

Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

Design Review: General Information, Application Instructions, and Submittal Requirements

Updated March 31, 2022

The City of Seattle's design review process requires that certain new construction projects undergo a discretionary review of the siting and design of new development. This Tip is intended to provide general information about design review and offer detailed instructions about the application, submittal and review process.

This Tip addresses the City of Seattle's Full Design Review (FDR) and Administrative Design Reviews (ADR), which apply to most larger-scale commercial, multifamily and mixed-use projects. ADR follows the same steps as Full Design Review, however, the applications are reviewed by a Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) land use planner and not the Design Review Board during a public meeting. A separate Streamlined Design Review (SDR) process applies to certain smaller-scale multifamily projects, and is addressed in Tip 238B, *Streamlined Design Review: General Information, Application Instructions, and Submittal Requirements*.

What Is Design Review?

Design review is a component of a Master Use Permit (MUP) application and is required for most new commercial, mixed-use and multifamily developments.

The City also administers other types of design review, such as the review of public capital improvements projects, landmarks, or development in historic districts. Those types of reviews are not covered as part of this Tip, which is dedicated to describing SDCI's design review process only. They are explained in other materials and consultation with the Department of Neighborhoods (DON) and the Design Commission.

Design review provides a forum through which neighborhoods, developers, architects, and City staff

can work together to ensure that new developments contribute positively to Seattle's neighborhoods.

Design review has three principal objectives:

1. To encourage excellence in site planning and design of projects such that they enhance the character of the City.
2. To provide flexibility in the application of development standards.
3. To improve communication and participation among developers, neighbors and the City early in the design and siting of new development.

Design review is administered by SDCI, as are other MUP components like environmental review (SEPA), variances, rezones, etc.

Design review applications involve public notice and opportunity for comment like these other components. Unlike other components, most projects subject to design review are brought before a Design Review Board for its guidance and recommendations, or, alternatively, to SDCI staff for ADR.

The final decision on the design review component is made by the Director of SDCI, along with decisions on any other MUP components. This decision may be appealed to the Seattle hearing examiner.

What are Design Review Guidelines?

We have published 2 sets of design review guidelines in order to provide greater predictability to designers, developers, and community members, and ensure greater consistency in design review decision-making.

The 2 sets are:

- [Guidelines for Multifamily & Commercial Buildings](#) that apply throughout Seattle's neighborhoods
- [Guidelines for Downtown Development](#) that apply specifically to downtown Seattle

In addition, many neighborhoods have adopted and published supplemental neighborhood-specific multifamily and commercial guidelines. Neighborhood-specific guidelines augment the Seattle design guidelines (citywide) and the guidelines for downtown development



by addressing more specific design concerns that have historical, cultural or architectural significance to a particular neighborhood.

You should check with us to determine whether a proposed project lies within an area which is covered by neighborhood specific guidelines. All of the [adopted neighborhood specific design guidelines](#) are also listed and available on our design review website.

Who is Subject to Design Review?

Applicants of all proposals over the thresholds (see Table A on page 3) are required to go through the design review process.

What are the Different Types of Design Review?

There are 3 types of design review including full, administrative and streamlined. This Tip addresses the full and administrative reviews; a separate SDR process applies to certain smaller-scale multifamily projects, and is addressed in Tip 238B.

FDR includes working with an assigned land use planner and giving presentations to a Design Review Board. The Board will hold at least one Early Design Guidance (EDG) meeting, followed by at least one Recommendation meeting after you submit your MUP application. The Code allows either you or the department to require additional meetings.

ADR is administered by an assigned land use planner. All the application materials and process steps for ADR are the same as full design review, except that these projects are not reviewed by the Design Review Board and therefore do not require a public design review meeting. Instead, you should plan to meet with your assigned planner to discuss project design issues.

In most cases design review is mandatory by exceeding the size threshold outlined in the table above. In some cases, an applicant may elect to go through design review on a voluntary basis. There are two types of voluntary review:

1. Applicants of projects under the mandatory design review thresholds who seek development standard departures may voluntarily submit their project to the design review process.
2. Applicants of development not otherwise subject to design review for a site that contains an Exceptional tree, as defined in Section 25.11.020, when the ability to depart from development standards may result in protection of the tree.

What is a Development Standard Departure?

A development standard departure allows a project design to achieve flexibility in the application of most of the land use code standards or requirements. In order to allow a departure from a land use code standard, an applicant must demonstrate that it would result in a development that better meets the intent of the adopted design guidelines.

