



City of Long Beach
Department of Development Services
Building and Safety Bureau

Foundation-Only Permit

Information
Bulletin

BU-034

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The Building and Safety Bureau (“Bureau”) have been frequently asked to issue foundation-only permits even though all the information required demonstrating a project’s compliance with the applicable codes, local ordinances, and state and federal laws has not been provided. However, the Bureau recognizes that, in some cases, there is a need to issue foundation-only permits to allow certain construction activities to begin prior to the approval of the final construction documents.

As authorized by Section 18.04.040.B of the Long Beach Municipal Code (“LBMC”), the Bureau may issue a permit for the construction of the foundation of a building or structure before the construction documents for the whole building or structure have been reviewed and approved, provided that adequate information and detailed statements have been filed to the satisfaction of the Bureau assuring that the completed project will comply with all pertinent requirements.

This information bulletin stipulates the Bureau’s policy in issuing foundation-only permits when all of the following requirements have been observed:

1. **Type of Projects Allowed.** Applications for foundation-only permits may be accepted on large and complex projects as determined by the Bureau and are not typically accepted on small jobs such as single-family residences, duplexes or small apartment and commercial projects.
2. **Scope of Work Allowed.** The type of construction work authorized under a foundation-only permit may include all construction work at or below grade such as:
 - Site cleaning and preparation, including removal of any existing asphalt and/or concrete slab;
 - Excavation and shoring work under the building footprint; and
 - Foundation, basement walls and columns below grade, slab on grade, and structural (podium) slab at or below grade level.

NOTE: Mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems require a separate plan review and permit for each sub-trade work. Approvals must be obtained by the appropriate utility agencies (i.e., Gas and Oil Department, Water Department, and Southern California Edison) having jurisdiction. For information regarding early start sub-trade permits, see #8 of this bulletin.

3. **Unrelated Work Excluded.** Other construction work not included with the foundation-only permit must be removed from the final foundation-only construction documents before it will be approved. The foundation-only construction documents should “stand by itself” as a complete, coherent construction documents for that part of the building or structure.
4. **Minimum Information Required.** Construction documents submitted for review shall clearly describe the scope of work covered for the entire building or structure as well as for the

foundation-only permit. For the foundation-only construction documents, the cover sheet must clearly state the construction work included in the foundation-only permit. Sheet indexes, site plan, foundation and drainage plans, construction notes, schedules and details must be included on the foundation-only construction documents. The foundation-only construction documents must be reviewed, signed and stamped by the geotechnical engineer and/or geologist who prepared the soils/geotechnical report when such a report is provided or required. Details of related underground sub-trade work must be included on the foundation-only construction documents where applicable. Upon approval, the cover sheet of the foundation-only construction documents must contain the following note:

FOUNDATON-ONLY PERMIT

This is only a partial permit that was requested by the building owner. The owner(s) and registered design professional(s) signed an "Assumption of Risk" agreement assuming all associated risks in order to allow the start of the construction project. The approval of this foundation-only construction documents and the issuance of the foundation-only permit does not convey any vested rights to a condition not in conformance with the codes, local ordinances, and state and federal laws. A subsequent construction permit is required for the remaining construction work before the project is complete. The construction work included in this foundation-only construction document is described on the cover sheet.

5. **Minimum Code Compliance Required.** Adequate construction details, structural calculations, and any other pertinent documents for the design and construction of the building or structure shall be provided to demonstrate that the construction work complies with the applicable codes, local ordinances, and state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, use, occupancy, construction type, number of stories, building height, floor area, fire and life safety issues, accessibility for disabled person, structural design, setbacks, parking, density, landscape, and any other required land-use entitlements or conditions. The foundation design, including any temporary or permanent shoring or tie-back, shall be in compliance with any provided or required soils/geotechnical report. Where applicable, underground utilities, including underground sprinkler mains, shall be approved by the appropriate sub-trade plan review staff and the utility agencies having jurisdiction.
6. **Routing of Construction Documents.** Construction documents submitted at the Permit Center on the 4th floor of City Hall will be routed to the appropriate Planning, Building, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Health and/or Fire plan review staff. It will be the responsibility of the owner(s), registered design professional(s), contractor(s) or designated agent(s) to submit the correct amount of construction documents to the appropriate departments or other governmental agencies (i.e., Public Works Department, Gas and Oil Department, Water Department, etc.) having jurisdiction.
7. **Plan Review Priority.** Construction documents submitted for plan review are reviewed in the order of their paid plan submittal date. An off-hour plan review service may be requested to expedite the review, but is subject to the availability of staff.
8. **Electrical Conduit Only or Partial Mechanical and Plumbing Work.** Related mechanical, electrical or plumbing conduits, ducts and/or pipes below or within the slab, foundation, or

basement walls and/or columns may obtain an early start sub-trade permit to commence construction before the construction documents for the entire sub-trade systems for the building or structure is completed or approved. At minimum, the conduit, duct and/or pipe size, location, and material type shall be provided on the sub-trade construction documents.

