



Public Information

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • Planning Division
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How Can I Split My Lot?

A general guide to the subdivision process in Ventura County

What is "Splitting a Lot" (or Subdividing)?

A lot split is the legal division of any lot into two or more lots, for the purpose of sale, lease or financing, now or in the future.

Is governmental approval required for all lot splits?

Almost all lot splits/land divisions require governmental review and approval. Exemptions are listed in Section 8201-4 of the County Subdivision Ordinance. Land divisions are regulated both by State law and by the Ventura County Subdivision Ordinance.

What is the purpose of the laws which regulate subdivisions?

California first adopted the Subdivision Map Act in 1907, and has substantially revised it since. The law was created to encourage orderly community development and to prevent fraud in real estate dealings.

The Ventura County Board of Supervisors has also adopted a local Subdivision Ordinance. The Ordinance ensures appropriate subdivision standards, such as lot design and street patterns are met, and basic services such as drinkable water and proper access are provided. It also guarantees that areas dedicated to the public are properly improved so as not to become an undue burden upon the general taxpayer. The Ordinance is an important part of the physical development process of our County.

Processing a subdivision OVERVIEW

1* **Presubmittal Meeting**

2* **Application Submittal**

3* **Application Review & Environmental Document Determination**

4 **Environmental Document Preparation & Review**

5* **Final determination on Tentative Map**

6* **Final Map & Recordation**

7* **Zoning Clearance & Bldg. Permit**

* See text section; "What steps & what permits/approvals are needed to divide land?"

What are the possible consequences of subdividing without government approval?

See Ventura County Public Information Brochure, "What is an Illegal Lot?"

What are the important issues to consider when dividing land?

1. Is the proposed division consistent with the County's General Plan?
2. Is it consistent with Zoning Code standards, such as minimum lot area?
3. Are the topography and other site conditions suitable for development?
4. Are there geological hazards such as earthquake faults or landslides?
5. Can County design and layout standards be met? In other words, are all the proposed lots usable?
6. Can Fire Department and Public Works minimum requirements for roads be met?
7. Is sufficient water of adequate quality available? Is there enough water pressure to meet Fire Department standards?
8. Can the new lots be served by a sewer system? If not, can septic systems be successfully installed at the site?
9. Are other public services and facilities available, (i.e. storm drainage, utilities, etc.)

10. Is the project compatible with nearby existing and proposed land uses?
11. Are there any special environmental factors (noise, archaeology, flora/fauna, air quality, water quality etc.) that would be adversely affected?
12. Are there easements that may affect the proposed division?
13. Is merger an issue? (See Ventura County's Public Information Brochure "What is Merger.")

Caution: The satisfactory resolution of these issues can require professional analysis, and the cost of these services should be obtained from private professionals prior to serious consideration. This analysis is sometimes very expensive.

How much is the County Planning Division filing fee?

Filing fees have been established by the Board of Supervisors. Fees are actually deposits, to which various agencies will charge staff time during the processing of your tentative map.

All deposit fees must be paid at time of application filing. If funds remain after processing, a refund will be issued. If processing costs exceed the deposit, the billing will be issued to the total balance that exceeds deposit.

The Planning Division Fee Schedule can be viewed at <https://vcrma.org/en/planning-permit-fees>

Are there other costs?

In addition to processing fees, you may have to pay for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report if one is required. You may also be responsible for all costs of providing basic services (drinking water, proper access, etc.); protecting against hazards (flood control, fire, etc.); a professional land survey; possible park, sheriff, school, traffic mitigation and other fees; and any other cost of meeting the conditions of approval of the land division. There are also fees for Public Works Agency (Survey and Mapping) to check the Final/Parcel map.

What steps and what permits/approvals are needed to divide land?

- 1. Request a presubmittal evaluation of proposal at Planning Counter.** A fee may be charged for this service.
- 2. Obtain and prepare application package.**
 - a. Prior to preparation, consult other agencies such as Public Works, Fire Department and Environmental Health, regarding access, road standards, water availability, and other issues cited above (1-13).
 - b. Obtain appointment with Planning Staff and submit application package.
- 3. Application review & environmental evaluation.**
 - a. Application is submitted with proper deposit fee.
 - b. Planning staff and other agencies review case for 30 days to determine adequacy of the application.
 - c. Staff issues letter regarding application completeness (or incompleteness).
 - d. Staff determines the type of environmental document needed for the project.
- 4. Environmental Document preparation & review.** Staff (or private consultant) prepares appropriate environmental document. If necessary, it is reviewed by Environmental Report Review Committee in a public hearing.
- 5. Final determination on Tentative Tract (5 or more lots) or Parcel Map (4 or fewer lots).**
 - a. On Planning Director approved projects like parcel maps, the Planning Director (or designee) signs approval letter following an Administrative Hearing, or
 - b. Planning Commission hearing is held, followed by Board of Supervisors hearing (on major decisions involving 5 or more lots).
- 6. Final Map or Parcel Map prepared, and submitted to Public Works for review.** The map is then recorded with the County Clerk, and the Zoning Clearance and building permits may then be granted for building on the new lot(s).

CAUTION: This brochure is only a general guide. Subdividing land can be an extremely complex and costly process. Before doing anything, a complete consultation with the appropriate local authorities of Ventura County is advised to avoid unnecessary or wasted expenditures.

BEFORE PROCEEDING, please contact the Ventura County Planning Division at 805/654-2488 or 805/656-1500 ext. 2488, or visit our website at www.vcrma.org/divisions/planning.