All departure requests should be clearly identified in the design review packet and in the submitted plans as follows:

Requested (or Granted after final Recommendation phase has occurred) development standard departures from the Land Use Code:

Code Section	Requirement	Proposed	Sheet
	60% transparency	45%	No. A-3

Departures may be granted from any multifamily and commercial or downtown land use code standard or requirement, except the following (see [SMC 23.41.012](#) for a complete list):

- Procedures
- Permitted, prohibited or conditional use provisions, except street level uses
- Residential density limits
- Certain development standards in Downtown, SM, MPC-YT and Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay zones
- Floor area ratios (FARs), except for certain cases in the Pike/Pine Conservation Overlay District
- Maximum size of use
- Structure height, except in certain cases
- Quantity of parking, except in certain cases
- Shoreline District provisions in SMC 23.60
- Standards for storage of solid-waste containers
- Noise and odor standards
- Provisions of Transportation Concurrency Project Review Systems
- Provisions of SMC 23.53 Requirements for Streets, Alleys, and Easements, except for access easement standards in SMC 23.53.025
- Measurement techniques in SMC 23.86 and Definitions in SMC 23.84
- Structural Building Overhangs
- Certain provisions in pedestrian-designated zones

Design Review Thresholds – Effective July 1, 2018

Table A for 23.41.004 Design review thresholds by size of development and specific site characteristics outside of downtown and industrial zones		
If any of the site characteristics in part A of this table are present, the design review thresholds in part B apply. If none of the site characteristics in part A of this table are present, the design review thresholds in part C apply.		
A.	Category	Site Characteristic
	A.1. Context	a. Lot is abutting or across an alley from a lot with single-family zoning. b. Lot is in a zone with a maximum height limit 20 feet or greater than the zone of an abutting lot or a lot across an alley.
	A.2. Scale	a. Lot is 43,000 square feet in area or greater. b. Lot has any street lot line greater than 200 feet in length.
	A.3. Special Features	a. Development proposal includes a Type IV or V Council Land Use Decision. b. Lot contains a designated landmark structure. c. Lot contains a character structure in the Pike/Pine Overlay District.
B.	Development on a lot containing any of the specific site characteristics in part A of this table is subject to the thresholds below.	
	Amount of gross floor area of development	Design review type ¹
	B.1. Less than 8,000 square feet	No design review ^{2, 3}
	B.2. At least 8,000 but less than 35,000 square feet	Administrative design review
	B.3. 35,000 square feet or greater	Full design review ⁴
C.	Development on a lot not containing any of the specific site characteristics in part A of this table is subject to the thresholds below.	
	Amount of gross floor area of development	Design review type ¹
	C.1. Less than 8,000 square feet	No design review ^{2, 3}
	C.2. At least 8,000 but less than 15,000 square feet	Streamlined design review
	C.3. At least 15,000 but less than 35,000 square feet	Administrative design review
	C.4. 35,000 square feet or greater	Full Design Review
Footnotes to Table A for 23.41.004		
¹ Applicants for any development proposal subject to administrative design review may choose full design review instead, and applicants for any project subject to streamlined design review may choose administrative or full design review.		
² The following development is subject to streamlined design review: (1) development that is at least 5,000 square feet but less than 8,000 square feet and (2) is proposed on a lot that was rezoned from a Single-family zone to a Lowrise 1 (LR1) zone or Lowrise 2 (LR2) zone, within five years after the effective date of the ordinance introduced as Council Bill 119057. This requirement shall only apply to applications for new development submitted on or before December 31, 2023.		
³ The following development is subject to administrative design review: (1) development that is at least 5,000 square feet but less than 8,000 square feet and (2) is proposed on a lot that was rezoned from a Single-family zone to a Lowrise 3 (LR3) zone, any Midrise zone, Highrise zone, Commercial (C) zone, or Neighborhood Commercial (NC) zone, within five years after the effective date of the ordinance introduced as Council Bill 119057. This requirement shall only apply to applications for new development submitted on or before December 31, 2023.		
⁴ Development proposals that would be subject to the full design review, may elect to be reviewed pursuant to the administrative design review process according to Section 23.41.016 if the applicant elects the MHA performance option according to Sections 23.58B.050 or 23.58C.050. If the applicant elects administrative design review process pursuant to this footnote 4 to Table A for 23.41.004, the applicant shall not be eligible to change its election between performance and payment pursuant to subsections 23.58B.025.B.2.c or 23.58C.030.B.2.c.		
Table B for 23.41.004 Design review thresholds by size of development in downtown and industrial zones		
Zone	Amount of gross floor area of development	Design review type
A. All DOC1, DOC2, or DMC zones	50,000 square feet or greater	Full design review
B. All DRC, DMR, DH1, DH2, PMM zones outside the Pike Place Market Historical District, IB, or IC zones	20,000 square feet or greater	Full design review

For exemptions, please see [SMC 23.41.006.A3 through A6](#) and [23.41.006.B](#).

What Is the Design Review Board?

Projects subject to FDR are brought before a Design Review Board, before the MUP application, during the EDG phase, and after the MUP application during the Recommendation phase.

