

# UNDERSTAND THE BREADTH OF NECESSARY PERMITS AND INSURANCES

Permits allow cities to establish standards that shared mobility operators must comply with to continue operating. Permitting requirements vary by city and jurisdiction. Therefore, you will need to coordinate with local municipalities and public agencies to ensure that permitting is done accurately in a timely manner. While permitting processes can appear linear, they can take longer than anticipated to obtain the necessary approvals. A good practice is to build in more time than necessary to ensure that deadlines align with your launch plan milestones. With staff reductions and the shift to remote work, many permitting systems may have longer lead times and may be online only.

Depending on transportation mode, the permitting process may be more nuanced than anticipated. As a good practice, start researching the permitting requirements of your proposed project area as soon as possible. The timelines of most permits are estimates, so build in extra time on launch plans to ensure that the team is setting realistic expectations to launch and operate the transportation project.

Sometimes, the permitting process can be overwhelming. The Clean Mobility Options Voucher Pilot Program Administrator Team offers free technical assistance to support you and your team as you navigate various permitting channels.

Check your municipality's website to apply for the right permits and to coordinate permit application deadlines before the launch of your mobility project. If you have questions about permitting, call the department to establish a direct point of contact and build a relationship.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Building relationships with people at the municipality is important because they can be valuable resources during the permitting process.

- Visit your mobility project's municipality's website for ordinances, rules, and regulations to understand the public permitting processes.
- It is advised to have the following information at hand since it is usually required when applying for permits:
  - Site renderings of your site for infrastructure placement
  - Map of proposed infrastructure locations - check local maps available via the City and coordinate with appropriate departments (e.g., Department of Public Works, Department of Transportation)
  - California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation which may include a Notice of Exemption (NOE) - see CEQA section below for more information
  - Documentation of pre-launch community engagement efforts and outcomes
  - Documentation of the agreement between the parties who control right-of-way
  - Documentation of sufficient outreach to abutters
  - Proof of insurance and indemnification of the municipality and/or third-party partners
  - Proof of Contractor License - [Here](#) is a list of approved contractors for EVSE and solar installations throughout California
  - Payment in the form the municipality specifies
  - Documentation of outreach with stakeholders
  - Documentation of coordination with the transit agency
  - Operations plan for parking vehicles during the maintenance of your mobility project

Since 2015, cities and counties in California must have local ordinances that provide a transparent process for installing EV charging equipment, as well as maximum permit approval timelines.<sup>3</sup> Jurisdictions that have created, or are in the process of developing, ordinances are graded and visible at the State of California's interactive [EV Charging Station Permit Streamlining Map](#). Depending on the scale of the project, local approval for EV charging can take between 5 and 40 days.

This local approval process is separate from approval from the utility to connect power to a parking space. Utility approval to begin the grid connection process varies by the individual organization. Examples of different application processes for different types of chargers and sites (e.g., on-street parking versus within a garage) in the Pacific Gas and Electric service area can be found at PG&E's [program resources](#) page. This process typically involves estimating the amount of power required, manufacturer details of the charging equipment, and diagrams of the nearby electrical circuit.

### *Other Areas of Consideration:*

- For many early EV adopters, coordinating charging in shared parking facilities, such as those found at many multifamily housing communities, proved more complicated than in personal garage units. It is important to note that state law requires commercial and residential landlords to allow small-scale EV charging installation.
- Accessible EV Parking Requirements may require 1 parking spot to be devoted to a van accessible handicap spot. This can sometimes require parking reconfigurations.
- California Building Code requires that charging at public locations, in most cases, at least one parking spot be devoted to handicap accessible vehicles.<sup>5</sup>
- EV charger installation requirements may be different for new constructed buildings (e.g., new multifamily dwellings, new surface parking lot).

<sup>3</sup> AB 1236 (GCS [65850.7](#)) and AB 970 (GCS [65850.71](#))

<sup>4</sup> For residential tenants, (GCS [1947.6](#)) residential) and commercial tenants (GCS [1952.7](#))

<sup>5</sup> California Code of Regulations, Title 24, Part 2

- DC Fast Charging installations require bringing more power to a site, resulting in an added layer of complexity compared to level 1 and level 2 installations. Since DCFS installation may involve intricate trenching, station developers should be cognizant of the right-of-way in which their installation is taking place, as they may need to obtain a special encroachment permit. This can be a lengthy process and should be accounted for during the project planning phase. For instance, The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), requires developers to get an encroachment permit before trenching under an existing right-of-way.
- If a Hydrogen Refueling Station is part of your mobility project, you will need to have permits for this infrastructure, which usually consists of a:
  - Low-pressure storage tank
  - Compressor
  - High-pressure storage tank
  - Pre-cooling system
  - Dispenser

## *The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Compliance*

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires agencies to inform government decision makers and the public about the potential environmental consequences of proposed activities. Evidence of CEQA compliance is required to obtain a full or standardized permit. However, it should be noted that CEQA only applies to projects that require discretionary permits from a state public agency. The State of California's Planning and Research Office offers many resources for understanding and implementing CEQA.

CMO projects are required to have an exemption from CEQA, therefore public agencies wishing to continue their projects need to prepare and file a Notice of Exemption. When an agency proceeds with a Notice of Exemption, the following items must be included:

- A brief description, including location, of the proposed project
- A finding that the project as proposed is exempt from CEQA
- A citation to the applicable exemption in the statute or CEQA Guidelines
- A brief statement of reasons supporting the finding that there is no possibility that the activity in question (project) may have a significant effect on the environment

## *Coordinate Permit Application Deadlines*

### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

Project schedules should include permitting deadlines and buffers due to delays during Covid-19 pandemic.

Coordinate with local municipalities and public agencies to ensure that permitting is done accurately in a timely manner.

## *Different Permits for Different Modes*

### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

Permit requirements will vary depending on the characteristics of your mobility project.

- Depending on whether your mobility project provides a service that is free-floating, docked, or requires electric charging, there will be different permitting requirements. Communicate with your contact at the municipality to explain your mobility project and clarify which permits you need to apply for.
- Transit Agency Permits may be required depending on the mode and characteristics of your mobility project. Interdepartmental coordination may also be required depending on the infrastructure needs your mobility project presents.
- Depending on if infrastructure needs to be installed, coordination with local utility providers will be required.