

## Being a Good Neighbor

In Carmel's early days, most projects could be completed in 30 days and many times by a single contractor! Today, projects can take years with many subs and large vehicles. We suggest being mindful of your neighbors by doing the following:

- **Living the Design:** Take extra time to consider and mock-up your design to minimize expensive and time consuming changes. Take advantage of City resources and outside professionals. The City also offers pre-application meetings.
- **Communicate:** Talk to impacted neighbors early in the project and make them a partner. Most don't like surprises and may like to be involved.
- **Ask Contractors to Be "Neighbors":** Your contractor should put themselves in your neighbors' shoes. Try not to park in "their" spot and minimize the number of trucks onsite.
- **Honor the Hours:** Rules allow you to work 8 am to 6:30 pm M-Sat, but please respect the effect your project can have on a calm neighborhood.
- **Drive Slowly & Quietly:** Remind workers that their large trucks cause significant noise. Insist on them driving mindfully and under 20 mph.
- **Keep a Clean Worksite:** It is impossible for a worksite to always be perfectly clean, but keep in mind the impact you are having on what is typically a clean and orderly neighborhood.
- **Keep a Quiet Worksite:** Try to eliminate or minimize the use of radios and loud talking. Avoid the use of particularly noisy power tools before 9 am and after 4 pm and warn neighbors of planned intrusive activities like cement pours or activities with cranes or large tractors.
- **Keep Trailers Off the Street:** Please try to park trailers off the street or easements.

## City Meetings

We strongly encourage you to attend the Carmel City Council and various Commission meetings to get a feel for how decisions are evaluated and made. This includes the Forest & Beach Commission, Planning Commission, and Historic Resources Board. You will be able to meet fellow citizens who play a key role in the process, and gain valuable experience seeing, first hand, other citizens getting feedback on their projects.

There are also other organizations that can play a role in providing valuable information:

*Friends of Carmel Forest:* [www.carmelforest.org](http://www.carmelforest.org).

*Carmel Heritage Society:* [www.carmelheritage.org](http://www.carmelheritage.org).

*Carmel Public Library:* <https://ci.carmel.ca.us/library>

## About CarmelCares

CarmelCares is a self-funded, grassroots effort dedicated to partnering with the City, other citizen groups, and local businesses using non-traditional communication methods to solve difficult problems such as traffic calming, pedestrian safety, town beautification, and historical preservation. We currently work with over 30 local businesses, the CRA, Sustainable Carmel, and others and are actively working on projects throughout the City.

## About the CRA

The Carmel Residents Association's (CRA) role is to support the needs and vision of our citizens, provide social opportunities to bring people together, and be an active participant in processes that can affect the overall direction of our community and protect things in our community that make it a special place. This includes the size and type of homes and commercial buildings that are built and changes made to them.

The CRA attends all City Council and Commission meetings to keep abreast and communicate about their opinion of projects and decisions up for approval. We encourage you to join the CRA and take an active role in keeping Carmel-by-the-Sea the beautiful, quiet, safe, and friendly place it has always been and should always be. You can join the CRA at: [www.carmelresidents.org/join-cra](http://www.carmelresidents.org/join-cra).



## Are You Thinking About Improving Your Property in Carmel-by-the-Sea?



Carmel-by-the Sea citizen groups created this brochure to provide an overview of the processes used by the City's Community Planning and Building Department to initiate and approve residential permits.

The goal of this brochure is to assist you plan and execute successful projects that will help in preserving the unique character of our "Village in the Forest".

All construction projects are challenging and Carmel certainly has its share of twists and turns. However, we feel that if you use the City's updated information and personnel resources, get professional assistance and are patient along the way, your project can be accomplished efficiently and with great results.

Thank you for your consideration and commitment to improving our community.

