

San Mateo County Planning and Building Department

Electronic File Submittal Requirements

This document is to be used as a guide for electronic file standards for plans submitted for planning and building reviews.

FILE NAMING CONVENTION

Files should be named as concisely as possible and contain the following information:

1. The project **Case Number**. This will be omitted for the first submittal, since a case number will not yet be available. If subsequent submittals are required, a case number will have been assigned and should be used.
2. The **Location** of the project. Please use the project's Address or APN. If using an Address, please only use the Address Number and Street Name, e.g. 2500 Middlefield.
3. The **Submittal Cycle Number**, e.g. first submittal will be "Cycle1", the second will be "Cycle2".
4. The **Type of Document** being submitted, e.g. Plans, Application, Structural Calcs.

To summarize, the file name should adhere to the following format:

Case Number – Location – Cycle Number – Type of Document.pdf

Failure to use file names consistent with the convention described above may affect review times. The use of dashes is recommended to make file names more readable.

File Name Examples:

First Submittal

455-County-Center-Cycle1-Plans.pdf
455-County-Center-Cycle1-Application.pdf
455-County-Center-Cycle1-StructuralCalcs.pdf
052341250-Cycle1- Plans.pdf

Resubmittals

BLD2020-00001-455-County-Center-Cycle2-Plans.pdf
PLN2020-00001-455-County-Center-Cycle3-GeoReport.pdf
PLN2020-00001-052341250-Cycle3-GeoReport.pdf

PDF FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

Portable Document Format (PDF) is the industry standard for electronic plans. PDF files must be properly formatted as described below. Please read the following instructions carefully. Improperly formatted plans can delay the plan review process for your project.

Layers: No multiple layers. Layers must be merged or flattened.

Format: Vector preferred

File Size: 100 MB per file. 1 GB total.

Grouping: One multiple-sheet PDF (a single file with multiple sheets) for plan sets that are 100 MB or less. For plan sets that are greater than 100 MB, group by discipline, for example, Architectural, Landscape Plan, Structural, Civil.

All documents are required to be flattened, unlocked, and full-size, one-to-one format:

- Files must be unlocked or unprotected so that corrections may be identified by reviewers. Any submittal containing a file that is locked or protected will be considered incomplete and must be resubmitted.
- PDF files need to be fully flattened and should not contain any SHX text objects. SHX text objects can result when plotting PDF files from AutoCad. Use True Type fonts to allow search ability within the PDF (SHX are not searchable).
- Drawings must be submitted in black and white pdf documents, separated by discipline (e.g. architectural, structural, etc.). Drawings must be scaled and oriented correctly and must not exceed 100 MB per PDF. Scanned plans must be legible and to scale in order to be reviewed.
- Each plan sheet must be marked to clearly identify the content of the page. Example: Page A1.0 Architectural Site plan
- All pages must be rotated so that the orientation is upright.
- Zip files and PDF packages are not accepted.
- PDFs are to be correctly bookmarked to distinguish sections of the document.
- Reports and other documents must be submitted as a separate pdf for each document type (e.g. calculations, specifications, reports, studies, etc.).

DRAWING STANDARDS

- All text shall be readable and no font shall be smaller than 10 point or equivalent.
- All sheets shall be oriented so that the top of the sheet corresponds with the top of the computer monitor.
- A 5" x 5" space shall be left blank in the bottom right-hand corner of all sheets of the drawings for the County to insert an approval stamp.
- Each plan sheet needs to include the project name, APN(s) and address.

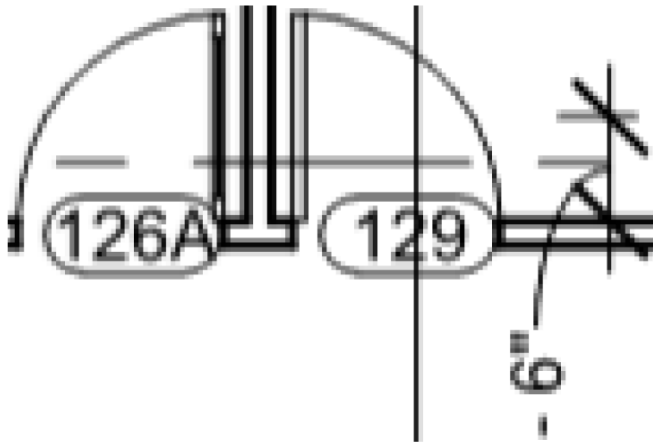
FORMATTING Q & A

Question: What is the difference between Raster and Vector files?

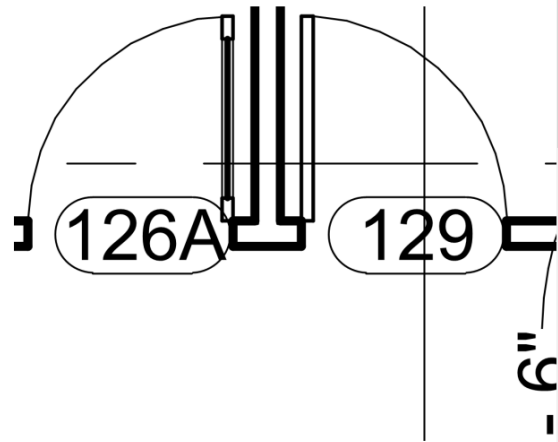
Answer:

A raster image is created from a series of square dots, called pixels or individual building blocks to form a complete image. JPEGs, GIFs, and PNGs are common raster image types. A PDF is generally a vector file. However, depending how a PDF is originally created, it can be either a vector or a raster file.

A vector-based file uses line segments to define all of the geometry on the page. Most PDFs created from CAD are vector-based. The County prefers applicants submit vector PDFs from the source as opposed to submitting scanned PDFs as they contain more smart data that make it easier to work.



Raster PDF



Vector PDF

Question: Are raster-based PDF files acceptable?

Answer:

Yes, assuming they meet the size limitation requirement of no more than 50MB total. However, the County prefers vector-based files.

Question: Are paper plans still acceptable?

Answer:

Yes, to allow for a smooth transition to the new Electronic Plan Check process, we will still accept paper plans when necessary.

Question: How do I combine multiple PDFs into a single file?

Answer:

There are numerous PDF tools freely available on the Internet, which can be used to merge, rotate, and rearrange PDF files.

Question: Why does the County require specific file names?

Answer:

Naming files to properly describe the contents of the file document will help reviewers identify more quickly which files they need to review. Comments from reviewers will be sorted by documents and by discipline. Revised file documents will need to be uploaded by applicants and improper or inconsistent naming of files will create delays in review of your application. Applications with files that are not named correctly may be rejected.