Professional.
3. Changes or revisions which add to the scope of work included in the original plan submittal shall be treated as new work requiring a new permit application and permit.

### **Mandatory Field Changes and Revisions**

When an inspector determines that the plans contain code violations or are missing critical information, the inspector shall get a second opinion from his or her supervisor prior to requiring the customer to make changes. The supervisor is also encouraged to contact the Senior Civil Engineer or the Land Development Chief for further discussion if necessary. If the item is

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confirmed to be a code violation or if PDS requires more information critical to ensuring the project meets the grading ordinance, the Field Supervisor will inform the Contractor in writing or by email. For Self-Certified projects, the Self-Certified Professional must also be contacted. Corrections and/or additional information will be required to reach a resolution. Violations that require major design changes may require an audit of the self-certified plans. Follow the Voluntary Field Changes and Revisions process. Regardless of the method used to resolve the violation, all violations will be tracked by the Inspection Section through the Field Supervisor. The violations will be noted in Accela Citizen Access under project notes and inspections fields with the code section and a clear description of the violation. Self-Certified projects will be scored, and any project that accumulates five (5) violations or more will be subject to a mandatory audit. The Field Supervisor should consult with the Senior Civil Engineer and Land Development Chief of inspections prior to mandating an audit of the project. Refer to Self-Certified Auditing and Appeal Procedures for additional information.

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