



CITY OF NOVATO
CALIFORNIA

922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945
415/899-8900
FAX 415/899-8213
novato.org

Mayor
Denise Athas
Mayor Pro Tem
Pat Eklund
Councilmembers
Eric Lucan
Amy Peele
Susan Wernick

City Manager
Adam McGill

BUILDING DIVISION PROTOCOLS FOR PERMIT APPLICATIONS AND INSPECTIONS DURING MARIN COUNTY SHELTER IN PLACE ORDER

March 20, 2020

Notice to the Novato Construction Community:

In response to the Marin County Shelter in Place Order (“Order”) issued by the Marin County Health Officer on March 16, 2020, the City of Novato’s Building Division has developed the following protocols that will be implemented immediately in order to protect public health and safety. If you have an active permit, we recommend you familiarize yourself with the provisions of the Order, which can be accessed via the following link: <http://bit.ly/MCSIP>. If you are contemplating a new project, be advised that new permits will not be issued for non-essential work until after the Order has been lifted.

If you have received this notice directly, it is because you have either a pending or active building permit and these protocols may affect your ability to begin or continue construction activities.

The Order allows only essential construction activities to continue while the Order is in place. Essential construction activities have been defined as continuation to completion of all residential construction projects that are partially completed in order to ensure health and safety. All new construction projects are prohibited unless they are adding to the supply of housing stock (i.e., building new homes, building a second unit, etc.) or maintaining the habitability of homes in order to avoid displacement of residents. Non-residential projects related to maintaining or upgrading essential business government or health care infrastructure are also allowed to continue. Determination of whether the construction activity meets these definitions is at the discretion of the City’s Building Official or Community Development Director.

New Building Division protocols as of March 20, 2020 are as follows:

- The public counter will remain closed to drop-in traffic through the duration of the Order (currently April 7, 2020).
- New building permit applications will be accepted electronically via email and drop off by appointment only. Electronic submittals can be made to buildingpermits@novato.org and appointments can be made by calling 415-899-8989. Please note that no work will begin on electronic submittals until payment is received. Because appointment times are limited, please be sure you have a complete submittal package. Submittal requirements can be found at: <https://www.novato.org/government/community-development/building-division/how-to-get-a-building-permit>

- If you are a licensed contractor and the work consists of the items covered by our online permitting service, you can continue to apply online at: <https://www.novato.org/government/community-development/building-division/online-permit-center>
- Though requisite plan checks will also be completed for all new permit applications, the City will issue building permits only for essential construction activities.
- The City will not issue new building permits for construction activities that are deemed non-essential.
- The City will provide inspections only for essential construction activities with active building permits consistent with the purpose and intent of the Order. Work must generally be necessary for the provision of continued life, health and/or safety and may include repairs of necessary appliances, mechanical equipment, or other residential construction required for sheltering in place as determined by the City's Building Official or Community Development Director.
- Inspectors will not be permitted to conduct inspections if they cannot comply with social distancing requirements or otherwise cannot safely conduct inspections. Inspectors are authorized to make these determinations at their sole discretion.
- The City will not provide inspections for construction activities with active building permits that are deemed non-essential. Upon knowledge of non-essential construction activity, the City will notify the permit applicant and/or property owner that such work is not exempted from the Order and will notify appropriate enforcement agencies if work does not immediately stop.
- The expiration date of any active building permits will be extended by the length of time that the Order is effective.
- New building site cards are being developed which will confirm that a project is authorized construction during the Order.

Please contact the Building Division at buildingpermits@novato.org if you have questions regarding these new protocols and visit our website regularly for updated information as these protocols are subject to change.
<https://www.novato.org/government/community-development/building-division>.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding. We are hopeful that we can return to normal operations very soon.