Seattle is divided into 8 Design Review Board districts (boundaries are indicated on Design Review Board Districts Map), each with its own 5-member Board*. The 5 volunteer members represent the following interests:

- 1 design profession
- 1 development
- 1 business or landscape design
- 2 local residential/community

Board members are appointed by the Mayor and Council and confirmed by City Council.

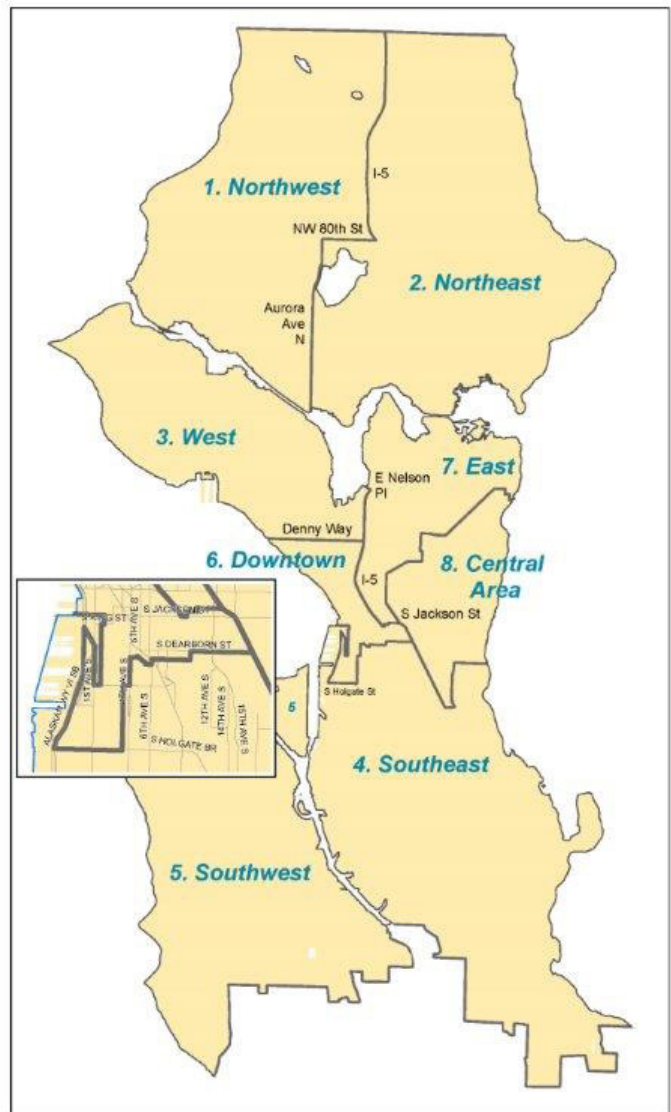
The manager of the design review program may appoint former board members to serve as substitutes for current members who are periodically absent.

* The Design Review Board participates in the city's Get Engaged program, which places young adults (18-29) on the city's boards for 1-year appointments. These members have full voting rights. Each year, at least 1 Get Engaged member serves on the Design Review Boards, bringing the total number of members for that Board to 6.

Who is the Design Review Planner?

We assign a land use planner to each design review project. The planner explains the permitting process, specifically the steps to navigate design review and associated reviews. The planner works closely with the applicant team to achieve a design that best responds to the design guidelines and helps prepare them for Board meetings. The planner also attends and helps facilitate the meetings of the Design Review Board and documents the Board's deliberations. Following a Board meeting, or the review phase in the case of ADR, the planner prepares and distributes a report summarizing the guidance, which the applicant uses to guide the design response.

