



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

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Geotechnical Evaluation Guidance

All hillside projects will require some level of evaluation of the on-site soils. The scope of a project can greatly impact the level of geotechnical evaluation necessary for Public Works to approve a project. This can range between professional verification subgrade suitability prior to placement of foundation elements to a full geotechnical report assembled and stamped by a geotechnical engineer. The list below provides some generic guidelines for Soils Assessments to assist in preparation of materials prior to entering the permitting process.

It is the sole responsibility of project applicants and their hired professionals to determine the suitability of any site for proposed construction. Public Works provides information and requirements as guidance for navigation of the permitting process and meeting base criteria, as determined by Public Works and Planning, for establishing suitability and meeting City policy. Approval of permits does not excuse the applicant and their professionals from taking all necessary actions to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Small projects

Examples:

Decks, pergola, small walls (less than 4 ft, "landscaping" walls, not supporting slopes or structures etc.)

Report Required:

Subgrade inspection of prepared base prior to installation, completed during construction.

Small-Medium

Examples:

Small to medium retaining walls that alter natural hillside slopes or support structures or pools. Projects with "significant" earthwork or structures with continuous concrete footings.

Report Required:

"Limited geotech" defined as a 1-2 page report based on an on-site evaluation and stamped by a qualified licensed professional. This assessment can typically be based on as little as a single hand-boring on the property, if the professional deems that it provides enough information to identify the soils and assure they are sufficient for the proposed work.

Full Lot Construction or Development – 'Large' Projects

Examples:

Construction of a single-family residence, pool near a slope, etc, multiple or large retaining walls, or projects involving significant earth movement and compaction.

Report Required:

Full geotechnical report.