

Soils Report Requirement Guidelines

The following types of projects are provided to help the applicant determine whether their project will require submittal of a [Soils \(or Geotechnical\) Report](#). Soils Reports are typically not required for non-habitable structures. Please note that the Planning Department reserves the right to require soils reports for projects that are not listed below. The County Geologist or a Registered Civil Engineer on the Planning Department staff will make the final determination.

1. A single-family, multi-family or habitable accessory building
2. A commercial building, industrial building or critical facility
3. An addition to any of the above which is located on slopes greater than 20%, located on fill, located in an area of potential liquefaction, or located in a flood plain, floodway or coastal high hazard zone
4. An addition to a single-family, multi-family or habitable accessory building greater than 500 square feet
5. An addition to a commercial building, industrial building or critical facility greater than 250 square feet
6. Any repair, reconstruction, alteration, addition, or improvement of a habitable building that modifies or replaces more than fifty (50) percent of the total length of the exterior walls, exclusive of interior and exterior wall coverings and the replacing of windows or doors without altering their openings. This allows a total modification or replacement of up to fifty (50) percent, measured as described above, whether the work is done at one time or as the sum of multiple projects during the life of the building
7. The addition of habitable space to any building, where the addition increases the habitable space by more than fifty (50) percent over the existing habitable space, measured in square feet. This allows a total increase of up to fifty (50) percent of the original habitable space of a building, whether the additions are constructed at one time or as the sum of multiple additions during the life of the building
8. An addition of any size to a building that is located on a coastal bluff, dune, or in the coastal hazard area, that extends the existing building in a seaward direction
9. Installation of a new foundation for a habitable building
10. The repair, replacement, or upgrade of an existing foundation of a habitable building that affects more than fifty (50) percent of the foundation (measured in linear feet for perimeter foundations, square feet for slab foundations, or fifty (50) percent of the total number of piers), or an addition to an existing foundation that adds more than fifty (50) percent of the original foundation area. This allows repair, upgrade, or addition up to fifty (50) percent, measured as described above, whether the work is performed at one time or as the sum of multiple projects during the life of the building
11. Any change of use from non-habitable to habitable use, according to the definition of "habitable" found in Section 16.10.040 of the Santa Cruz County Code, or a change of use from any non-critical facility to a critical facility
12. Any alteration of any building posted "Unsafe to Occupy" due to geologic hazards
13. Retaining walls which require a building permit, retaining walls that function as a part of a landslide repair whether or not a building permit is required, sea walls, and gravity walls
14. Bridges
15. Water tanks greater than 10,000 gallons
16. Above ground commercial storage facilities for hazardous or flammable material
17. Proposed building sites or access roadways located on property having undocumented or unpermitted grading (such as log landings, logging roads or prior unauthorized grading)
18. Grading with cuts or fills over three feet in height located within five feet (horizontally) of a property line, or grading that has the potential to cause instability or other grading related impacts to adjacent property
19. Access roadways that include fill greater than 2'
20. Grading on slopes greater than 20%
21. Creation of cut or fill slopes five feet or greater in height related to slope stabilization, landslide repairs, or streambank protection
22. Grading activities where there is evidence of high groundwater or spring activity
23. Any portion of development located within a FEMA floodplain or floodway
24. Coastal protection structures
25. Land Divisions