Figure 2: Design Review Board District Map

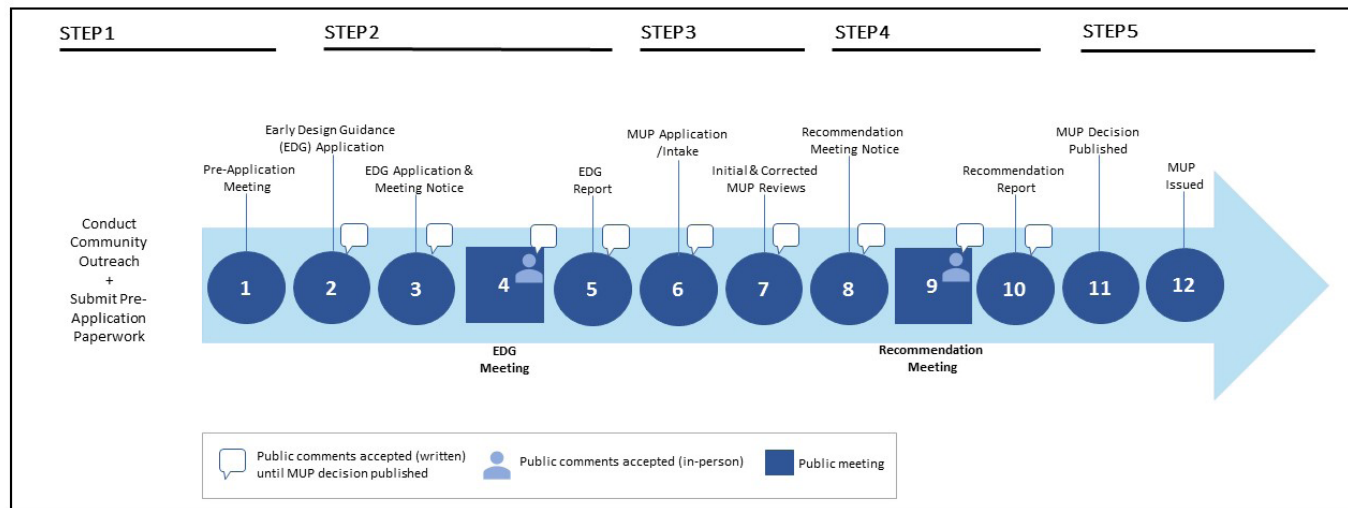


What Is the Design Review Process?

The following diagram shows the basic steps of the FDR process (which is explained in greater detail later in this Tip):

Figure 3:

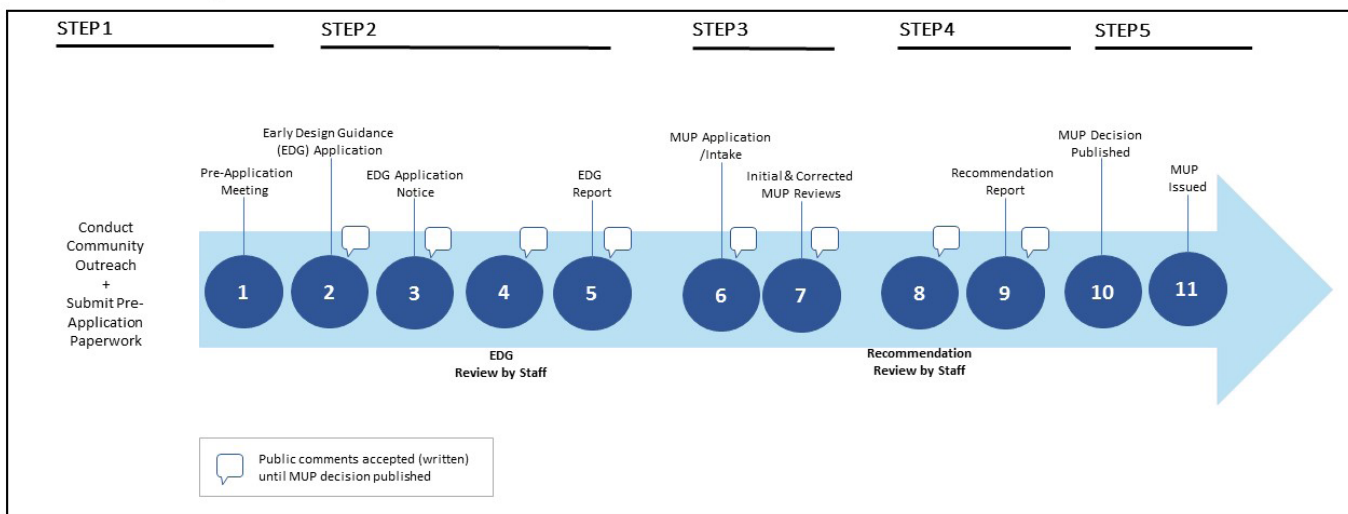
Full Design Review Process



The ADR process mimics the same steps of the FDR process, except that the project does not go before a Design Review Board nor are public design review Board meetings held. Instead, all of the design review is conducted administratively by the assigned planner. The following diagram illustrates the ADR process:

Figure 4:

Administrative Design Review Process



Permitting Process

Step 1

PRE-SUBMITTAL APPLICATION AND CONFERENCE

Complete the Building & Land Use Pre-Application online using the [Seattle Services Portal](#). You will also need to upload a site plan and a complete legal description for your site. You'll receive an email once we have added the pre-application site visit (PASV) fees to your project. A pre-application project number will be assigned to you. After you have paid the fee, we will perform the inspection.

Your preliminary application materials will be sent to other departments for their review and comment. A pre-submittal conference meeting is also required; you should submit the pre-submittal conference application when you submit your other materials.

