



City of Santa Barbara

ZIR SITE INSPECTIONS COMMON QUESTIONS

A Zoning Information Report (ZIR) is required for every transfer of residential property (except condominiums) located within the City of Santa Barbara. This requirement **cannot** be waived by the owner or potential buyer. The purpose of the ZIR is to provide information to the potential buyer regarding the zoning and permitted use of the property. As part of the ZIR preparation, a physical inspection of the property is performed. The following is a list of frequently asked questions and answers regarding the ZIR site inspection.

What is the purpose of the physical site inspection?

The site inspection is performed to identify the buildings, structures, and improvements on the property, as well as their associated uses, for comparison with the City's official records.

What should I expect during the site inspection?

The ZIR inspector will meet with either the owner or agent on site and explain the purpose of the inspection, the areas that will be inspected, and answer any questions the owner or agent may have regarding the inspection itself and the City's regulations and policies. The ZIR inspector will take notes and photographs during the inspection.

Who must be present for the site inspection?

An adult must be present for the site inspection. This can be the seller, buyer, or agent for either party; tenant; or any other person over the age of 18. Failure of a representative to be present for the site inspection will result in the need to schedule a new inspection and assessment of a re-inspection fee.

How long does a site inspection take?

Most inspections take approximately 15-20 minutes; however, multi-unit properties and large estates can exceed one hour, depending on the number of units and the size of the property.

What areas of the property are inspected?

The site inspection includes the interior of all residential units and accessory structures (garages, sheds, studios, etc.), and the entire grounds of the property. Access must be available to all buildings/structures at the time of the scheduled ZIR inspection. If all interior areas are not accessible, the ZIR inspector may need to return to the site when access is available and a re-inspection fee will be charged.

If your property also contains permitted non-residential uses/structures, those areas will not be inspected.

What items are typically noted during the site inspection?

The ZIR inspector documents all buildings and structures (including trellis/patio covers, mechanical equipment, built-in barbeques, decks, fountains, pool/spa, etc.) on site and their current use for documentation in the ZIR. Items noted during the inspection include, but are not limited to, the number of residential units, number of bedrooms¹ and bathrooms, any extra sinks (laundry, bar, kitchen), accessory rooms, any building additions/alterations, location of laundry facilities, and the location of buildings/structures to determine any non-conformance with zoning requirements. Parking areas (covered and uncovered) and whether they are unobstructed for vehicular access are documented in the ZIR. Items

¹ The number of rooms used as bedrooms are noted; however, the number of bedrooms that are indicated in the ZIR is based on City archive plans.

that appear to be within setbacks, the front yard, or required open yard, and any over-height hedge or fence located on a street corner or adjacent to a driveway are also identified in the ZIR.

What if I need to cancel or reschedule the site inspection?

If you need to cancel or reschedule the site inspection, please call the Planning and Zoning Counter at (805) 564-5578 at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled inspection time. Missed appointments without prior notification will be subject to a re-inspection fee.

Why does the inspector take photographs during the inspection?

The photographs are used by the inspector, in addition to notes, to compare the exterior details (e.g., doors and windows, air conditioning units, patio covers and exterior alterations) and interior room configuration and floor plan layout to the building permit record and archive plans.

When can I expect to receive the final ZIR?

The City's goal is to provide the final written ZIR within three *working* days of the site inspection. The final ZIR is emailed to the person identified on the submitted ZIR application form. If this date cannot be met, the ZIR inspector will contact the property owner or agent to explain the reason for the delay. Delays are usually due to the need for additional information or records (such as County Assessor records) from the property owner.