

# **B-PERMIT PLAN CHECK MANUAL**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This B-Permit Plan Check Manual will attempt to give the reader insight into the submittal process, interaction with Private Engineers and applicants (developers), the use of check lists for each kind of civil design, standard plan sheets and plan notes and the use of electronic plan checking. It is the goal of the Bureau of Engineering to have uniform plan checking rules and standards citywide.

In the City of Los Angeles the Class B-Permit is used for the design and construction of major street, sewer, storm drain and structural improvements where new grades, elevations/depths and structures will be created. This is different from the Class A-Permit in which all construction is relatively minor and joins existing elevations or the S-Permit which is for sewer or storm drain connections only.

In almost all cases the conditions or requirements that will necessitate the need for a B-Permit come from Planning Case or Zoning actions. These conditions were usually jointly agreed upon by the Bureau of Engineering, Department of Transportation and the Planning Department well before the submittal of plans to be checked. However, in some instances the physical conditions of the improvement location make it impossible, impractical or extremely costly to design to the required conditions. In these cases the conditions should be modified before starting any plan checking to save the applicant unnecessary checking costs. The plan checker should determine exactly what is required for the conditions of approval and should field check where the improvements are to be constructed for unknown problems.

Sometimes a property owner wishes to improve the public improvements along the frontage of his/her property. This known as a "voluntary improvement" and all street widths and other improvements must comply with current City standards. The only exception being a street widening which is less than ultimate width where an AC berm would be permitted instead of concrete curb and gutter at the full roadway width.

B-Permit plan check is performed on an actual cost basis. This means that the checker and anyone else who works on a particular project will charge their actual hours worked to this B-Permit. The applicant will be charged those hours plus the appropriate City overheads. That means that B-Permit time charging must be as fair and accurate as possible in order to be equitable to both the City and the applicant.

## REQUIRED CHECKLISTS

In an effort to reduce the time it takes to process B-Permit plans, and to reduce costs to the applicants, the Bureau of Engineering has instituted a program where **private engineers are now required to submit completed checklists when submitting B-Permit plans for plan check**. There are **separate checklists** for Grading, Street, Storm Drain, and Sewer Plans. The checklists are available at the B-Permit Public Counter or can be found in this B-Permit Plan Check Manual under the corresponding type of design.

Before submitting plans to the Bureau of Engineering, the Private Engineer should be familiar with all Bureau of Engineering requirements, including Design Manuals and Standard Plans. These are available on the internet at no cost at: <http://eng.lacity.org/techdocs/>.

Submitted plans will be reviewed for conformance with all Bureau of Engineering requirements by a plan checker who will use the above referenced Checklists.

The first plan submittal should be as complete and accurate as possible and every item on the appropriate Checklists must be checked as either "OK" or Non-Applicable "N/A". The private engineer must sign the appropriate checklists and submit the signed checklists when submitting for B-Permit plan check. The private engineer is responsible for acquiring the checklists from the counter, or the Bureau's web site, and completing all checklists that apply. If you have any questions as to which checklists apply, please contact your plan checker.

Quality submittals take less time to approve to get the project to construction, and save the applicant money.

The improvements constructed under approved B-Permit plans and accepted by the Bureau of Contract Administration become the City's responsibility to maintain forever in the future. That is why the approved plans must be designed to City of Los Angeles standards. All approved designs should consider possible future additions or capacity needs. This does not mean there is only one way to design something and a plan checker's personal ideas should not be the only way. The goal should be "is it buildable" and will the finished product meet City standards. It must be remembered that B-Permit plans by code must be submitted by California Registered Civil Engineers and signed by them meaning they are liable for the end product. Sometimes even registered engineers do a poor job and their work is unacceptable. This situation may require some redesign and coaching by the plan checker, but it should be limited to

making the design “buildable”. It must be remembered that in most cases the Bureau of Engineering is not and should not be the designer of record for the civil portion of the B-Permit Plans. Leave the design to the private engineer as long as it is within the “parameters of acceptance”. Sometime the Bureau of Engineering does the design for charitable or civic organizations. Often the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Street Lighting design their portions of B-Permit projects.

Sometimes after the initial plan check the private engineer resubmits the plan a second time for a recheck, but did not see or ignored the corrections indicated. Therefore, before returning the plans the second time for the identical items, the plan checker should have the private engineer come to the office for a meeting to go over the corrections in person. If the third submittal still needs the same corrections, the plan checker should set up a meeting with the private engineer and the owner to resolve the problem. By involving the owner, he/she can now understand the problems that are “holding up” his/her project. This will take a lot of the pressure off of the City for the time involved in checking and the eventual claim of “excessive time charges”.