1. [Pre-Application Site Visit Request \(PASV\)](#) *Note: This form may be submitted electronically via your project portal.*
2. [Preliminary Application Form \(PAF\)](#) *Note: This form may be submitted electronically via your project portal.*
3. [Pre-Submittal Conference Application](#)
4. [Statement of Financial Responsibility / Agent Authorization](#)
5. [Basic Site Plan per Tip 103, Site Plan Requirements](#)

Applicant Services Center (ASC) support staff will review the request, note pertinent information, and call back with available appointment times and an assigned EDG project number. Please note that the pre-submittal date is scheduled several weeks from the application date to allow time for the completion of the Preliminary Assessment Report. Fees for pre-submittal conferences and additional hours of review are listed in the current version of the Fee Subtitle and are summarized in the Land Use Application and Fee Requirements document available online on our [“Fees” page](#).

We highly encourage you to upload a draft EDG packet along with the pre-submittal materials. This will allow staff to begin review of your packet and provide feedback at the meeting and likely save review time after the application is submitted. We also recommend

that you use the [EDG Packet Checklist Worksheet](#) to document where the information has been provided; please provide a copy of this worksheet to your planner along with the draft packet.

Public Outreach:

Visit [DON's Early Community Outreach for Design Review webpage](#) for information and resources about planning, conducting, and documenting your required community outreach. The DON staff contact listed on that webpage is responsible for reviewing and approving your outreach documentation and is available to answer any questions you have about your outreach. You may [begin your outreach](#) at any time, however it must be completed before we will schedule your EDG meeting or begin any review of your application.

Pre-Submittal Conference:

Design review requires a pre-submittal conference with your assigned land use planner. At the pre-submittal conference, various city staff will be in attendance to discuss your project.

Please limit the number of people attending on behalf of your project to six due to room size constraints. If you want to bring more people to the meeting, please call (206) 684-8850. Please note that if you need to reserve a larger room, it may result in a delay of your appointment.

During the conference, please be prepared to make a presentation that includes the project site, surrounding building context, and your general development program. This is an opportunity for all parties to discuss the following:

- Review draft design packet and design thinking
- Process steps
- Community outreach
- Nearby projects and/or initiatives in the planning or construction phases
- Possible development standard departures
- Other important preliminary issues

A designated member of your team should take minutes/notes during the pre-submittal meeting and prepare the written notes of the meeting and email the draft (in Word format) to the City staff in attendance ideally within two weeks of the pre-submittal meeting. Staff will review and approve the final notes and add them to the project file.

STEP 2**EDG APPLICATION, MEETING PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION****EDG Application:**

The EDG application may be submitted immediately following the approval and upload of the staff-approved pre-submittal conference notes by staff to the project portal following the procedures outlined under [Step 2 EDG](#) on the Design Review website.

All EDG applications are accepted daily, based on when a complete application is submitted through your [Seattle Services Portal](#). You do not need to schedule an intake appointment for EDG applications. You do, however, need to follow the steps in [How to Submit Your EDG Application](#).

The following are the required items that must be included for a successful, complete EDG application:

1. Draft EDG packet developed using the [EDG Packet Checklist](#). The 11 x 17-inch formatted packet enables the applicant to describe the conditions influencing the design and graphically demonstrate the design proposal for the project. This packet is what the planner will evaluate during design review.
2. [Statement of Financial Responsibility Form / Agent Authorization](#) signed by the property owner.
3. Payment of fees per the [Land Use Application Fee Requirements](#) – see the Land Use Fee Table on the last page.

The fees due are outlined on the last page of the [Land Use Application Fee Requirements document](#). The fees for additional land use hours will also be collected at this time. The information in this document will be used to give public notice of the project.

All of these [forms and instructions](#) are all available online, or from the 20th floor ASC, Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave.

The EDG Design Proposal Packet

The 11"x17" packet enables you to describe the parameters affecting your design and graphically demonstrate the project proposal. There's a [full checklist of EDG packet contents](#).

In general, the EDG packet should include:

1. **Follow packet standards.** Please see the [EDG checklist](#).

2. **Project Info:** Project number, address, meeting type and date.
3. **Development Objectives:** Approximate number of residential units, amount of commercial square footage and number of parking stalls and aerial photo of site and context.
4. **Site Plan:** Clear site plan showing property lines, dimensions, spot elevations, topography, structure footprint, adjacent structures, trees, access, right-of-way dimensions and landscaping, as well as a legal description.
5. **Urban Design Analysis:** Vicinity map, graphics and photos, indicating surrounding uses, structures, zoning and notable features, axonometric or other three-dimensional drawing, photos or models of the nine block area surrounding the project site. Include information showing shadow impacts. Map and photos including call-out notes on drawings and captions stating what design cues can be gleaned to inform the design alternatives and contextual conditions.
6. **Zoning Data:** Brief summary of applicable standards and how proposed development will meet these standards.
7. **Design Guidelines:** Briefly list those guidelines that are most pertinent to the site and design of the project. Explain why these guidelines are relevant and how the proposed design responds. Include conceptual response to guidelines with conceptual images or graphics.
8. **Architectural Massing Concepts:** Show 3 viable alternative architectural massing concepts showing your design thinking process. Include at least one scheme that does not need any departures so that the board and staff may better understand the impact of any departure requests. Graphics for all options should be comparable and generally show the same development objectives. For each concept, list opportunities and constraints explaining the reasoning for a preferred option. Include conceptual floor plans so ground level uses and functions are understood. Show siting, massing, open space, possible façade treatments, and access in the same graphic context. 3D studies and sketches at the street level are helpful in processing this information, particularly the thinking in the design evolution.

