

Permit Sonoma

Overview of At-Cost Projects

At Cost Projects require collection of an initial minimum deposit in accordance with the Permit Sonoma fee schedule for the service requested. This deposit pays for Permit Sonoma staff review, coordination, inspection, public hearings, and processing costs related to the permit request based on actual staff time expended and other direct costs. Department staff track their time against each project and, if needed, invoice applicants on an hourly basis to recover costs of services that exceed the minimum fee(s) collected.

The At Cost approach minimizes the initial submittal fee required for customers that are working on permits that have to go through a public hearing approval process or potentially complex environmental review. Permit Sonoma staff track, bill, refund, and maintain deposit accounts, while still maintaining accountability through time tracking and reporting. This process is required for larger scale projects such as General Plan Amendments, Use Permits, and Subdivisions.

The following is a brief overview of the At Cost Project application process:

1. As a permit submittal requirement, the applicant completes an At Cost Project Agreement form which outlines terms and conditions of the agreement including a general description of type of costs the applicant agrees to pay (such as staffing hours, consultant costs, and legal review).
2. The applicant pays the At Cost Project deposit in accordance with the Permit Sonoma fee schedule.
3. Permit Sonoma places deposits in a separate account which will be used to pay actual costs of the project.
4. Permit Sonoma provides the applicant a statement of account approximately every three months which includes a listing of all deposits received and brief description of all charges incurred during the billing period.
5. If Permit Sonoma staff determine that inadequate funds are on deposit for continued project processing, staff notify clients in writing and request an additional deposit amount estimated necessary to complete processing of my application.

The application terms and conditions can be accessed in more detail in the [At Cost Project Reimbursement PJR-095](#) form.