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LAND DIVISIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION AND OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

What is Required to Divide Land

Colusa County, under the authority of the State Subdivision Map Act, requires a tentative map to be filed whenever property is divided. The County also establishes requirements for all land divisions. The regulations and requirements for a tentative map are contained in the State of California Subdivision Map Act and the Colusa County Code.

What is a Tentative Map?

A tentative map accompanies an application to divide land. The map is used to show how a piece of property is to be subdivided. The map shows the proposed number of parcels to be created, current and proposed easements, as well as design and improvements of the proposed land division.

There are two types of tentative maps, a Tentative Subdivision Map and a Tentative Parcel Map. The primary difference between a Tentative Subdivision Map and a Tentative Parcel Map is that a Tentative Subdivision Map is required for subdivisions creating five (5) or more parcels and a Tentative Parcel Map is required for creating four (4) or fewer parcels.

Who Prepares the Tentative Map?

A civil engineer or licensed land surveyor will need to prepare the tentative map for you. The tentative map must be drawn to scale and must show such things as existing and proposed parcel lines with dimensions, existing structures, recorded and proposed easements, drainage, contour lines and elevations, etc. See the application submittal requirements for all the items that must be shown on the tentative map.

What is the Tentative Map Approval Process?

The first step is to talk to Planning staff. Planning staff will be able to determine whether your parcel is capable of being subdivided, based upon the current zoning and General Plan land use designation. Planning staff can also explain the application process and go over the application form and fees. You should also talk to staff in the Environmental Health Department regarding water and sewage disposal and the Public Works Department regarding road improvements and drainage.

Next the tentative map must be submitted to the Planning Department. This must be accompanied by a completed application, the required number of map prints, copies of the application, a current title report, and the required processing fees.

Planning staff will review the map and application for completeness. Copies are forwarded to affected public agencies for their review and recommendations. As a result of the reviews, conditions may be placed upon the project.

Once deemed complete an environmental review is done to determine what effect, if any, the project will have on the environment. If it is determined that there may be an effect on the environment, mitigations may be required to reduce the project's environmental impacts to a less than significant level. If an impact can not be mitigated, the applicant may opt to change the tentative map or be required to prepare an environmental impact report.

A notice of public hearing for the project is sent by mail to all property owners within a minimum distance of 300-feet of the project and a notice is placed in a newspaper of general circulation in the project area.

The Planning Commission will then conduct a public hearing to review the project, take public comments, and approve or deny the tentative map. The Planning Commission may approve, modify, or delete any of the conditions that have been recommended for the project. All decisions may be appealed to the Board of Supervisors within 10 days following the Planning Commission's decision.

The tentative map process usually takes about four to six months from the date of application submittal to the date of Planning Commission approval. However, more time may be required if additional studies are required or if correct information is not submitted.

What is a Final/Parcel Map and How is it Approved?

A Final Map is the end result of a Tentative Subdivision Map approval and a Parcel Map is the end result of a Tentative Parcel map approval. These will be the official maps used to record the division of land. After the tentative map has been approved by the Planning Commission the applicant has 24 months to fulfill all conditions and submit a Final/Parcel Map to the County Surveyor. In addition, time extensions up to 5 years may be granted to complete the map.

A Final/Parcel Map will need to be prepared by a civil engineer or licensed land surveyor and submitted to the County Surveyor in the Public Works Department. You will need to check with the Department of Public Works for their fees.

After approval by the County Surveyor the Final/Parcel Map will be placed on the Board of Supervisors Consent Agenda for final approval. With the approval of the Board of Supervisors the Final/Parcel Map will be recorded. After recordation the parcels can be legally sold.

Application Fees and Other Potential Costs

See the Department of Planning and Building fee schedule for the current tentative map application fees. If additional studies are required these will be done at the cost of the applicant. The map process involves other costs. A registered Civil Engineer or Land Surveyor must prepare the tentative map as well as the Final/Parcel Map and they will charge for their services. Immediately upon approval of the tentative map the Department of Fish and Game requires a fee to be submitted at time of the filing of the environmental document as well as a filing fee for the County Clerk and Recorder. The County Surveyor will charge a map checking fee. There will also be a fee to record the map.

If you have any additional questions regarding the process, please call Planning staff at 530-458-0480.