- 9. Departures:** Summary table for all potential development standard departures, including the following code citation and code requirement, proposed design departure, and rationale explaining how the departure results in a project which better meets the intent of the design guidelines. Graphics should accompany the table, as needed, to clearly explain the departure(s) showing code compliant and requested departure with dimensions.

EDG Meeting Preparation

Once the EDG application has been submitted, we will contact you and set up an evening public meeting in the Design Review Board area where the project site is located. The Design Review Board members, the general public and the project applicants will be invited. We maintain a [calendar](#) of all scheduled, upcoming meetings.

Notice of the meetings is also provided in our weekly [Land Use Information Bulletin](#), which is available online and through mailed notice to residents and property owners within 300 feet of the site, and with a yellow placard posted at the project site.

The land use planner will work with you to revise the draft 11"x17" EDG design proposal packet originally submitted at intake so that it better meets the criteria outlined in the [Design Review: EDG Proposal Packet Checklist Worksheet](#).

For ADR, the planner will conduct their review following the steps listed above, as well as meet with you.

Once the planner indicates that your proposal packet is sufficient and ready to be reviewed by the board, you are expected to submit 8 hard copies of the final packet and one digital file (saved as a pdf) of the 11"x17" packet to SDCI 10 calendar days in advance of the meeting.

For ADR only 1 hard copy is required.

The hard copies should be addressed to the land use planner; the digital copies should be sent to the design review program support staff. Instructions for creating and sending the pdf file are online on the [Submit Your Packet](#) section of the [Design Review website](#). We will distribute the hard copies to board members and post the digital copy to our database and online in advance of the meeting.

EDG Presentation

At the board meeting, you will present information about

the surrounding context of the building site, and the site's characteristics, as well as describe your development objectives and share early design concepts for massing, open space, and facade treatments, and show examples of other projects they have completed. Your presentation to the board should be concise and clearly related to the design guidelines, and include large graphics that can be easily read from a distance.

Tips for an Effective Presentation:

1. *If the design review process is new to you or your project is in an area you are less acquainted with, we recommend that you take the time to attend board meetings for other projects to familiarize yourself with that board and nearby projects.*
2. *Your project presentation is limited to 20 minutes so using this time wisely and efficiently is critical! For this reason, avoid having an owner/developer presentation so that the time can focus on the project design.*
3. *You should assume that the board and public following the project are familiar with the site and surrounding area, so please restrict your presentation overview of the context and site analysis to no more than 5 minutes.*
4. *Focus on those specific conditions, architectural cues and site cues that inform your early design concepts.*
5. *Remember to clearly convey and orient the site to your audience.*
6. *Your presentation should not mimic your proposal packet; instead 'curate' from your packet and pull out the most relevant graphics and information from the packet. The bulk of your presentation should focus on your design concept/evolution and massing options. You should also plan to spend a few minutes addressing any specific or major issues raised by the planner or public, as these will likely be issues of focus for the board and public. Clearly express your design concept and highlight key design guidelines that apply to the site and design proposal.*
7. *Allot time (1-2 minutes per departure) to walk through each of your departures, using graphics to clearly and quickly explain each request.*
8. *All of your graphics should be clear (with brief text)*

and can be easily read from a distance. Avoid using a 3D model if it has not been introduced and shown in your packet. Avoid bringing in supplemental sheets for your packet (and remember any additional graphics will need to be integrated into your electronic packet submission and resubmitted).

9. *Rehearse your presentation ahead of time! Remember to project your voice and face the audience.*
10. *You are responsible for bringing all equipment and materials needed for the presentation, such as easels, screens, laptops, extension cords or projectors.*

After your presentation, the public is invited to offer their comments and concerns regarding the siting and design of development on the site. Board members deliberate and identify the design guidelines that are of the highest priority for the site, as well as incorporate any relevant comments from the public in their EDG report.

The assigned land use planner will summarize the board's EDG report and it will be sent to all parties that attended the meeting or who have written to us regarding the project. These reports, as well as the 11"x17" design proposals, are also available under [Search Project Reviews](#) located on the Design Review page.

STEP 3

MASTER USE PERMIT (MUP) APPLICATION

You must develop a schematic design response to the design guidelines, and your EDG, and then schedule a MUP intake appointment. When you apply, you must fill out and submit an Application for Design Review (see Attachment 1 on page 13). All outstanding fees must be paid upon application for the MUP.