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## Planning

The Planning Division processes all development applications to ensure they adhere to the General Plan. Each project is assigned to a Planner who guides the applicant through the submission process. Planners try to simplify the process for applicants, but large projects can still be complex and take a considerable amount of time. Planners also perform inspections to check for compliance to approved plans at key points in the project.

## Building Safety

The Building Safety Division is responsible for the permitting and inspection of construction projects within the City. These duties include:

- Reviewing permit applications to ensure compliance with Municipal and State Codes.
- Conducting inspections of approved projects.
- Issuing certificates of occupancy.

The Building Safety Division prides itself in having a first review period of less than one week and strives for next-day scheduling of inspections.

## Inspectors

The Inspector's job is to ensure that all construction work has been done in accordance with local, state, and national building codes. You should develop a good relationship with your inspector and view his work as making sure your contractors' work is done properly. This can avoid costly and time consuming fixes after your project is completed.

## Compliance

The Code Compliance Division ensures compliance with the Carmel Municipal Code and provides public education and outreach on existing laws as well as resolving code violations. Code compliance activities are usually initiated through both citizen complaints and City staff observations.

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## How to Get Started

- **Learn the Basics:** Almost all projects now require a permit, including simple ones like installing a new water heater. However, many simply require filling out a form and getting an over-the-counter approval.
- **Use the Permit Application:** There is one application that should cover most situations. Here is a link: <http://bit.ly/buildingapplications>.
- **Track One Project:** Basic projects that add less than 10% to the floor area or introduce minor exterior changes may qualify for a Track One project. They can take as little as two to three weeks and are approved at staff level. Check out: <http://bit.ly/trackoneproject>.
- **Track Two Project:** These are larger projects that propose 10% or greater change in floor area, are demolition and reconstruction jobs, or have other large site improvements. They will require Planning Commission approval and can take a minimum of three to four months. Check out: <http://bit.ly/tracktwoject>.
- **Hire a Professional:** There are many talented and experienced designers, architects, contractors and associated professionals who understand our processes. You are also allowed to "do it yourself" by being what is known as an Owner-Builder. However, you should understand the pros and cons of this before making the decision to go on your own.

## For More Information

The Planning and Building Department stands ready to partner with you on your next project. Their website has a wealth of information and many of your questions may be answered there. Start with <http://bit.ly/planninghandouts>. If you still have questions, call 831 620-2010 or come in to the Planning Desk at City Hall. An electronic permit system is available primarily to save time and money on large projects. You should ask if a Pre-meeting or 1 hour Permit by Appointment meeting is available for your particular project.

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## Things to Keep in Mind

- **Historic Resources:** Carmel values its storied history and hundreds of homes are classified as historic. This can restrict the kinds of changes you can make but there are also benefits. Ask about this as a good first step in your project.
- **Overlay Districts:** There are several types of Overlay Districts that can increase the time and cost of preparing your project plans. Examples include Beach, Downtown, Park, Archeologic, and Environmental. Check if you are in one.
- **Boilerplate:** Larger projects require a large number of boilerplate pages with requirements such as storm water runoff, traffic management, and waste disposal plans.
- **Property Information:** Information about most properties in Carmel-by-the-Sea is available at the Planning window. You can check out prior projects on your house and adjoining ones.
- **Water Credits:** All water fixtures require credits and each house has a limited number. Check with the Water District regarding the current fixture count for your property.
- **Fire Sprinklers:** Projects that modify more than 50% of the walls will require fire sprinklers.
- **Trees:** Carmel loves trees and each project will require a certain number and type of trees. The trees and their roots must also be protected.
- **Setbacks and Building and Fence Height:** There are rules on where the house can be placed as well as building and fence heights.
- **Site Coverage:** Strict rules govern lot coverage for both the structures and landscaping.
- **Sustainability:** Your architect can tell you how you can make your project more sustainable.
- **Solar Requirement:** Starting in 2020 all new construction will require a solar power system.
- **Complete Your Submittal Package:** Use City checklists to be sure your submittal package is complete. This can make approvals much faster.