



## INFORMATION SHEET

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**NO. G-19**

**DATE** : November 3, 2014

**SUBJECT** : General

**TITLE** : **Permit Processing Guidelines for Play Areas and Play Components at the City and County of San Francisco (City) Owned, Leased, or Publicly Funded Sites**

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**PURPOSE** : To clarify the permit processing by the different permit review agencies for play area and play components at City owned or leased or publically funded sites as scoped by the CBC Section 11B-240 for play areas.

**REFERENCES** : **California Building Code (CBC) Sections:**  
11B-240 Play Areas  
11B-1008 Play Areas  
**San Francisco Building Code (SFBC) Sections:**  
106A Permits  
**California Health and Safety Code (CHSC) Sections:**  
115725-115750 (January 1, 2008)

**DISCUSSION** : Since January 1, 1992, the State of California has regulated the design and construction of play equipment for public use under the CHSC Sections 115725-115750. Prior to 2014, the CBC did not cover building permit requirements for playgrounds, play equipment, and play areas. As of January 1, 2014, the 2013 CBC adopted the accessibility provisions for playgrounds, play equipment, and play areas from the 2010 Americans with Disabilities Act Standards (2010 ADAS) Section 11B. Building permits are now clearly required.

Before 2014, new construction or alteration plans for City play area projects were reviewed for accessibility and CHSC compliance by Mayor's Office on Disability (MOD) or Department of Public Works Disability Access Coordination (DPW-DAC). But unless the play area was part of larger capital improvement projects that included new construction or alterations of existing buildings, or other permitted structures such as retaining walls, the other permit agencies such as Department of Building Inspection (DBI), Planning Department and San Francisco Fire Department (SFFD) lacked a defined permit review role.

**Project Classifications:**

A. City Projects are buildings or sites that are owned, leased, or publicly funded in whole or in part and by or on behalf of the City of San Francisco.

1. Examples include but are not limited to City offices and clinics, City occupied leased spaces, libraries, parks, and playgrounds including those built by philanthropic groups on City land, publicly funded affordable housing, and community development projects.

2. Funding sources include but are not limited to General Obligation Bonds, General Funds, RPD Community Opportunity Fund, MOH and MOHCD, OEWD, philanthropic gifts and State or Federal grants issued to the City.

3. City Projects shall be reviewed for accessibility compliance by either the Mayor's Office on Disability (MOD) or the DPW Disability Access Coordinator (DPW-DAC) prior to submittal to Department of Building Inspection (DBI) for permit processing. DPW-DAC reviews City Projects designed, managed, or built by DPW. MOD reviews the other City Projects including publicly funded affordable housing.

B. General Projects are play area installations that are located on private property and are privately funded. These projects will be reviewed for accessibility and other building code requirements by DBI.

C. San Francisco Unified School District or San Francisco Community College District Projects are play area installations that are located on public properties which are under the jurisdiction for permits and reviews for accessibility by other state agencies. DBI, MOD or DPW-DAC have no role overseeing these projects.

**City Projects Types with play areas and play components:**

A. New Construction or Alteration Projects Containing New Play Areas. These are new construction or alteration projects where a new play area is ancillary to the buildings and facilities constructed or altered on the site. These projects may include the construction of privately or publicly funded housing, recreation facilities, libraries or community centers. Path of travel obligations may be required where a new play area is added or substantially replaced.

B. Existing Recreation Projects Adding New Play Areas. These are existing sites where new play areas, play components and other related recreational elements are added to or replaced at the site; the site may have existing buildings or other habitable structures that are not being proposed for alteration. Path of travel obligations may be required where a new play area is added or substantially replaced.

C. Failing Playgrounds. These are existing play areas, play components and play area use zones that are being replaced due to failure. Examples include Recreation and Parks Department's 2012 Bond Failing Playgrounds project that specifically seeks to replace composite play structures that contain arsenic impregnated wood, deteriorated fiberglass and metal and play area surfacing composed of sand and/or deteriorated rubber, material.

D. Play Area Maintenance Projects. These are maintenance and or repairs to existing play areas and play components equipment where less than 50% of the play structures or composite components are replaced. Note: this type of repair project would not typically require a Building Permit.

**Agency reviews for City Projects:**

Site improvements with new construction or alteration of buildings, facilities and play areas will be reviewed by:

- A. MOD or DPW-DAC for CBC Chapter 11B Accessibility compliance.
- B. Planning Department for CEQA and other Planning requirements, when applicable.
- C. DBI for permitting, structural, architectural requirements and for the assignment of an occupancy classification.
- D. SFFD for exiting if the area is 750 square feet or greater, and if the play area is enclosed by a perimeter fence or other facility, or if a play area of any size is located on an above grade roof top or below grade. As part of their review, SFFD will verify egress path, egress width calculations, and occupant load.
- E. PUC for water related features.
- F. Electrical, plumbing when appropriate.

**Permit Application submittal and routing for City Projects:**

## Pre-permit submittal

City Projects shall be reviewed for accessibility by either DPW-DAC or MOD prior to filing for a permit. (See discussion under Project Classifications Section A3)

## Permit Submittal

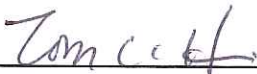
- A. For all projects, permit intake begins at the 1<sup>st</sup> floor DBI Public Information Counter:
  - 1. DBI reviews the scope of work and determines that the description of work is clearly indicated on the permit application as new construction, replacement, or alteration of play area and play components.
  - 2. For City Projects, DBI also verifies the plans have been reviewed and approved by either MOD or the DPW-DAC.
  - 3. DBI verifies that the applicant has two sets of plans, and that the submittal meets all applicable standards including that the sheet size is 11"x17" minimum.
  - 4. DBI refers the applicant to Central Permit Bureau at the first floor for intake for larger projects. Larger projects will be taken in for processing and routed through the different applicable reviewing authorities.

B. For Over the Counter (OTC) plan review, the applicant should proceed to the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor after intake on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. Please note: OTC process is only possible if the project meets DBI's criteria and can be processed within approximately one hour by each routed reviewing station. Plan reviewers will:

1. Conduct an initial screening of application and plans,
2. Verify that the project is publically funded,
3. Verify that either DPW-DAC or MOD has reviewed the plan for accessibility (see Discussion item Project Classifications Section A3) and verifies that the Disabled Access checklist is included and that either the MOD or DPW Access Compliance for City Funded Projects forms are on the cover sheet of each plan set,
4. Complete the routing slip and refer the project to the Planning Department for over the counter approval, Note: a Planning Department OTC approval may require the project applicant to have an advanced letter granting a Categorical Exemption from further environmental review.
5. After approval, the Planning Department representative will route the applicant to the Fifth floor for the remainder of the approval process that may include DBI, Fire Department, Public Utilities Commission and other appropriate stations,
6. The final plan reviewer on the fifth floor will route the applicant to the cashier at fifth floor.

**Permit Application submittal and routing for General Projects (i.e. privately funded projects located on private property:)**

The review would be the same as the review for City Projects except that DPW-DAC or MOD would not participate in review the project for accessibility. DBI will review all play area installations for accessibility and other code requirements when the play areas are located on private property and are privately funded Recommendation: Review the ADA Play Area Brochure and use the MOD Play area inventory form as an accessibility guide. (Both documents are available on the MOD website under the Plan Review and Approval heading).

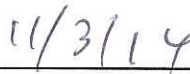


Tom C. Hui, S.E., C.B.O.

Director

Department of Building Inspection

Date



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