When you apply for a MUP, which includes a design review component, other necessary components such as zoning, SEPA (if required), administrative conditional use, etc., must be included.

The design review plans should include at least four colored and shadowed elevations on a single sheet at minimum. They also must include a colored site/landscape drawing embedded on the design review sheets of the MUP plan sets showing your initial design response. In addition, the MUP level plans and drawings showed should include such details as exterior materials and/or colors, departure documentation, and a written request for any development standard departures.

Once your application has been accepted, you must place a large sign on the site. We will send notice by mail, and provide a public comment period allowing people to comment on any and all aspects of the project, including siting and design issues.

The assigned planners will begin their zoning, design, environmental (and other reviews as applicable) reviews of your application materials and request further information, clarification, or changes from you via a correction notice that will be sent to you.

STEP 4

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD RECOMMENDATION MEETING: PREPARATION AND PRESENTATION

The Recommendation Design Proposal Packet

The 11"x17" packet enables you to describe the parameters affecting the design and graphically demonstrate the project proposal.

In general, the recommendation packet should include:

1. **Follow packet standards.** Please see the [full checklist](#).
2. **Project Info:** Project number, address, meeting type and date.
3. **Proposal Info:** Approximate number of residential units, amount of commercial square footage and number of parking stalls and aerial photo of site and context.
4. **Summary of Context Analysis:** Vicinity map and photos, indicating surrounding uses, structures, zoning and notable features, axonometric or other three-dimensional drawing, photos or models of the nine block area surrounding the project site.
5. **Summary of Existing Site Conditions:** Map, graphics and photos showing existing site conditions, such as topography, trees, natural features, structures and access.
6. **Zoning Data:** Brief summary of applicable standards and how proposed development will meet these standards.
7. **Composite Site Plan:** Clear composite site plan showing proposed structure footprint, including all dimensions and spot elevations, adjacent structures, open spaces, access, and landscaping.

- 8. Response to EDG:** Provide itemized brief description of how the proposal responds to the priority design guidelines and guidance provided previously.
- 9. Floor Plans:** Indicate property lines, uses, entries, access, setbacks, dimensions and adjacent building locations.
- 10. Composite Landscape/Hardscape Plan**
- 11. Elevations:** Call out materials, colors, fenestration details, venting locations.
- 12. Materials/Color Palette**
- 13. Renderings**
- 14. Exterior Lighting Plan**
- 15. Signage Concept Plan**
- 16. Building Sections**
- 17. Departures:** Summary table for all potential development standard departures, including the following code citation and code requirement, proposed design departure, and rationale explaining how the departure results in a project which better meets the intent of the design guidelines. Graphics should accompany the table, as needed, to clearly explain the departure(s) showing code compliant and requested departure with dimensions.

Recommendation Meeting Preparation

The planner will review your draft 11"x17" design recommendation proposal and work with the applicant to revise the draft so that it better meets the criteria outlined in [Design Review: Recommendation Proposal Packet Checklist](#).

The Design Review Board will reconvene to consider the proposed design once the project design has been sufficiently developed in response to the EDG, and after initial zoning review has occurred. Design Review Board meetings are in the evening and open to the public. The planner will conduct their review following these same steps for ADR, as well as meet with you, before finalizing their recommendations for this phase of the design review.

Once the planner indicates that your proposal packet is sufficient and ready to be reviewed by the Board, you will be expected to submit 8 hard copies and 1 digital

file (saved as a pdf) of the 11"x17" packet to SDCI 10 calendar days in advance of the meeting.

Only 1 hard copy is required for ADR.

The hard copies should be addressed to your land use planner; the digital copies should be sent to Design Review Program support staff.

Instructions for creating and sending the pdf file are online at [Submit Your Packet](#) section of the [Design Review website](#). We distribute the hard copies to board members and post the digital copy to our database and online in advance of the meeting.

In addition to Design Review Board members, and the project applicants, the general public is invited to your Design Review Board meeting. We maintain a [calendar](#) of all scheduled, upcoming meetings.

Notice of the meeting will be provided in our weekly [Land Use Information Bulletin](#). It is available online and through mailed notice to all parties of record.

Recommendation Meeting Presentation

You should highlight the project's guidance provided at your EDG meeting, and clearly describe the departures you've requested, while giving your presentation to the Design Review Board during the Recommendation phase. You should prepare a table of our departure requests that compares the proposed design in quantitative terms to the code requirements. Your presentation to the board should be concise and it should include large graphics that can be easily read from a distance. You should bring any materials needed for the presentation, such as easels, laptops, extension cords or projectors.

In many cases, you may also be required to submit 3D models, photo montages, computer-assisted graphic images, or other graphic material to aid decision-making. You can arrange these details with your assigned land use planner, who will indicate when best to submit such additional information.

