Submittal Requirements for Residential Decks or Balconies
(Submit 3 sets of drawings and two sets of all other documents)

This document outlines the submittal requirements unique to decks or balconies associated with residential construction.

Decks or balconies not exceeding 18 inches above grade at all points around the perimeter of the deck do not require a building permit and are not regulated relative to the property lines.

For decks or balconies requiring a permit, drawings must be prepared showing the following information:

1. Project Information
   a) Parcel address
   b) Detailed descriptions of the scope of work
   c) Property owner’s name and address
   d) The designer’s name, address and telephone number. The plans must be signed and dated by the designer.
   
   Note: The Building Division requires decks or balconies 30-inches or higher above the adjacent grade to be designed by a California licensed architect or engineer.
   e) List the currently applicable building and residential codes on the top sheet of plans. Obtain the edition years from the Building Division web page.
   f) When a new balcony is proposed for apartment or condo building, specify on the cover sheet the type of construction of the building and if the building has fire sprinkler system.

2. Site Plan Sheet – This sheet is needed to clearly show the location of the deck or balcony that is associated with the proposed work. This sheet is required regardless of whether the deck or balcony is new, replaced or simply being repaired. This document will be imaged as part of the permit records to accurately describe the scope of work. The site plan should be drawn to no smaller than 1/8”=1’0” scale. Include the following information on the site plan:
   a) Property lines that define the parcel.
   b) Required zoning setbacks relative to the property lines. These may be obtained by calling the Community Development Department at 925-943-5834 and asking for a planner on counter duty. The setbacks are a function of the lot’s zoning classification.
   c) Location of all easements. No deck or balcony will be allowed to be constructed into an existing easement.
   d) Outline of all existing buildings and accessory buildings
   e) Use a shaded or solid area to define the scope of work.
   f) Location of all trees and their associated drip lines, including trees from adjacent property which have drip lines onto the subject property
   g) Location and layout of any private sewer disposal system, including septic tank and leach field routing.
   h) Location of any potable water wells.
   i) Provide a reference north arrow.
3. Construction Plans
   a) Provide existing and proposed plans. Submit floor plans to a minimum scale of $\frac{1}{4}''=1’-0’’$ to fully dimension the layout of the deck or balcony. Provide section detail references on the floor plans to point to specific details of the construction of guardrails and exterior stairs. (If a new door is to be provided to provide access to the deck or balcony from the interior of the residence, then please refer to the submittal requirements for Window and Door remodels for additional plan requirements.)
   b) Provide exterior elevations of the deck or balcony. The elevation must show the complete layout of the guard system to be used where open sides of the deck or balcony walking surface are more than 30 inches above grade within 36 inches horizontally. Provide section detail references on the elevations and floor plan to point to specific details of the construction of the guardrail system and ornamentation. Guards shall be a minimum of 42-inches above the deck or balcony and not allow a 4-inch sphere to pass through. Accurate slopes of grade must be shown in the plans on the elevations and building cross sections.
   c) Provide cross sections through the deck or balcony. Include a minimum of two orthogonal cross sections through the deck or balcony – one parallel with the outside wall of the residence and one perpendicular to the existing residence. These sections must clarify beam line construction and framing of the deck or balcony to the existing building. Provide section detail references on the sections that point to specific details as listed below.
   d) Provide a foundation plan drawn to a minimum $\frac{1}{4}''=1’-0’’$ scale. Specify the foundation system for the deck or balcony framing. Show locations and dimensions of footings or piers. Provide section detail references on the foundation plan to point to the foundation details and the post-to-foundation details.
   e) Provide a deck or balcony framing plan drawn to a minimum $\frac{1}{4}''=1’-0’’$ scale. Provide section detail references at the deck or balcony to building interface. Specify framing member sizes for ledgers, joists posts and girders.
   f) Provide specific details of the following connections: Concrete foundation’s depth, width, reinforcement, and clearance above grade; post-to-footing detail; post-to-beam detail; deck or balcony-to-building attachment detail; flashing of the exterior wall detail where the deck or balcony attaches to the exterior wall of the residence.
   g) Provide elevation/section details to clearly indicate what elements or systems are being used to provide lateral bracing to the deck or balcony in two orthogonal directions. For example, these may include cross braces or tension-only ties between posts to handle the deck or balcony parallel to the existing building. For the traverse direction (perpendicular to the exterior wall of the residence), two horizontal hold-downs attaching the deck or balcony to the residence’s floor system are required. In any case, the plans must contain clear and specific details for the lateral support system to be used.
   h) If stairs are proposed with the deck or balcony, provide complete framing and construction details of the stair system. Provide specific details for the handrails, guards, headroom clearance, rise and run of treads and landings.
   i) When impervious moisture barrier system is used, details for all elements of impervious moisture barrier system and manufacturer’s installation instructions shall be provided on plan.

4. Foundation/Soils Report
   A foundation/soils report may be required when any of the following conditions apply:
   a) The site slopes exceed 1V:3H.
   b) The engineer or architect incorporates allowable design values higher than that associated with the allowable design values corresponding to Class of Materials Item 5 of CBC Table 1806.2.
   c) The site is located within an Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zone.
   d) The site has a known history of soil related problems (e.g., creep, settlement, lateral spreading, etc.).

5. Technical requirements:
   a) Uniform live load of decks or balconies shall be 1.5 times the live load for the area served, but not required to exceed 100 psf.
   b) Wood structural members that support moisture permeable floors, such as concrete or masonry, shall
be of naturally durable or preservative-treated wood unless separated from such floors by an impervious moisture barrier. The impervious moisture barrier system protecting the structure supporting floors shall provide positive drainage of water that infiltrates the moisture-permeable floor topping.

c) All elements of impervious moisture barrier system shall have special inspections.
d) Enclosed framing shall be provided with openings that provide a net free cross ventilation area not less than 1/150 of the area of each separate space.

6. Conditions:
a) A Construction Debris Recycling Plan is required on permits where the valuation is $50,000 or greater, or the floor area affected is 1,000 square feet or greater, or more than 300 square feet of surface area is demolished, or if the building’s conditioned area, volume or size is increased.
b) Noncompliant plumbing fixtures with water-conserving plumbing fixtures shall be replaced.
c) For new decks, the applicant must obtain Contra Costa Sanitary District’s approval prior to issuance of the permit.
d) Contra Costa County Fire Protection District approval is required for new balconies proposed for apartment and condo buildings.