

# What is Considered “Development/Development Activity” per the Geologic Hazards Ordinance?

Santa Cruz County Code section 16.10.040(19) defines *Development/Development Activities* as a project that includes activity in any of the following categories. Note: this chapter does not supersede SCCC 13.20.040 for purposes of determining whether a certain activity or project is considered development that requires a *coastal permit*; some activities and projects will require coastal permits although they do not fall under any of the following specific definitions:

- a) The construction or placement of any habitable structure, including a manufactured home and including a non-residential structure occupied by property owners, employees and/or the public;
- b) Modification, reconstruction or replacement of 65 percent of the major structural components—consisting of the foundation, floor framing, exterior wall framing, and roof framing—of an existing habitable structure within any consecutive five-year period, or modification, reconstruction or replacement of 50 percent of the major structural components of an existing critical structure or facility, as defined by this chapter, within any consecutive five-year period, whether the work is done at one time or as the sum of multiple projects. For the purpose of this section, the following are not considered major structural components: exterior siding; nonstructural door and window replacement; roofing material; decks; chimneys; and interior elements including but not limited to interior walls and sheetrock, insulation, kitchen and bathroom fixtures, mechanical, electrical and plumbing fixtures. The extent of alterations to major structural components will be calculated in accordance with administrative guidelines adopted by resolution of the Board of Supervisors;
- c) The addition of habitable square footage to any structure, where the addition increases the habitable square footage by more than 50 percent or 500 square feet, whichever is greater, over the existing habitable space within a consecutive five-year period. This allows a total increase of up to 50 percent of the original habitable space of a structure, whether the additions are constructed at one time or as the sum of multiple additions over a consecutive five-year period;
- d) An addition of any size to a structure that is located on a coastal bluff, dune, or in the coastal hazard area, that extends the existing structure in a seaward direction;
- e) A division of land or the creation of one or more new building sites, except where a land division is accomplished by the acquisition of such land by a public agency for public recreational use;
- f) Any change of use from nonhabitable to habitable, according to the definition of “habitable” found in this section, or a change of use from any noncritical structure to a critical structure;
- g) Any repair, alteration, reconstruction, replacement or addition affecting any structure that meets either of the following criteria:

- h) Posted “Limited Entry” or “Unsafe to Occupy” due to geologic hazards, or
  - a. (ii) Located on a site associated with slope stability concerns, such as sites affected by existing or potential debris flows;
- i) Grading activities of any scale in the 100-year floodplain or the coastal hazard area, and any grading activity which requires a permit pursuant to Chapter 16.20 SCCC;
- j) Construction of roads, utilities, or other facilities;
- k) 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, rip-rap erosion protection or retaining structures, and gabion baskets;
- l) Installation of a septic system;
- m) Any human-made change to developed or undeveloped real estate in the special flood hazard area, including but not limited to buildings or other structures, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavation, drilling operations, or storage of equipment or materials. This is in addition to any activity listed in subsections (19)(a) through (k) of this section;
- n) Any other project that is defined as development under SCCC 13.20.040, and that will increase the number of people exposed to geologic hazards, or that is located within a mapped geologic hazard area, or that may create or exacerbate an existing geologic hazard, shall be determined by the Planning Director to constitute development for the purposes of geologic review.