The Board will review the design in light of the concerns, public comments and the previously identified EDG. The Board will deliberate and offer official recommendations to SDCI on the design and the appropriateness of any requested development standard departures. SDCI will send a written summary of the Board's recommendations to all parties of record.

Please also see Tips for an Effective Presentation on pages 8 and 9.

STEP 5

DIRECTOR'S DECISION

Our Director makes the final decision on the design review component of a MUP application. However, if the Design Review Board's recommendation was offered by at least four members, it will be considered a consensus recommendation that the director must adopt in most cases.

Our Director may override the board's recommendation only if he/she believes the board has made a clear error in the application of the guidelines, has exceeded its authority, or has required design changes that contravene other non-waivable local, state or federal requirements. Conversely, when the board's recommendation is supported by less than four members, the Director will give due consideration to the board's recommendation in reaching his/her decision, along with any minority opinions, staff recommendations and public comment.

Our Director's design review decision will be published together with the decisions on other MUP components related to the project, with written notice to all parties of record, as well as notice in the weekly [Land Use Information Bulletin](#). Final issuance of the permit often requires updates to the MUP plans to comply with design review conditions.

STEP 6

APPEALS AND CONTRACT REZONES

As with other discretionary MUP-component decisions, the design review decision may be appealed by any interested party. Appeals may be made during the 14-day appeal period by letter and a filing fee to the Seattle Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner must afford substantial weight to the Director's decision, basing any decision to the contrary on a finding of clear error or omission, not simply of differing opinion or conclusion. You can't make an appeal of a design review decision to the Seattle City Council.

In the case of a contract re-zone proposal, our Director will make a recommendation to the Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner then provides a recommendation to the City Council, where the final decision is made.

STEP 7

BUILDING PERMIT

You may apply for a building permit, following submittal of a complete MUP application. Submit colored elevations with the building permit plans and include material and color call outs. Building permit applications for design review projects are reviewed by a land use planner, who compares this set of plans against the MUP plans to confirm consistency with the approved MUP. The MUP must be issued before any demolition or building permits can be issued.

You need to submit the right-of-way (ROW) plans to the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) for projects that require street or alley improvements. They must be accepted for review by SDOT, before you can submit your construction permit plans to us. You should coordinate with SDOT and submit initial Street Improvement Plans (SIP) when you apply for your construction permit to avoid potential delays. We will not accept construction permit applications for new buildings until the SDOT plan has been accepted.

STEP 8

POST PERMIT REVIEW AND REVISIONS

Any revisions you wish to make must be submitted to your land use planner for review. Projects that have undergone design review have less flexibility for future revisions than other projects. Proposed changes to a MUP that have little or no effect on the design or environmental impact of the originally approved permit may be considered minor revisions.

Proposed substantive changes and/or changes that require additional impact analysis or approvals may be considered major revisions. On some occasions, the Design Review Board may be asked to consider a revision, but only after additional public notice has been given and only at an already-scheduled Design Review Board meeting. Please see Tip 224B, *Master Use Permit Revisions* for more information.

The land use planner will inspect constructed projects prior to occupancy to ensure compliance with design review approval. You will be expected to pay all additional administrative costs.

Additional Information on Design Review

Visit our [Design Review webpage](#) for more information about Seattle's Design Review program.

In addition to basic program information, the site features:

- Links to the Preliminary Application Form (PAF), Statement of Financial Responsibility/Agent Authorization Form and Fee Worksheet and other required application materials
- Checklists of the packet requirements for both Early Design Guidance and Recommendation phases
- A calendar of upcoming design review meetings
- Design proposal packets
- Visual gallery of design guideline examples
- Visual gallery of successful projects

Visit our [Shaping Seattle map](#) to see all of the design review projects currently under review, along with their design proposals.

Printed design review resources are available at the Public Resource Center, 20th floor, Seattle Municipal Tower, 700 Fifth Ave. Please visit: <https://www.seattle.gov/sdci/about-us/who-we-are/design-review> for additional information.

Access to Information

Links to electronic versions of SDCI Tips, Director's Rules, and the Seattle Municipal Code are available on our website at www.seattle.gov/sdci.

Attachment 1

Project No. _____

City of Seattle

**Response to Guidelines: MUP Application for
Design Review****(Attach additional sheets as needed)**

1. Please describe the proposal in detail, including types of uses; size of structure(s), location of structure(s), amount, location and access to parking; special design treatment of any particular physical site features (e.g., vegetation, watercourses, slopes), etc

2. Please describe in narrative text and on plans any specific requests for development standard departures, including specific rationale(s) and a quantitative comparison to a code-complying scheme. Include in the MUP plan set initial design response drawings with at least four (4) colored and shadowed elevation drawings and site/landscape plan.

3. Please describe how the proposed design responds to the Early Design Guidance.