9. **Assumption of Risk Agreement.** The owner(s) and registered design professional(s) responsible for the project must complete and sign the "Assumption of Risk" agreement before a foundation-only permit or an early start sub-trade permit is issued. If the owner(s) is a corporation, one of the corporate officers may sign for that corporation. The original signed agreement shall be provided to the Bureau prior to permit issuance for their record. A copy of said agreement must also be made part of the first sheet of the foundation-only construction documents and/or sub-trade construction documents.
10. **Approval Required Prior to Permit Issuance.** All applicable approvals from other departments or governmental agencies must be obtained prior to issuance of the foundation-only permit, including mechanical, electrical and plumbing plan check if any conduits, ducts and/or pipes are below or within the slab, foundation, or basement walls and/or columns. Utility agencies (i.e., Gas and Oil Department, Water Department, and Southern California Edison) approvals must be secured for the project. All applicable approval received on the foundation-only permit must be obtained again for the subsequent building permit.
11. **Subsequent Final Construction Documents.** When the remaining portion of the building or structure is approved, the subsequent final construction documents must include all sheets from the previously approved foundation-only construction documents. The cover sheet or index sheet of the final construction documents for the remaining work must include a note stating the extent of work covered by the foundation-only permit, the project number for the foundation-only permit, and the name(s) of the staff that reviewed the project.
12. **Retention of Construction Documents.** A copy of the approved foundation-only construction documents will be required at the time the foundation-only permit is issued. A copy of the approved final construction documents will be required when the subsequent building permit is issued. All copies will be kept in the office until the project is completed.
13. **Plan Review, Permit and Development Impact Fees.** Plan check fees based on the total construction valuation for the entire project shall be paid at the time initial construction documents are submitted. Permit fees based on 25% of the total construction valuation shall be paid at the time the foundation-only permit is issued including any special inspection, C&D deposit, and processing and surcharge fees. The remaining permit fees based on 75% of the total construction valuation shall be paid at the time the subsequent building permit is issued including any special inspection, school district development fee, and processing and surcharge fees. Development impact fees (i.e., Transportation, Park and Recreation, Police and Fire Facilities) shall be collected prior to final building inspection or issuance of the certificate of occupancy. Other development impact fees (i.e., sewer capacity charge and county sanitation fee) shall be collected at the time the plumbing sub-trade permit (or early start sub-trade permit) is issued.

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After issuance of the foundation-only permit, the following steps should be taken to ensure that all parties involved in the construction work fully understand the approved scope of work and how the inspection will be performed.

1. **Preconstruction Meeting.** The owner(s) or owner's representative(s) shall arrange a preconstruction meeting to be attended by the registered design professional(s) responsible for the design, structural observer, contractor, affected subcontractors, deputy inspectors, and the building inspector, if available. As a minimum, teleconference meetings between various parties shall be held before the start of construction. The purpose of the meeting shall be to identify the scope of work involved in the foundation-only permit, when appropriate inspection request should be made, and at what level construction work cannot proceed beyond until the subsequent building permit is obtained for the remaining construction work. A record of the meeting shall be included as part of the first structural observation report submitted to the building inspector.
2. **Inspection of Construction Work.** During the first called inspection, the building inspector will meet with the contractor(s) to confirm the scope of work and type of inspection permitted on the approved foundation-only construction documents. The contractor(s) will be reminded that no construction work shall proceed pass the work indicated on the approved foundation-only construction documents until the subsequent building permit for the remaining portion of the building or structure is issued. Request for inspection beyond the foundation-only level without securing the required subsequent building permit may result in the delay of the project.

If you wish to obtain a foundation-only permit as described in this information bulletin, you should notify staff as soon as possible.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Assumption of Risk Agreement for Foundation-Only Permit
- Assumption of Risk Agreement for Early Start Sub-Trade Permit